THE EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYEES WITH REGARD TO THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME AT DRAKENSBERG POWER STATION

By

LESLEY – ANN ROMAN

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree

MAGISTER ARTIUM

in

SOCIAL WORK

(MSD EMPLOYEE ASSSISTANCE PROGRAMMES)

In the Faculty of Arts (Department of Social Work)

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Supervisor: Professor L.S. Terblanche

Pretoria

2003

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted with employees from Drakensberg Power Station, in Kwazulu Natal. Twenty-three non-supervisory employees were interviewed, and six supervisors partook in a focus group. The purpose was to gain insight into the experiences and perceptions of employees about the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), by exploring factors influencing utilisation and investigating the extent of employee awareness of the EAP, to recommend appropriate modifications to the service. Findings indicate employees are aware of the service, but unfamiliar with its purpose and functioning. They are not aware of how to access the service. The utilisation is affected by the lack of visibility of the service, the lack of awareness of family members about the services and concerns about confidentiality. It was found that supervisors were not adequately trained in the EAP and lacked the information to effectively utilise the service, thus they were reluctant to refer employees to the EAP.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

ESKOM: Peaking Generation implemented an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), at all of its Power Stations, and it's Head Office, in July 2000. Three of the power stations are located in rural areas, including the Drakensberg Power Station **(hereafter referred to as the station),** whose employees served as the population of this study. The rest of the divisions are based in urban environments. Since the inception of the EAP, the programme seems to be under-utilised, despite the high HIV/AIDS infection figures in the region, and alcohol related problems been identified by the occupational nursing staff, as a mentionable problem.

Despite the perceived need for the programme, the utilisation figures suggest a resistance to utilising the programme. This evaluative study was an attempt to determine and analyse the reasons for the present utilisation figures, by exploring both employee and supervisor experiences and perceptions of the EAP.

1.2 Motivation

The Station is located in the Drakensberg Mountains, where the borders of Lesotho, Kwazulu Natal and Orange Free State meet. This is a remote part of South Africa, with limited access to social and developmental resources. The researcher's interest was piqued by the low utilisation of the EAP, since she had expected this resource to be over-burdened, considering to the lack of alternative resources, in the community.

There exist little information regarding the South African EAPs and it was hoped that with this study, the researcher would make a contribution to the limited body of knowledge available, by providing insight into the functioning of a South African EAP, as well as provide the external service provider, The Centre for Human Development (CHD), with information to improve the utilisation figures and possibly the EAP itself. Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA) – South Africa, in their standards document for EAPs (1999: 39) supports the concept of evaluating the perceptions of users to improve service provision. The study was also intended to benefit the employees and ESKOM: Peaking Generation, as it should

result in the improvement of services, rendered to the station. The study will also allow CHD and the station management to identify the areas of the EAP, which need to be altered, modified and changed. According to Frost (1990: 45) "findings from evaluation with this focus [utilisation] can provide useful direction regarding where modifications in EAP marketing and educational strategies need to be made."

1.3 Problem Formulation

The EAP at the Station is not fully utilised by the employees (non-supervisors and supervisors). Wellness practitioners, occupational health practitioners, union representatives and supervisors appear to be reluctant to refer employees to the EAP, despite the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, in the region and incidence of alcohol abuse. The reasons behind this was explored and detailed. There appears to be little integration between the EAP, wellness and occupational health service providers, resulting in programmes not achieving its full potential thus impacting negatively on absenteeism and sick leave figures. As a result, employees are not as physically and psychologically as healthy, as they could be.

Little information exists with regard to the experiences and perceptions of South African employees towards EAP services, despite the considerable increase in the EAP industry, over the last decade. The researcher was able to find only one evaluative study, conducted of a South African EAP, despite conducting an extensive literature review. The Centre for Human Development also conducted this study.

Even within the social work field of practice, the concept of evaluating clients' attitudes toward and perceptions of services is a relatively new phenomenon. This study provides a working knowledge that gives insight into the broader dynamics of the South African EAP industry, and provides a framework for future evaluations. For these reasons, the researcher undertook a study to determine and analyse the experiences and perceptions of the employees, with regard to the EAP, with the intention of determining and analysing the reasons influencing the utilisation of the service and investigating the extent to which employees are aware of the service. Frost (1990: 45) maintains that employee awareness of an EAP is the first step towards the utilisation of the EAP.

The aims and objectives of the study, the research approach, the type of research, the research design and the research strategies and procedures, for the study is described in the following subsections.

1.4 Aims and Objectives of Study

The aim of the study is to determine the perceptions and experiences of the employees toward the EAP services, provided by the CHD. The purpose is to determine and analyse the reasons why the EAP is under-utilised by the employees (non-supervisors and supervisors), and in so doing gain insight into the needs and expectations of South African, ESKOM – Peaking Generation employees of their EAP, so as to improve the service provided to the station, to improve EAPs generally and to enhance the overall service provision by CHD.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

❑ To determine the employees at the Station's level of awareness of the EAP.

❑ To determine the extent to which supervisors are willing to refer employees to the EAP, at the Station.

❑ To determine and analyse the reasons supervisors at the Station are reluctant to refer to the EAP.

❑ To determine and analyse the experiences and perceptions of supervisors with regard to EAP supervisory training.

❑ To evaluate and analyse the experiences and perceptions of employees at the Station, with regard to the utilisation of the EAP.

1.5 Research Question

This qualitative study was conducted using an exploratory research design, since little is known about employees' experiences and perceptions of EAPs. For this reason the researcher formulated a research question, as opposed to a hypothesis, since not enough information was available to formally test any hypotheses. Grinnell (1997:12) confirmed the appropriateness of not using a hypothesis and wrote, "qualitative studies rely on qualitative and descriptive methods of data collection and generate hypothesis". The implication is that when using a qualitative approach, a research question is always used in place of a hypothesis. The research question for this study is as follows:

What are the experiences and perceptions of the employees at Drakensberg Power Station with regard to their EAP?

1.6 Research Approach

After considerable debate and extensive literature review, the researcher concluded that a qualitative approach would be best suited to the study, since the data being collected was heavily influenced by the experiences, attitudes and perceptions of the research participants, rather than being collected by a predetermined or highly structured or standardised measurement instrument (Grinnell, Jr. 1997: 107). The focus of the research would also be on the orientation of individuals, rather than their actions.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994:2) refer to a qualitative research approach as "a multi-perspective approach (utilising different qualitative techniques and data collection methods) to social interaction, aimed at describing, making sense of, interpreting or reconstructing this interaction in terms of the meaning that subjects attach to it." During this study, the researcher focused specifically on the interaction between the service provider and the employees at the station, in an attempt to determine and describe the experiences and perceptions of the employees toward the EAP.

To ensure the comprehensive collection of the data, the researcher obtained her information using two different qualitative data collection methods. Two focus groups, guided by interview schedules, were conducted with the six supervisors. An introductory session was held prior to the commencement of the focus group sessions, and although union representatives were invited, they did not attend, and this was seen as an indication to the researcher that they decline to participate in the study. Twenty-three semi-structured face-to-face interviews, guided by interview schedules, were also conducted with a stratified random sample of non-supervisory employees. The interview schedule did, however, comprise of some quantitative questions.

A combination of a quantitative and qualitative approach, referred to as triangulation by Mouton and Marais (1990: 91) and de Vos (1998a: 357-362) was considered but due to a large percentage of population having only basic literacy and numeracy

6

skills, the use of a questionnaire survey was rejected and as a result information would be difficult to quantify as a result.

1.7 Type of Research

This study will provide CHD with recommendations to improve their service, to make recommendations with regard to any modifications required in terms of marketing strategies and educational initiatives, and give some insight into the needs and expectations of employees, resulting in improved utilisation figures. Consequently, applied research, as described by Fouche and de Vos (1998: 69) was used to develop knowledge to improve the overall EAP utilisation figures. Applied research has as its focus the resolution of problems within social work practice, so as to improve the profession and its interventions. In this research project, EAP services, is regarded as the social work intervention.

The study addressed the immediate problem of low utilisation rates, facing the EAP service provider and the latter chapters of the research report makes conclusions and recommendations based on findings, of the research. This problem was explored through the evaluation of the existing EAP programme, using non-experimental research methods. Masi (1994: 39-40) describes evaluation, as the scientific gathering and analysis, and reporting of data. Rossi and Freeman (1989), in De Vos (1998b: 367) provide a comprehensive definition of evaluation research "[it] is the systematic application of social research procedures for assessing the conceptualisation, design, implementation and utility of social intervention programmes." Evaluation is used to determine the effectiveness of the programme, and in so doing provide the information needed to change people's knowledge, behaviour, or attitudes, towards the service, and can be used as a basis to make and implement decisions.

The process of this research project was relatively unstructured. Interviews were, however, conducted with the assistance of interview schedules, in an attempt to provide some structure to the data collection process. The focus of the research was the perceptions and experiences of employees, based on their various orientations. Consequently, evaluative research as described by Tripodi (1983: 81-99) together with Arkava and Lane's more narrowly focused formative evaluation research design (1983:54), was employed.

In this study, social research procedure was used to assess the design, implementation and utility of the existing EAP, provided by CHD, through the eyes of the employees and the supervisors. This provided an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme and highlighted areas for improvement.

1.8 Research Design

The research design refers to "the plan of how to proceed in determining the nature of the relationship between variables" (Arkava and Lane, 1983: 46).

With this study, it was intended simply to explore the experiences and perceptions of the employees (non-supervisors and supervisors), at the Station, with regard to the EAP, and to lay a foundation for future, more in depth studies in EAP evaluation. There exists very little information, regarding the effectiveness of South African EAPs. To date the researcher was able to access only one other evaluative study, of a South African EAP. Marias and Mouton (1990: 43) describe the goal of exploratory studies as "the exploration of relatively unknown research area, to gain new insights into phenomenon, to undertake preliminaries investigation prior to a more structured study…to determine priorities for future research..." For this reason, exploratory research design, through the use of focus groups and semi-structured interviews, was selected to format the study.

1.9 Research Procedures and Strategy

The focus group interview is described by Schurink, Schurink and Poggenpoel as "a purposive discussion of a specific topic or related topics taking place between…individuals with similar background and common interests," provided the supervisors with a supportive contained environment, conducive to discussing shared feelings of fear, rejection and other factors, which might result in resistance to referring to the EAP. Two sessions were held with all six supervisors.

The semi-structured face-to-face interviews afforded the researcher an opportunity to understand the closed internal worlds of the twenty-three non-supervisory employees, by studying their attitudes and perceptions. To maintain the focus of the sessions, an interview schedule was used. The questions, in the interview schedule, covered a broad range of topics relevant to the EAP, and also provided for the relatively

systematic collection of data. These interviews uncovered a variety of problems, which can be presented to the external service provider for modification.

The data collected from both the focus groups and the interviews focused on six areas: 1) the level of awareness of the EAP, 2) the visibility of the EAP, 3) the employee's description of EAP, 4) the employee's perceptions of using the EAP, 5) the employee's concerns about confidentiality and 6) do employees inform family of the existence of the EAP? The focus groups also looked extensively at supervisors' resistance to refer and the presence of and attitudes toward supervisory training.

Compilation of data: The results and contents of both the focus groups and the semi-structured interviews were documented through audio – recording of sessions and note taking during the focus groups.

Interpretation of results: Tabulations, comparisons and deductive reasoning was used to analyse the results, once all the information was compiled.

Results and recommendations will be reported to CHD, the Production Manager and the Power Station Manager, by means of a written report, and to the respondents by an oral presentation.

1.10 Pilot Study

1. 10. 1 Literature Study

The second chapter of the research report is dedicated to a comprehensive review of EAP literature. The following material added considerable value, in ensuring the study is well grounded within a sound theoretical framework.

The Standards documents produced Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA) – South Africa (1999), United States of America (1992) and the United Kingdom (1998) are essential to the study, as it lists evaluation of services, through service users, with the intent to improve services, as one of the standards of EAP services.

The journals applicable to the study, including the EAP Digest and the EAP Quarterly were consulted extensively ensuring that the results were verified through the use of the most recent available information.

A wide range of books provided basic information regarding EAPs from an international perspective; these included the Handbook of Performance Technology, edited by Stolvitch and Keeps (1992), Employee Assistance Programs: A basic Text, edited by Dickman (1988) and the Human Resources Handbook, edited by Klarriech, Francek and Moore (1985). Two books, Employee Assistance Programs in South Africa and Employee Assistance Programs in the New South Africa, edited by Paul Maiden, were also consulted as they examine the state of the art of Employee Assistance Programmes, in South Africa, specifically.

1. 10. 2 Consultation with experts
The following individuals were consulted during the execution of this research project and provided the researcher with support and non-academic guidance.

Johan Hatting – Director, Accounts Services, CHD, provided information and insight into the selection of an appropriate and relevant topic, for the research project.
Jaco Cronje – Director, Clinical Practice, CHD, was consulted on a broad scale throughout the research process, to ensure that the procedures, including the writing of the research proposal and the pilot testing of the data collection instruments, were clinically as well as academically correct. He also provided support and guidance for the researcher, while the study was being conducted.

1. 10. 3 Feasibility of study
There is consensus between CHD and station management that the EAP needs to be evaluated. The Production Manager at the station consented to the researcher conducting the study, which enabled the researcher to access to the employees. Twenty minutes was allocated per interview with an employee, and this was sufficient time for the needed data to be obtained. The researcher

was also permitted to conduct two focus groups with the supervisory employees. CHD also agreed to the researcher conducting the study.

Very little resources were needed to conduct the study, as it was intended that the study be a relatively inexpensive exercise. Since the researcher is unemployed, she gave extensive personal input and relied mostly on her own personal resources.

1. 10. 4 Pilot testing of data collection instruments

The information was collected by means of focus groups and semi-structured face-to-face interviews; both of these were conducted in conjunction with an interview schedule (see Appendix two, three and Appendix four). The researcher compiled the required measuring instruments for data collection and as a result the university required that the instrument to be pilot tested on a similar target group, not partaking in the study, prior to the commencement of the study.

As a result, pilot testing was conducted at Vanderkloof Power Station, situated on the Orange River, at the border of the Free State Province and the Northern Cape Province. The station was selected as it is also an ESKOM: Peaking Generation Power Station located in a rural area, so the staff, conditions of employment and the service rendering of the EAP, were likely to be similar. The staff compliment at Vanderkloof Power Station was, however, smaller than that of Drakensberg Power Station. The pilot tests were conducted using four non-supervisory employees, to test the schedule for the semi-structured interviews, and three supervisors to test the schedule for the focus groups.

Jaco Cronje, Clinical Director of the Centre for Human Development, was also consulted, to provide input into the design of the data collection instrument.

The pilot testing resulted in only minor adjustments to the instruments, and changes were mainly to enhance clarity of certain questions, thus allowing for the collection of more accurate data.

1.11 Description of Research Population

The target population consisted of the entire staff component, including 71 non-supervisory employees, six supervisors of the Drakensberg Power Station, but excluding management representatives. Management was deemed to be those individuals allocated on the "M-band" salary scale, and included the Production manager and the Maintenance Manager.

The study excluded management, as their expectations, experiences and perceptions, of the programme, differ significantly from that of the line function employee, as management is likely to focus on cost-benefit analysis, rather than awareness, availability and quality of services.

Since the population of supervisors was so small, the entire group was approached to partake in the study, however, while developing the sample for the focus group it became evident that the union representatives could also offer valuable insight and information, similar to that of the supervisors and it was decided to include them in the focus group discussions. An introductory meeting was held for these two groups, to highlight the purpose and expected benefits of the study as well as to arrange mutually agreed upon times and dates, when the focus groups could be conducted, however, the union representatives did not attend, and as a result they were excluded from the investigation.

The remaining employees were approached by means of a staff meeting (due to the basic literacy levels of a large percentage of staff) where the purpose, expected benefits of the study and confidentiality aspects, were discussed and opportunity was given for questions. Because a large segment of the population has only basic literacy and numeracy skills, written invitations, were not considered an effective method of obtaining a sample, from the target population.

It was hoped that at least a 30% sample of the population would be obtained. This meant 21 semi-structured face-to-face interviews, had to be conducted. The researcher held 23 semi-structured interviews, obtaining a final sample of 32%.

The employees, at Drakensberg Power Station, are split along numerous divides (strata). These include culture/race, gender and literacy levels, which are reflected in the scope of work, within the station, where the generally more educated employees are directly responsible for the production of electricity and the maintenance of the station, while other, less educated employees provide the indirect services such as general maintenance, transport and provision of meals. A comprehensive list of employees, in there various work sections, stratified random sampling as proposed Strydom and de Vos (1998: 197) and Smith and Geis (1992: 156) was used to select a sample of non-supervisory employees.

Using stratified random sampling meant non-supervisory employees were first divided into groups (strata) based on work sections, (as per the list of employees) and then randomly selected from the group of names. This ensured that all the different groups of employees were equally represented, in the study. As there is only one non-supervisory female employed at the station, she was specifically solicited to partake in the study.

The population of the study is limited to the employees of Drakensberg Power Station; there are two other rural stations within Peaking Generation, that is, Gariep and Vanderkloof Power stations. There is also a host of other rural stations within ESKOM, which are also serviced by CHD. These will not form part of the study.

1.12 Ethical Issues

Durrheim and Wassenaar (1999: 66-70) and Strydom (1998: 23-35) emphasise the importance of conducting ethically sound research. The ultimate responsibility to ensure the research is of the highest ethical standards lies with the researcher. The researcher ensured that the research was ethically sound by employing the following strategies.

Informed consent was obtained from all the respondents who agreed to participate in the study, prior to conducting the study. They were informed of the goal of the study and their right to participate or not to participate. There will be no hidden agendas with regard to the purpose of the study. Each participant, signed an informed consent form (see Appendix One).

13

All information was handled in a confidential manner, so as to guarantee no emotional harm will come to employees due to their participation in the study. Except for the researcher, the translator and the research supervisor, no one will have access to the research data and no one will be able to identify individuals from the information cited in the research report.

The results of the study are intended to benefit all parties involved, CHD, the management of the station and the station employees. CHD will benefit, as they will be able to address the issues as determined by the study and as a result improve their overall programme. The station and its employees will benefit from the improved, modified services. The results of the study will be reported to both the Centre for Human Development and ESKOM: Peaking Generation Management.

1.13 Definition of Key Concepts

1. 13. 1 Definitions

1. 13. 1. 1 Employee Assistance Programme:

EAPA – SA (1999: 4) defines an Employee Assistance Programme as "a work site based programme designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity based problems associated with employees impaired by personal concerns, but no limited to: health, marital family financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress or other personal concerns which may adversely affect employee job performance."

Googins and Godfrey (1987:103) define EAPs as "a set of policies and programme procedures by which the work organisation legitimately intervenes in identifying and treating problems of employees that impact and have the capacity to impact job performance."

The researcher defines an EAP, as a programme provided by the employer to address the emotional and physical needs of employees whose personal problems affect their job performance, through the provision of confidential guidance and counselling.

1. 13. 1. 2 Experiences

The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English (1998:339) defines experiences as "actual observation of or practical acquaintance with facts or events, [and] knowledge and skill resulting from this."

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (2000: http://www.dictionary.com) defines experiences as "active participation in events or activities, leading to the accumulation of knowledge or skill."

According to the researcher experiences can be defined as "participation in and observation of events or occurrences that lead to the development of skills or knowledge."

1. 13. 1. 3 Perceptions

According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English (1998:761) defines perceptions as:

1. The act or faculty of perceiving [and] intuitive recognition.
2. Action by which the mind refers its sensations to external objects as cause.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (2000: http://www.dictionary.com) defines perceptions as:

1. The process, act or faculty of perceiving.
2. The recognition and interpretation of sensory stimuli based chiefly on memory.

According to the researcher perceptions can be defined as:

1. Insight, intuition or knowledge gained through observation.
2. Impressions gained through the senses and how they are interpreted based on one's experiences.

1. 13. 2 Abbreviations and Acronyms

EAP (s)	**EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (S)**
ESKOM	**ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMMISSION**
DRAKENSBERG POWER STATION	**ESKOM:PEAKING GENERATION, DRAKENSBERG POWER STATION**
CHD	**THE CENTRE FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**
EAPA – SA	**EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROFESIONALS ASSOCIATION – SOUTH AFRICA**

1.14 Contents of Research Report

This research report contains the following sections highlighted by Strydom (1998: 424- 425). The researcher, however, also included a chapter for a literature review.

Research Topic

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter contextualised the research in terms of the significance of the problem and its resolution for the organisation, the external service provider, the employees and their families and the broader field of EAPs in South Africa.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter will provide the research with its theoretical credibility, by consulting a wide range of policies, books and journals; appropriate to the topic – focusing on EAP

rational, goals, essential elements and standards, of which evaluation of services form a fundamental part.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter will focus on the following aspects, as proposed by Mouton and Marias (1990: 188): Statement of the research problem, a description of the research design and the data collection procedure, the analysis and interpretation of the data. Here the focus will be on processing and analyzing the data to produce the results of the study.

Chapter 4: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter is a summary discussion of the results, with the researcher drawing conclusions from the results and making recommendations to CHD and ESKOM Peaking Generation Management.

References: A comprehensive list of the resources, consulted during this study will be presented at the end of this research report.

CHAPTER TWO
CREATING A CONTEXT FOR EAPs…A LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Employee Assistance Programmes are a new form of support offered by employers to employees, and it is described by EAPA – SA (1999: 4) as "a work site based programme designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity based problems associated with employees impaired by personal concerns, but no limited to: health, marital family financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress or other personal concerns which may adversely affect employee job performance." It is borne of the belief that work life and personal life are interrelated, and as a result impact on each other.

It would seem, however, as if employers see provision of EAP services more as part of their social responsibility, rather than as part of a sound business strategy, aimed at reducing the impact of personal problems on productivity. Harper (1999: 2) points out "to date EAP infrastructure has not been perceived by most South African companies decision makers as an integral and essential part of effective human resources management". She states later "this perception threatens the viability of the EAP and runs the risk of the EAP being viewed as a disposable cost center". Peters (1999: 84) agrees with Harper and believes, "the EAP…needs to know how to generate value through its activities and will have to constantly justify their services to customers." Both these authors are implying that the need exists for the EAP profession to prove to industry and big business that EAP services make good business sense.

Evaluations offer an opportunity to provide feedback to the client company and for EAP providers to assess the quality of programme being provided and to suggest improvements, if appropriate. Emener and Yegedis (1988: 245) maintain that good, high quality; efficient and effective programs should be continually striving for improvement.

Myers (1984:297) acknowledges the importance of supervisor and employee opinion in EAP evaluation. However, few researchers have examined employee attitudes and

perceptions, in relation to their willingness to utilise the Employee Assistance Programme. The researcher found the results of only three similar studies, in print.

To contextualise this study, the researcher undertook a comprehensive review of relevant literature, regarding the essential elements of an EAP, its goals and objectives, as well as similar evaluative studies, as pertaining to this research project.

Purpose of this chapter is to offer succinct description of what was uncovered, with the intention of placing the problem in theoretical perspective, identifying alternative theories for understanding the problem and to identify central concepts. It will briefly describe the goals and objectives of EAPs, its essential elements, and the need for evaluation, marketing and supervisory training, with the intention of providing a theoretical framework for the study.

2.2 The need for EAPs in the Workplace

According to Ntsamai (1991: 19) "the workplace is the primary environment for adults…work is perceived as a central dynamic of modern industrial society." While the workplace remains one of the most dynamic environments within which we function, it also results in problems, which places stress on the individual. The employee also experiences stress in his relationships or systems outside of the workplace. Both work stress and interpersonal stress can have a significant impact on employee social functioning and work performance, since the individual is unable to compartmentalise or separate the different aspects of themselves. Googins and Godfrey (1987: 1) maintain "work and family, or personal and social lives of employees do not constitute separate or unrelated spheres."

What is of great concern to the employer is how these factors impact on productivity. Ntsamai (1991: 19) states further "mental health services provided in the workplace…can forestall the development of serious maladaptations…employees who suffer from emotional illness may have difficulty meeting job requirements," which is in accordance with Smith (1988: 4) who was of the opinion that occupational mental health has as its primary goal the enhancement of quality of life at the worksite. The EAP targets employees experiencing a broad range of personal problems, which impact on work performance and addresses these problems through

19

social interventions. (Please note definitions of EAPs in Chapter One.) It has at the heart of its intervention improved productivity, through enhanced social functioning.

2.3 Goals and Objectives of EAPs

Goals and objectives of programmes are important since they provide the EAP service provider with the tools needed to evaluate the services they render to their clients. Without identifying the specific goals and objectives of the EAP, evaluation cannot take place. Emner and Yegedis (1998: 246) hold this position "goals and objectives: a) define the purpose of the program; b) define the reason for the program's existence; and c) indicate how and by when the program's goals will be obtained."

2. 3. 1 Goals of EAP

Harper (1999: 11) describes two goals for the EAP

- Aiding an individual/employee to overcome mental and bio-psychosocial problems that effect performance and well-being.
- Assisting employers to have healthier and more productive work force.

Mathews (1990: 42) and Myers (1984: 124) identify the following two common goals for an EAP.

- To prevent problems through employee education.
- To identify and rehabilitate problem employees who do not meet job requirements.

Class discussions during the EAP Masters Programme at the University of Pretoria (May 2001) helped to formulate the following three goals for the EAP.
- Enhancement of productivity.
- Enhancement of social functioning.
- Improving the overall effectiveness of the organisation.

The literature indicate that an EAP, may either focus on the employee needs only as described by Mathews and Myers, or it may choose to target both the employees and the client organisation as suggested by Harper and echoed in the discussions of EAP Master's Programme at the University of Pretoria**.**

2. 3. 2 Objectives of EAP

Mathews (1990: 42) lists two objectives for an EAP.

- To implement a confidential assessment and referral system for all employees; and
- To deliver appropriate education and promotional information to increase employees' and institution's skill in dealing effectively with personal problems and the use of the EAP.

Wright (1985:15) cites three objectives for Employee Assistances Programmes**.**

- To implement a confidential counselling service to assist employees and their families with problems that can affect their personal and on-the-job functioning.
- To deliver training and orientation sessions to all company employees.
- To develop a public relations package which will describe the program to employees and assist them to use it appropriately.

Both these authors agree that for an EAP to be successful and achieve its goals, it is essential that the programme provide confidential counselling, education and training for employees (supervisors and non supervisors), as well as be effectively marketed to employees to ensure services are utilised.

2.4 Essential Elements of the EAP

The twentieth century brought ground-breaking achievements in the work place. Through the provision of Employee Assistance Programmes employers have a means of assisting employees with personal and work problems, which may affect job

performance. The underlying belief being that personal problems are private, until it affects work performance, which then gives employers the right to intervene. EAPs have become increasing popular with South African firms, seeking to provide assistance to employees, with regard to personal problems, in an attempt to enhance productivity. According to Maiden (1992: 3) "employee assistance programs in South Africa have become the social conscience of the organisation in which they are ensconced."

Many authors have described key components vital to the success of an EAP. To be as comprehensive as possible, the perspectives of a wide and diverse range of authors are described.

According to Dickman and Challenger (1988: 279-280) there are ten attributes of an EAP, which are critical to its success: management backing; labour support; confidentiality; easy access; supervisor training, labour steward training, insurance involvement; breath of service components; professional leadership and follow-up and evaluation.

Googins and Godfrey (1987: 162) describes seven principles for programme development including identifying and establishing relationship with the client; identifying the need for EAP; mobilising support for the EAP; assigning responsibility to the advisory board; defining the mission of the EAP; specifying objectives; and developing a monitoring and evaluation process.

Dickman (1988: 110-122) listed eleven components:

- Management endorsement: Support and involvement from the highest managerial levels, must be highly visible within the organisation.
- Labour endorsement: Unions must be seen to actively support and accept the programme.
- Policy statements: The organisation must provide a clear policy statement of the intentions and philosophies of their EAP. Harper (1999:5) claims a written policy statement "defines the purpose of the program, the organizational

22

mandate, client eligibility, the roles and responsibilities of various personnel in the organization, program procedures and service mix".

- Confidentiality: Assurances must be given that all problems handled by the EAP will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

- Supervisor and Labour Steward Training: Supervisors and shop stewards must be formally trained in the purpose and functioning of the EAP, as they are often the first to observe drops in job performance.

- Financial Aspects and Insurance Coverage: Cost to employees must be noted upfront.

- Professional Personnel: Staff must be skilled professionals and have a broad knowledge base.

- Broad Service components: Staff must have the expertise to deal with a variety of social and personal problems.

- Accessibility: employees must be able to access the services, quickly and conveniently.

- EAP Awareness: Employees must be made aware of services, through rigorous marketing throughout the organisation, to ensure that employees make use of the programme. Peters (1999: 95) maintains with regard to utilisation, "ten percent is a useful figure to strive towards by South African standards".

- Programme Evaluation: The EAP must be evaluated on a regular basis to determine if it is working and if it does what it is intended to do.

Chiabotta (1987: 20-21) believes success requires integration into the organisation, willingness to work together, stressing dignity and confidentiality, making the programme easy to use, training and encouraging supervisors, monitoring and evaluation. Almacan (1981), in Durkin (1985: 243) on the other hand condensed the essential elements of the EAP into five major components; 1) policy and procedures, 2) administrative functions, 3) education and training, 4) resources and 5) evaluation.

Most of the authors described above, though they may differ vastly in their approach to developing an EAP, agree that the following basic elements are essential to developing a successful programme: EAP awareness (which is closely related to the

promotion or marketing of the programme as described in the EAP objectives), confidentiality and the key role of the supervisor. It is intended with this study to evaluate these components as they play a crucial role in developing insight into employee attitudes and perceptions of the employees and supervisors toward the EAP.

2.5 Marketing an EAP

Francek (1985: 28) describes two types of EAP marketing: internal marketing, that is the promotion of EAP to employees and external marketing that is getting management to buy into the concept of implementing EAP into their organisation. For the purpose of this research we will be focusing on the internal marketing strategy of the EAP, to assess how aware employees are of the programme and the relationship or impact it has on employees' utilisation of the programme. Peters (1999: 101) describes internal marketing as "having a direct impact on utilization of the service."

Harper (1999: 10) gives insight into who should be the target market to be reached in the internal marketing campaign, when saying "the individual and his or her family, supervisors, staff, others with the responsibility for the health and welfare of employees, organization as a whole and the organization in terms of service provision." Francek goes on to explain "the primary goal of an ongoing marketing approach…is to make sure that employees and their dependents know when and how to use the program" or put otherwise that employees and their families are made aware of the programme and know how to use it. He furthermore denotes a key element of internal marketing, as "a high level of program visibility needs to be established and maintained over the life of the EAP".

Beidel (1999:92) list the following objectives of an internal marketing campaign:

- To increase employee knowledge of EAP and its services.
- To increase familiarity and comfort with EAP operations.
- To increase utilisation of the programme.
- To enhance the integration of the EAP within the host organisation.
- To maintain visibility of the EAP.

Once again Beidel confirms the link between the marketing of the EAP, employee awareness of the programme and programme utilisation. External services providers, Stanley, Murphy and Peters (1988: 233) state, "we are aware of the importance of marketing the EAP…that we maintain a high visibility…we understand that when an employee is having a personal crisis they will respond to the resources that are known and readily available." Herein lies the essence of the internal marketing campaign that it ensures the programme is highly visible and user friendly, so that employees are able to easily access the resource.

2.6 Supervisors and the EAP

Supervisors are essential to the EAP, since they are the first to notice any drop or change in work performance of an employee, and the early identification of problems are key to the success of an EAP. First line supervisors are the EAPs most significant link to the company employee, since they are in a position both to refer troubled employees and to support employees who voluntarily make use of the service. Service providers would do well to heed this fact and to make a concerted effort to ensure that supervisors are allies.

Peters (1999: 96) describes the supervisor primary function as "to ensure employees are productive" as a result he says the "EAP is dependent on the supervisor training, insight and referral." Supervisors who have insight into the functioning of the EAP and who believe in the benefits of the programme will access the services of the EAP and refer appropriately.

Myers (1984:250) emphasises that "supervisory referrals are considered the most important because they result from the confrontation process in performance appraisals." Cohen (1985: 188) agrees describing the relationship between supervisor and employee "as one based on a system of accountability, [which is]…the best mechanism for aiding a troubled employee". The natural hierarchy of organisations provide EAPs with valuable consumers, in the form of the supervisors.

The most effective way to gain supervisor support is through supervisory training programmes design to create awareness of the EAP, its principles, to clarify the role of the supervisor within the context of the EAP and to provide adequate procedures

for referral. To cite the standards set EAPA – SA (1999: 30), "the EAP will provide training for supervisors, management and worker organisation personnel in order to give them understanding of EAP objectives, procedures for referring employees experiencing job performance problems to the programme; and the impact of the programme on the organisation." Supervisory training is clearly considered to be a fundamental requirement, should the EAP wish to be successful. Many other authors have maintained a similar position in the previous two decades.

Romano (1995:50) claims "[supervisory] training is essential to maintaining the health and vitality of EAPs". Dayoff (1996: 29) is in agreement stating that a highly effective EAP must "take time to train and consult supervisors…to develop trust and confidence in the EAP." A sentiment expressed also by Cohen as far back as the mid eighties "training supports the notion that it is all right to ask for help and that no-one is expected to have all the answers to all of the employees problems…and is an effective means of enhancing supervisory understanding and utilisation of the EAP" (1985: 188).

2. 6. 1 Types of referrals

Referrals can, however, be obtained from more that one source. Wright (1985: 18-21) explains that there are three ways for the EAP to receive referrals.

- Voluntary referrals. Voluntary assistance is provided to any employee or his immediate family.
- Suggested referrals. If a supervisor has reason to believe that the employee has a personal problem that may be contributing to his poor performance, the supervisor may suggest that the employee arrange for an interview with the employee assistance counsellor.
- Mandatory referrals. The mandatory referral procedure is an option available to management to use during the latter stages of the discipline procedure, and management may refer an employee facing dismissal or seeking re-instatement, to a counsellor on a mandatory basis as a condition of employment.

Alternatively, Myers (1984: 231) describes six types of referrals.

- Self-referrals
- Family referrals
- Peer referrals
- Co-worker referrals
- Union referrals
- Supervisor referrals

Although Myers describes a much broader referral network than Wright, they are of the same mind that supervisors and self-referral are a key referral resource. However, supervisors appear to be somewhat resistant to taking up this role. Myers (1984: 251) maintains that the problem with supervisory referrals is the tendency of supervisors to avoid confrontation and referral due to a lack of skill and various rationalisations. He believes, however, that effective training can increase supervisory effectiveness and EAP referrals. Stanley, Murphy and Peters (1988:233) concur with Myers and "developed an extensive supervisory training package…provides supervisors with training regarding issues of performance management and the methodology of using the EAP as a management resource."

The other significant type of referral, also described by both authors is that of self-referrals. These are also indicative of a successful EAP, since they offer insight into the general employee awareness of the programme. Myers (1984: 239) contends "the rate of self [referrals] to total referrals is a good indicator of EAP success." He states further that reducing stigma [of using the EAP] and assuring anonymity [and confidentiality] can increase the rate of self-referrals.

2. 6. 2 Reasons why supervisors are reluctant to refer

The training of supervisors with regard to EAPs is clearly recognised as an essential function of an EAP, in literature. The training supervisory personnel in EAP procedures are essential if supervisors

27

are to appropriately utilise the EAP. This will help to develop them into a key referral resource. Referrals are in turn the lifeblood of the EAP. Myers maintains, however, that supervisors have not met their responsibilities (1984:231), which raised a debate into why supervisor were reluctant to refer employees to the EAP. Supervisors often appear to be reluctant to refer employees to the EAP.

According to Myers (1984: 234) supervisors' resist referring workers to the EAP because of the following reasons:

- Supervisors may fear referring employees to the EAP, will be interpreted by the troubled employee as a judgement against him, especially if the employee is in denial.
- Supervisors' may avoid confrontation since they fear employees will initiate a discrimination charge against them.
- They may fear management will not support their decision.
- Supervisors may want acceptance from employees and may fear referral to the EAP may jeopardise this.
- They may lack information about the EAP and its procedures.

In their referral agent handbook (year unknown: 25), the Centre for Human Development, the external EAP contractor, explains that the reluctance on the part of supervisors to refer employees are often based on the following myths:

- A sense of betrayal: Supervisors may hold the belief that they are doing the wrong thing when "turning in" the employee and referring him to the EAP.
- A fear of harm to a valuable employee: supervisors may want to protect a valuable employee and consider referring the employee to the EAP to be placing the employee at risk.
- A feeling of personal responsibility: Supervisors sometimes feel that they should be able to assist employees, if they have a

personal problem, and regard their inability to help as a personal failure.

- Esprit de Corpse: Often the misconception is held that the problem should remain and be taken care of within the group/the department.
- Concerns about confidentiality: Supervisors are often concerned about whether or not the EAP will fulfill its principle of confidentiality, and that information may be passed on.
- Personal reactions: supervisors are often reluctant to address employee problems, because they fear their personal reactions may affect their own performance.

Many fears govern the behaviour of the supervisor, and although these fears may be real and need to be acknowledged, many of them are based on myths and a lack of understanding and insight into the functioning of the EAP. Many of these myths can be debunked and fears worked through, during intensive, effective training of supervisors into the functioning of the EAP, its procedures and the clarification of the role of the supervisor in the EAP process. Whatever the supervisor's reason's for resisting referral, the EAP needs to address these issues up front, if the company is to draw full benefit from the programme.

2.7 Confidentiality and EAP

Confidentiality is a clinical principle, which refers to the holding of therapeutic information, in confidence, unless otherwise requested by the client. It is a key element of social work, psychology and psychiatry. A good rapport is based on trust and employees will not share the innermost feelings and thoughts, their circumstances and background, if they do not believe or are not guaranteed that the information will be held in confidence.

The Standards Document for Employee Assistance Programmes, as compiled by EAPA – SA (1999) as well as the Standards Document compiled by EAPA – USA (1992) both list confidentiality of information as an essential element of an EAP.

EAPA – SA states, "the EAP's success and credibility is dependent on the maintenance of confidentiality" as motivation for its inclusion in the document" (1999: 18).

EAPA – USA describes its intent with inclusion of confidentiality as a key element as "program success and credibility hinge, to a large extent, on employee confidence that the EAP respects individual's privacy and adheres to confidentiality requirements and procedures…both internal and external EAPs are committed to maintaining confidentiality." (1992: 26-28). If employees do not believe that the information disclosed to the EAP is confidential they will not use the EAP, since they will be concerned that management may access the information and that work status and future promotion may be influenced by information disclosed to the EAP.

According to Dickman (1988: 112) "confidentiality is as a cornerstone of an effective EAP" and states that assurances must be given that all problems handled by the EAP will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Smith (1993: 34) is in agreement with Dickman and maintains, "confidentiality is critical [for an EAP]"

2.8 Evaluation of EAPs

Despite recognition by most major role players (compare Mathews, 1990: 40-41; Dickman, 1988: 110-122; Dickman and Emener, 1988: 279-280; Kim (1988: 169-187); Chiabotta, 1987: 20-21 and Googins and Godfrey, 1987: 162) that evaluation is a key element of developing and improving EAPs, actual evaluations appear to be few and far between.

Extensive literature has been reviewed and this confirmed that the evaluation of an EAP is vital to its success. However, throughout EAP literature it is also stressed that the evaluation of programmes, is not only essential for EAP success but also necessary to ensure the future and survival of EAPs in industry, as it allows service providers the opportunity to prove its credibility and worthiness.

However, it appears as if a concerted effort was made in the eighties and early nineties to create awareness of its significance but this endeavour later ran out of

steam with only vague references to the importance of ongoing evaluations but the published material seem to take a back seat.

Today there appears to be a revival in the movement of EAP evaluation and the document, Standards for Employee Assistance Programmes in South Africa, compiled by EAPA – SA (1999: 39) stipulates that EAP professionals should evaluate the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the EAP operational activities with the goal to assure a cost-effective and relevant service to employers and employees, as well as their dependents. These sentiments are also echoed by other EAPA Chapters; see standards documents compiled by EAPA - UK (1998: 83) and EAPA – USA (1992: 62).

Standards Documents of Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA) Chapters in United States of America (1992:62), United Kingdom (1998:83) and South Africa (1999: 39) all prescribe the evaluation of EAPs as a standard for service delivery. The implication being that evaluation of services must be regarded as a prerequisite for developing an EAP.

The standards document compiled by the American Chapter of EAPA is quite adamant in this regard and iterates, "an EAP shall evaluate the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of its internal operations. Measurable objectives shall be stated for both process and outcome evaluation." The standards document for the United Kingdom is still in draft form, and although evaluation is listed as a standard for service delivery it does not, however, expand on the when, where, why and how evaluations should be carried out. The newly established South African Chapter of EAPA has also developed a draft standards document, which gives clear goals, objectives, criteria and guidelines for the evaluation of an EAP.

This study will evaluate the EAP with the intention to ensure a "relevant service to employers, employees and their dependents" (EAPA – SA, 1999: 39).

2. 8. 1 Reasons for EAP Evaluation

The reasons for evaluating an EAP are many. The most important being that it is regarded as a means of developing a better service and to hold practitioners

accountable for the services they deliver. Googins and Godfrey (1987: 129) explain, "the presence of a program evaluation mechanism adds to program credibility and provides information that can be used to improve services", while Durkin (1985: 244) on the other hand looks at evaluation from a much broader perspective maintaining that "evaluation of individual programs contribute to the knowledge of what is effective in the field of employee assistance programming."

From literature it is clear that the belief is held that programme improvement cannot take place without the evaluations of individual EAPs. If EAPs are to be effective and to make valuable contributions, within the workplace, it is essential that they are evaluated and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Mathews (1990: 40) maintains that reasons for evaluating EAPs include examining the effectiveness of a new program, comparing the program to some benchmark, making decisions, discovering unintended effects, achieving accreditation, providing a basis for program modification, and ensuring proper allocation of limited resources. Kettner, Moroney and Martin (1999: 16) enthused "one of the most exciting features of effectiveness – based program evaluation is that it produces information that informs staff about how successful the program was in relation to expectations as expressed in objectives".

Emener and Yegedis (1988: 244) cites six possible reasons for evaluating an EAP

- Vindication. To illustrate the program is worthwhile and justifying the program's existence.
- Salesmanship. To convince others that expansion and extension of the program is worthwhile.
- Verification. Verifying worth and impact are important to a program's survival.

- Improvement. Analysing facts about a program can not only specify strengths and weaknesses, but also suggest their magnitude and overall impact on program outcomes (results and effects).

- Understanding. Knowledge and understanding of how and why a program works.

- Accountability. Funders insist on holding programs accountable for producing results.

The motivation for this study is in line with the three latter reasons, that is, to gain understanding of the dynamics of the programme, making improvements to the programme and holding the Centre for Human Development, the external service provider accountable for producing results. The empirical study will be carried out within the context of services provided by CHD.

2. 8 .2 Types of EAP Evaluation

Durkin (1985: 246-247) identifies three types of evaluation.

- Process evaluation. Also sometimes called progress evaluation, formative evaluation or developmental evaluation (compare Durkin, 1985: 246-247; Higley & Cooper, 1994: 49 and Csiernik, 1994: 32). It is about evaluating programmes periodically during its operation, to identify strengths and weaknesses of programmes and to evaluate if the programme is being utilised in the manner and degree originally intended. The variables in process evaluation include case finding, treatment agencies, acceptance of EAP referral, informal evaluations and reports about EAP, follow-up, awareness of programme, sources of referral, supervisory versus self-referral, training, types of publicity and evaluation of evaluation.

- Impact evaluation. Impact is measured by changes brought about in those employees and organisation units participating in the programme.

33

- Outcome evaluation. Outcome evaluation is used to identify the benefits – both tangible and intangible – and the cost – both direct and indirect – of conducting the programme.

Geis and Smith (1992: 133) identify two types of evaluation.

- Retroactive evaluation, focusing on accountability.
- Proactive evaluation, focusing on improving functioning.

In essence these authors differ only in terms of the names they have chosen to describe the different types of evaluation. The essence in their thinking has much commonality, both recognising the need to evaluate with the intention of modification and remaining accountable to the client organisation.

This empirical study made use of process evaluation through investigating following variables: awareness of programme, supervisory and self – referrals, training and types of marketing. Process evaluation focuses upon how the programme functions and not on whether or not the stated goals have been met. As a result this study will focus on what is working well, why it is working well and what needs to be done to improve things.

Mathews (1990: 41) is of the opinion that an EAP should be evaluated relatively soon after its implementation to obtain information and make adjustments before mistakes are compounded or opposition is solidified. On the other hand enough time must pass to permit meaningful and accurate information to be accumulated. He suggests, "new programs should be evaluated no less than one year and no more than five years after implementation." The programme in this study has been operational for a little over two years, which makes the timing of the evaluation ideal.

2.9 Previous Related Studies
Over the last two decades, various evaluative studies have been done, especially in the United States. Most were conducted in the mid eighties and a small amount done in

recent years. Only three studies, by Milne, Blum and Roman (1994: 123-143), Farkas (1990: 30-36) and Harris and Fennel (1988: 424-436), focused on the attitudes and perceptions of employees towards the EAP and its impact on utilsation. The following section provides an analysis of studies conducted previously which have a direct or indirect relationship with this research.

Butterworth (2001: 1-8) investigated the impact of stigma on the propensity to refer oneself to the EAP for counselling; within the context of two distinctly different organisations in Melbourne, Australia, by means of firstly conducting a focus group and then using the information obtained to construct a questionnaire. The results indicated that support for EAP counselling was high, provided the counselling was for someone other than oneself, for example a college. The study by Butterworth (2001), relates only broadly to the present research, in that it investigates the utilisation of the EAP. It is also similar in that he also made use of focus groups to collect his data, however, the data collection methods, in the research currently being described, is semi-structured interviews, with non-supervisory employees and focus groups for supervisors.

The study undertaken by Milne, Blum and Roman (1994: 123-143) relates directly to the research project, being described at present. They conducted a study into the factors that influence employee propensity to use an employee assistance programme, using data collected from 1 987 employees at a large firm in the United States. Milne et al. (1994) investigated the relationship between employees' cognitive and attitudinal perceptions of an EAP and their propensity to use. This is very similar to what is intended with the present empirical study.

Milne et.al. (1994) collected their data by means of survey questionnaires for non-supervisor employees and focus groups for supervisor employees. This is where the two studies differ. The researcher was unable to make use of questionnaires, because a large percentage of the population only have basic literacy and numeracy skills, as a result the study presently being described made use of semi-structured interviews. The results revealed by Milne et. al. (1994) included that expressed levels of confidence in the EAP is significantly influenced by one's familiarity with it and perceptions of its

accessibility, as well as by one's perceptions of top management and supervisory support for it.

OHer (1993: 41-75) conducted survey research to measure EAP customer satisfaction, within an American company. Evaluating EAPs through questionnaires and he identified specific problems and made recommendations to improve the service. Results indicated that EAP services may be perceived as worthwhile even though they are not be totally effective. Results further indicate that "customer" was most interest in EAP's understanding of company business priorities and issues surrounding confidentiality. This research, by OHer (1993) relates only broadly to the empirical study being presently described, in that it evaluates EAPs, however, its intention differs somewhat from the current research, since it measures customer satisfaction, rather that attitudes and perceptions of "customers" toward the EAP and its services.

Farkas (1990:30-36) conducted an evaluative study of an EAP, within a Fortune 500 company in the USA, by means of a survey questionnaire. The intention of the evaluation was to improve services, through determining client perception of the EAP and their satisfaction with services provide. The study by Farkas (1990) relates directly to the research in question but once again the data collection methods will differ, as literacy and numeracy rates need to be taken into account, in the South African context. As a result, semi-structured interviews and focus groups were used to obtain information; since non-supervisory employees and supervisors were approached differently. The results from Farkas's study (1990) indicated that the low rate of self-referrals was due to lack of knowledge on the part of employees that EAPs even existed. Subjects reported first hearing of EAP when supervisors suggested it. Subjects were also concerned regarding issues of confidentiality

Frost (1990: 45-54) discussed an evaluation method that was designed to assess employee awareness of the company EAP, by means of a questionnaire. He looked at employee familiarity with the EAP and how it relates to the appropriate use of the programme. Results from Frost's study (1990) indicated:

1. High visibility of the EAP could have a positive impact on utilisation.
2. Accessibility of the EAP had a direct impact on utilisation

3. Employee concerns about confidentiality with regard to co-workers finding out they used the EAP, and information being reported back to their supervisors, affecting employment status, also affected utilisation.

This study by Frost (1990), relates to only one aspect, of the investigation being presently described, as the present study looked more broadly at attitudes and perceptions of employees with regard to EAPs, in general, by using semi-structured interviews.

Harris and Fennel (1988: 424-436) pioneered an investigation into the perceptions of an employee assistance programme and employee willingness to participate. A sample of 150 white-collar employees was surveyed, in the United States. This study relates directly, to the current empirical study except that the data collection methods differ, and that non-supervisor employees and supervisors were approached differently. Harris and Fennel (1988) found that a willingness to obtain help from an EAP was greatly influenced by a respondent's familiarity with the programme, perceptions of its trustworthiness and opportunities for personal attention.

2.10 Conclusion

From the comprehensive literature study compiled, there can be little doubt that the EAP literature, show overwhelming support for the concept of programme evaluation. Some literature go as far as saying evaluation of EAPs cannot be over-stated; since it provides an opportunity to demonstrate effectiveness in achieving EAP goals and objectives, which can in turn be used to convince industry that EAPs do add value to their business.

Sadly, it appears as if only a limited number of evaluative studies, focusing on general effectiveness of EAPs, have been done, most of them in the mid eighties, in the United States. Only more recently has the focus changed to include the attitudes and perceptions of employees toward EAPs and the effect this has on their propensity to use the programme. Within a South African context, no similar study could be confirmed in the literature.

This study should help to develop insight into the expectations of employees, with regard to Employee Assistance Programmes, as well as give some understanding into the functioning and dynamics of South African EAPs. It can be confirmed through literature, or rather through a lack of documentation, that this study will benefit the field of EAPs, in that it will bring new knowledge to the field, especially within a South African context.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In an attempt to explore the experiences and perceptions of employees with regard to the Employee Assistance Programme, data was collated from a stratified random sample of the employees from Drakensberg Power Station, with the exclusion of management employees. The employees were divided into two groups, supervisors and non-supervisory employees, and consequently two different forms of data collection methods were used to collect data from each group. Focus groups were conducted with supervisors and semi-structured interviews were held with non-supervisory employees.

The data was analysed using Hubberman and Mile's Approach, as described by Poggenpoel (1998: 340). The analysis and the findings will be discussed in two parts; first the data collated from the semi-structured interviews will be described and analysed, followed by a description and analysis of the data obtained from the focus groups.

3.2 Data Collection

The data for this study was obtained form the employees of the station, excluding management, which were defined as employees with a salary grading of M-band and above, within an ESKOM context. For the purpose of data collection, the staff was divided into two groups, supervisory and non supervisory employees, and the data for this study was obtained using two different types of qualitative data collection methods, focus groups for supervisory employees and semi-structured interviews for non-supervisory employees. The non-supervisory employees were further divided into their work sections (strata), to ensure that employees from all the different sections were represented in the study. As a result, the sample, of non- supervisory employees, was selected using stratified random sampling method, as proposed by Strydom and de Vos (1998: 197) and Smith and Geis (1992: 156), and every third employee, on the employee list, (beginning with employee number 21) was interviewed, resulting in an

eventual sample of 32%, of the population. Two non-supervisory employees declined to participate and they were replaced using the same method, continuing where the original sample had ended. The eventual impact of this was that the section responsible for the catering services was under represented, in the sample, that is, two of these employees were interviewed, rather than the required three for representation, and the station employees were over represented, that is 18 employees were interviewed, one more than the required 17, needed for representation. There is only one female non-supervisory employee, at the station and she was interviewed, purposefully.

Prior to initiating data collection process, introductory meetings were held with the staff of each section, to discuss the purpose, scope and benefits of the research, as well as confidentiality aspects and the concept of volunteerism. Data was collected from all six supervisory employees, through conducting two focus groups, one of 75 minutes long and the other of 90 minutes long. During the course of the research it however, became evident that one of the M-band managers hand a significant amount of employees, reporting directly to him and that he might have been able to make a contribution, should he have been included in the study.

Twenty-three semi- structured interviews, ranging from between 20 and 30 minutes, were conducted, with the use of an interview schedule, using a stratified random sample of non-supervisory employees. The interview schedule contained both quantitative and qualitative type questions. This method of probability sampling was chosen to ensure that each non-supervisory employee had the same chance of being selected, and that each of the work sections were adequately represented in the study. Further more the station already had a list of employees, per section, which facilitated the sampling process. Of the 23 interviews conducted three were in Afrikaans, nineteen in English, and one in Zulu, DPS02 was the only respondent who required the use of an interpreter, during the interview. All the respondents were asked with regard to language preference.

3.3 Analysis of data, findings and verification: Semi – structured interviews

Twenty-three non-supervisory employees (n = 23) were interviewed, during the process of data collection. Below is a brief profile of all the employees interviewed as

part of the sample: Code, Race, Education Level, and Job Description. Gender is excluded to protect the anonymity of the one female employee.

DPS 01 – Black; English and Zulu; Basic Education and Training; Non core services

DPS 02 – Black; Zulu; Basic Education and Training; Non core services

DPS 03 – Black; Zulu and Afrikaans; Grade 3; Non core services

DPS 04 – White; Afrikaans and English; Matric; Core services

DPS 05 – Black; Zulu and English; Matric; Core services

DPS 06 – Black; Zulu and English; Grade 7; Non core services; Shift worker

DPS 07 – Black; Zulu and English; Grade10; Security; Shift Worker

DPS 08 – White; Afrikaans and English; Technical Matric; Technician

DPS 09 – Black; Zulu and English; Grade 10; Security; Shift Worker

DPS 10 – Black; Zulu and English; Matric; Security; Shift Worker

DPS 11 – White; English; Post Matric; Operator; Shift Worker

DPS 12 – White; Afrikaans; Post Matric; Operator; Shift Worker

DPS 13 – Black; Zulu and English; Post Matric; Technician

DPS 14 – Black; Zulu and English; Grade 10; Artisan

DPS 15 – Black; Zulu and English; Matric; Security; Shift Worker

DPS 16 – Black; English; Post Matric; Technician

DPS 17 – Black; Zulu and English; Matric; Clerk

DPS 18 – Black; Zulu and English; Grade 8; Utility Man

DPS 19 – Black; Zulu and English; Post Matric; Artisan

DPS 20 – White; Afrikaans; NTC 1; Artisan

DPS 21 – White; Afrikaans and English; Post Matric; Technician

DPS 22 – White; English; Post Matric; Artisan

DPS 23 – White; English; Post Matric; Artisan

Fifteen (74%) of the non-supervisory employees interviewed were racially classed as black and this includes one employee, racially classified as Indian. Eight employees (26%) are racially classed as white. Fourteen of the sample interviewed (60%) spoke Zulu as their home language and nine (40%) of the employees interviewed spoke either English or Afrikaans as a first language. Fifteen of the employees interviewed (74%) were in possession of matric or higher qualification, while eight of the sample (26%) had a lesser qualification. Eighteen of the employees interviewed (78%) had

job functions directly related to the production of electricity and maintenance of the station, while the other five of the sample (22%) worked in the services sections. This is relatively reflective on the demographics of the population of the non-supervisory employee population, except as earlier identified in the chapter.

The information obtained from the sample of employees, during the semi-structured interviews, was transcribed and analysed using Huberman and Miles Approach, as described by Poggenpoel (1998: 340). Interviews were transcribed and encoded – Drakensberg Power Station (DPS) 01 to DPS 23. The table below displays an overview of the themes and categories identified, through the use of this model. There after the report offers a description of the analysis and results, within these themes and categories.

Table 3-1 An overview of themes and categories of experiences and perceptions of employees with regard to the Employee Assistance programme

Themes	Categories
1. Awareness and visibility of EAP	1.1 Employee awareness of the EAP. 1.2 Marketing strategies. 1.3 EAP Policy Statement 1.4 EAP awareness amongst family members.
2. Experiences and Perceptions with regard to the utilisation of the EAP	2.1 Employee perceptions of using the EAP. 2.2 Employee description of EAP. 2.3 Concerns out confidentiality.

3.3.1   Awareness and visibility of the EAP

> *"We are aware of the importance of marketing the EAP…that we*
> *maintain high visibility…we understand that when an employee is*
> *having a personal crisis they will respond to the resources that are*
> *known and readily available."*
> *External Service Providers: Stanley, Murphy and Peters (1988: 233)*

- **Employee awareness of the EAP:** Sixteen research respondents (70%) indicated that that they knew of the existence of the company's EAP (Question One), two of these respondents initially indicated that they were not aware of the existence of the EAP, but later confirmed their presence at a presentation regarding the EAP, as a result there responses were classified as being aware of the EAP. Seven respondents (30%) indicated that they had no knowledge of the existence of the programme. In terms of the demographics, it is important to note that 60% of the service staff interviewed was unaware of the service, while only 16% of employees at the station were not aware of the service. As illustrated by the excerpts below, those respondents indicating a lack of awareness were quite adamant in their response.

  Researcher: "Did you know Peaking had an EAP?"

  DPS 03: "Niks gehoor van EAP nie."
  R: "Was dit die eerste keer dat jy daarvan hoor toe ek met julle praat"
  DPS 03: "Ja, dit was die eerste keer."
  R: " So jy het nie enige promosie goed gesien nie?"
  DPS 03: "Nee, ook niks gesien nie."
  R: "Jou toesighouer het nie vir jou 'n telefoon kaart gegee nie?"
  DPS 03: "Nee, niks nie."

  DPS 06: "No, I did not know about that. But I saw those cards, but nobody explained what it was for."
  R: "Do you have a wallet card?"

43

DPS 06: "I haven't got a card but I saw somebody else had a card. I think I was not here that day. We work shifts and can't always make meetings…I don't know what EAP stands for."

DPS 14: "No, I just seen it this week."

R: "So you were not aware that there was a counselling service available to the staff?"

DPS 14: "I did not know there were people who could help…EAP? What does that mean?"

R: "Have you seen any promotional material about the EAP?"

DPS 14: "Yes. This week there's a poster in the office. I never seen anything until this week."

Respondents were also asked, specifically, how they obtained their first information regarding the EAP. Four respondents (DPS 01; DPS 02; DPS 06 and DPS 10) indicated that they obtained the telephone phone cards, without any further information. The quotes below offer a possible explanation as to why the release of wallet cards to the staff has not been effective - because it was not re-enforced by supporting information.

DPS 06: "I saw those cards, but nobody explain to us what it's about."

DPS 10: "[Manager] came with the cards and telephone numbers to phone. Unfortunately as a shift worker, I was not here when the presentation was done."

Nine respondents (DPS 04; DPS 05; DPS 08; DPS 09; DPS14; DPS17; DPS 18; DPS 22 and DPS 23) received their information via various staff presentations, however, respondents were all very unsure about when, how and by whom the presentations were done. The researcher was unable to determine exactly how many of these presentations were done, however, it was clear that there had been a minimum of two presentations, one by an ESKOM: Peaking employee, and another by the Centre for Human

Development. There also seem to be indications of a second presentation by CHD, but this remains uncertain.

> DPS 05: "I remember a lady or gentleman came to the Visitors' Centre to inform us about the EAP, how it works."
> R: "Do you recall who did the presentation?"
> DPS 05: "Somebody from Durbanville office [ESKOM: Peaking Generation Head Office]."
> R: "Can you recall when this was?"
> DPS 05: "Early this year or maybe last year [2001]."

> DSP 22: "They came about a year and a half ago [2001] and gave a talk."
> R: "Do you recall who did the presentation?"
> DPS 22: "I think it was somebody from Megawatt Park, I never saw the people before and I haven't seen them again."

> DPS 23: "…a couple of years back, there was a chap here. Gave out cards, with contact numbers, also brochures…four or five years ago [1997/1998] somebody was at Drakensberg."

The quantitative responses seem to indicate a significantly high and satisfactory level of awareness, however, the qualitative information obtained later indicated that although employees are aware of the EAP, they would seem to know very little with regard to its purpose and functions. Farkus and Hirsberg (1990: 33) found that the low rate of self-referrals was due a lack of knowledge on the part of employees. According to Myers (1984: 200) "education [of employees] are designed to encourage self-help and self-referral," which implies that a lack of understanding of the EAP would negatively affect utilisation. This lack of education is reflected in the quotations cited below:

> DPS 20: "Ja, ek weet dit bestaan, maar ek weet nie presies wat dit behels nie."

DPS 11: "I haven't heard too much actually, of the whole programme. I think it makes it awkward, especially with shift work, often information doesn't come through."

DPS 20: "Ek het dit al op 'n vorige stasie gehoor, ek weet nie of dit die selfde is nie, maar terloops, ek het al gehoor, maar nie op 'n Peaking stasie nie."

This is further made evident by the fact that not one of the respondents was aware of which company was responsible for providing the service. Two (DPS 05 and DPS 23) of the respondents indicated that they were aware that the service was provided by an outside company, one (DPS 10) indicated that he would be able to obtain it from his promotional wallet card, two (DPS11 and DPS 16) indicated that the service was a human resources function and one respondent (DPS 22) indicated that the presentation was so long ago, that he could not remember.

Question three "What is the EAP Company called?" did not add much value to the research, except to re-enforce the lack of awareness of employees. Instead the researcher should have been explored the respondents' awareness regarding Peaking's use of an external service provider, in more detail. This could possibly have linked up and added depth to the findings with regard to employees concerns about confidentiality.

- **Marketing Strategies:** The marketing of an EAP is vital to its success, and is recognised as one of the essential functions when implementing and sustaining any EAP. Compare Beidel (1999: 92), Harper (1999: 10), Googins and Godfrey (1989: 126), and Francek (1985: 24-29). Francek (1985: 28) goes so far as to state, "the marketing plan is the single most important criterion in marketing an effective EAP." At the Drakensberg Power Station the marketing plan employed by CHD, included the use of strategies such as employee presentations and written material, while ESKOM: Peaking Generation promoted the services via employee presentations, and printed and electronic media.

As a result employees were exposed to a very diverse marketing plan. Of the sample interviewed, 18 of the employees (78%) indicated that they had seen various types of promotional material, related to the EAP, and five employees (22%) indicated that they had not. These included wallet cards, with the toll-free telephone number (61%), pamphlets and brochures (16%), posters (39%), staff presentations (50%), e-mail (11%) and articles in the ESKOM News (17%).

Graph 3-1 An illustration of the employee exposure to various marketing strategies

Percentage

Wallet Card 61%

Posters 39%

Employee Presenations 50%

E-Mail 17%

Newsletter 11%

Strategy
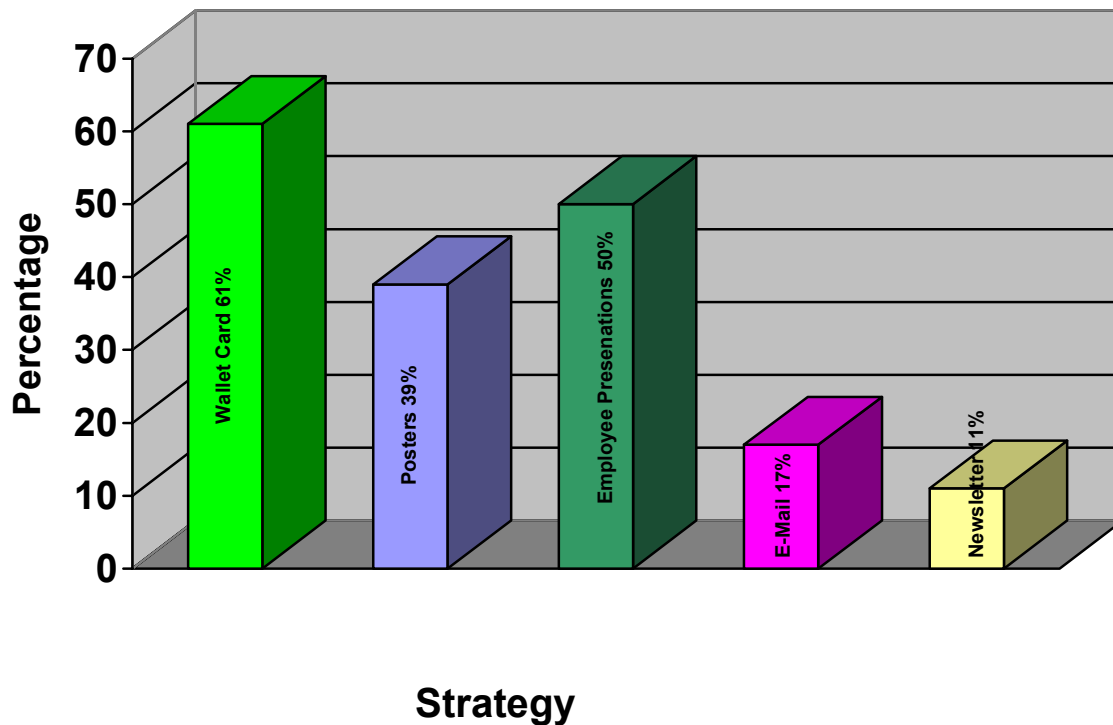
Googins and Godfrey (1989: 126), and Francek (1985: 24) agree that when selecting an appropriate marketing plan, it is essential that recognition be given to the uniqueness of organisations and companies, which are diverse in the products they produce, the people they employ and the environment in which they operate. What came across very strongly, in this section, was that shift workers and others who tended to spend time away from the station, be it in the course of their daily duties or *ac hoc* work away from the station, felt

47

that information did reach them, if they were away and they seem to be resigned to the fact that this was so. The following quotes display their sentiment:

> DSP 01: (A services employee, on promotional material.) "…only telephone cards, maybe they come when I was not here, 'cause we going out sometimes, so when people is coming and they don't come back again…[Supervisor] give me the card."

> DPS 11: (A shift worker on promotional material.) "Often information does not come through often to everyone…the people, who are on shift today, may hear it, but it doesn't get passed on to the people who aren't here."

Employees were also concerned about the fact that the promotional material seemed to be presented in English, when a significant number of employees were in fact Zulu speaking. Beidel (1999: 114) emphasised that a company, which is affected by cultural differences, require a diverse array of marketing strategies.

> DPS 09: (A Zulu speaking respondent, on promotional material.) "They give a toll-free number, pamphlets on the notice board written in English…they need to translate it into Zulu, most blacks here they're speaking Zulu, few people here communicate well in English or Afrikaans."

Beidel (1999: 113) also emphasises "the timing of a promotional effort can be as critical as its content…the EAP should be aware at all times of the organization's other promotional campaigns and informational efforts and schedule its promotional activities in relation to those activities – recognizing that at times some EAP efforts go hand-in-hand with other organizational activities, while at other times they need to stand alone." One of the employees also provided valuable information with regard to the

48

presentations; in that he shared that the EAP presentation had been combined with various other promotional activities.

> DPS 17: "…there was a presentation at the Visitors' Centre...It was in English, I don't remember if there was translation, but there was a lot of things happening on that day, AIDS Awareness and the launch of the new ESKOM logo."

The flaw with using this promotional activity seems to lie in the preparation and planning of the event, this statement is based on three factors: 1) Many employees felt that a general mass meeting style meeting was not effective, in dispersing information, so as to allow individuals the freedom to ask questions; 2) Employees felt the presentations should be in their mother tongue, so as to facilitate comprehension of the material; and 3) Employees felt various promotional activities tended to be lumped together, causing topics to become blurred.

> DPS 03: "Ja, dis 'n goeie ding, as hulle mense leer hoe dit werk."
> R: "So daar is nog nie genoeg inligting nie?"
> DPS 03: "Yebo, Die mense moet kom beduie."
> R: "Hulle moet weer 'n groot vergadering hou?"
> DPS 03: "Seksies is beter."
> R: "Hoe so?"
> DPS 03: "Om beter te luister.

The following quotes also indicate that many of the staff that was aware of the wallet cards, which seem to be a major part of the EAP marketing strategy, did not know what they were for, or how this card could be used to access the EAP. The language issue is reflective of a problem, in terms of the printed promotional material.

> DSP 02: (A Zulu speaking respondent, on promotional material.) "The telephone card, but I did not know what it was for, until you came last

49

week…there is information on the notice board but he does not understand what it is…cannot understand from reading it."

Respondent DPS 01, a Zulu speaking employee, answered that he was unaware of the existence of EAP, but admitted to seeing promotional material. Both his answers were accepted as is; hence the discrepancy with the figures obtained in Question One.

> DPS 01: "No, I don't know about that [EAP], I got the card, nobody told me about the card, they [supervisor] just give me the card…one day I get the card on the table, but did not tell me what card was for."

This serves to indicate that there exist major flaws within the marketing mix of strategies being implemented at the station and as Peters (1999: 101) describes internal marketing as "having a direct impact on the utilisation of services", the implication is that the inappropriate selection of marketing strategies, will have a negative impact on the utilisation of the programme. A case-in-point would be DPS 08:

> DPS 08: "I understand it's for people with problems, but we talk, other people don't know about this thing."

- **The EAP Policy Statement:** The policy is deemed important because it denotes the entire scope and function of the EAP, including its limitations. According to the Standards Document of the United Kingdom (1998: 26) "It is important that everyone knows the reason for the EAP, its goals, the philosophy governing its operation, its relationship with other functions and limitations." Many authors hold the position that the visibility of the EAP Policy Statement is key to the success of the programme. Compare Harper (1999: 5), Peters (1999:91), Dickman (1988: 110-112), Googins and Godfrey (1987:125), Almacan (1981), in Durkin (1985: 243) and Myers 1984:123). The EAP Standards Documents as compiled, by various EAPA Chapters around the world, South Africa (1999: 11), the United Kingdom (1998: 26 & 27) and the United States (1992: 11), affirm their position. According to

Harper (1999: 5) "Ideally the policy should not only come from top management but should also be approved and supported by the employees."

While the researcher confirmed that ESKOM: Peaking Generation did have a comprehensive, written EAP Policy, of all the research respondents interviewed, only three (13%) indicated that they seen an ESKOM: Peaking Generation EAP Policy Statement. Respondent DPS 18 and respondent DPS 14 were, however, quite sure that one did exist, while respondent DPS 22 and respondent DPS 16 were rather dismissive of the idea of a policy statement.

> DPS 18: "No, I know there is something, because ESKOM would never do something without it, they won't make a mistake on their part."

> DPS 14: "No, I haven't seen it but when they did the presentation they gave a brief outline."

> DPS 16: "Yes, I think…sent us an e-mail, but I just deleted it. I don't think I read it. It probably said EAP, so I just deleted it."

> DPS 22: "Yes, but as I said, it was one of those things that wasn't relevant to me, so I did not really worry about it."

One respondent was under the impression that the EAP, actually referred to the medical rescue service, and responded to the question regarding the EAP policy statement as follow:

> DPS 07: "Yes, we have seen it…especially if we need a helicopter, we can call them. We are covered."

Another employee was in a similar state of confusion; when asked if he was likely to make use of the service this was a part of his response:

51

DPS 10: "I had a problem the beginning of the year, I don't know if I was supposed to phone that number. My wife was sick and the ambulance took long to come, was I supposed to phone?"

Yet another employee, who stated he had no information regarding EAP services, described the purpose of the wallet card, with the toll-free number, as follows:

DPS 01: "Before when I get that card, I think maybe that card is for if I got an accident, in the road."

- **EAP awareness amongst family members:** The families of the employees are also entitled to make use of the EAP. This section is intended to ascertain whether or not employees were aware of this and if they in fact relayed the information to their families. There was no direct contact with family members of employees. As a result, quantitative data was obtained via three questions, to discover how many employees knew their families were entitled to use the service and how many actually informed their family of the availability of the service.

The sample of employees were also questioned with regard to their families awareness of the existence of the EAP, since their families were also able to access the EAP, and since it was up to them to inform the families of the availability of services. Fourteen of the respondent interviewed (61%) responded affirmatively to Question One: "Did you know that your immediate family could also use the EAP?" Of the nine respondents (39%) who had responded negatively to the question, six (66%) had previously indicated that the had no prior knowledge of the EAP, which means three respondents (13%) of the entire sample were aware of the EAP but did not know that their families, too could access the service.

DPS 02: "Yes, those guys they explain that his wife can have access to come and help to get good information, if they got a problem."

> DPS 11: "Yes, I heard that my wife was included but I did not know it extended to the children as well."

On the other hand, seventeen (74%) of the respondents indicated that they had not informed their families about the availability of services. Once again, if the six respondents are excluded, who had no information about the EAP, it means ten of the eleven employees who were aware of the fact that their families could access the EAP, did not inform their families about the availability of the EAP. This is quite a significant amount.

Researcher: "Have you told your family about the EAP?"

> DPS 09: "I never did. Keep [it] for self."
> R: "How come?"
> DPS 09: "I thought, if they got a problem they need to speak to me, 'cause I'm the boss, I'm the father, I'm the head of the family."

> DPS 16: "No. S**t, I won't tell her."
> R: "What's that about?"
> DPS 16: "She'll abuse it, no I'm kidding…if I thought see needed some kind of counselling I'd tell her, here's this thing, go…in my mind put the EAP away, for when I need it, I haven't mentioned it to her, it's shelved."

Sixty-one percent of staff interviewed, confirmed being in possession of wallet cards, on which the EAP toll-free number was printed. Employees were also then asked if they had given their families. Five respondents indicated that they had, in fact given the toll-free number to their wives or other family members. DPS01 gave the number to his family, even though he had previously indicated that he did not know what the number was for.

> DPS 01: "Yes, I show it. I say my supervisor come with the card and tell me to take it home…nobody tell me about that card."

This means that of the 14 respondents answering Yes to Question One, of the interview schedule, ten respondents (71%) did not related the toll-free number to their families.

> DPS 17: "No…I didn't give her the number, I kept that with me."
>
> R: "Why is that?"
>
> DPS 17: "If she wanted the number, she'll inform me."
>
> R: "So she needs to get it from you?"
>
> DSP 17: "Yes. Maybe I should put it at that place where we keep all the numbers…since I don't live with them, [I'm] only there on weekends and I got a lot to tell."

The themes that are identified here are that employees are not aware of the availability of services and that the families of employees do not know how to access the service. Should the six employees who had no information of the EAP were included in these figures; it would mean that 19 families of the sample of 23 employees (83%) did not know about the existence of the Employee Assistance Programme.

These numbers is significantly high to warrant concern, as it indicates a trend that employees do not relate information to the families. Francek (1985: 28) explains "the primary goal of an ongoing marketing approach…is to make sure that employees and their dependents know when and how to use the program" or put otherwise that employees and their families are made aware of the programme and know how to use it. The researcher found no evidence to indicate that any promotional activities were targeted at the family of the employees, despite the fact that they too were able to make use of the service. Reflected, as themes here, was 1) that it was left up to the employees to forward the information to their family members and 2) Employees did not reliably fulfill this task.

Table 3-2 on page 55, provides a comparative analysis of respondents' answers regarding employee preparedness to relate information regarding the EAP to their family member. To facilitate comprehensive of the table, a description is provided of the questions, under analysis.

Question One: Did you know your immediate family could also make
use of the EAP?
Question Two: Have you told your family about the EAP?
Question Four: Have you given them the toll-free number?

Table 3-2 Comparative Analysis of Respondents' Answers regarding Employee
Preparedness to Relate Information regarding the EAP to their Family Members

Respondent DPS Code	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3
05; 10; 14 and 18	Yes	Yes	Yes
04; 09; 11; 13; 15; 16 and 23	Yes	No	No
02	Yes	No	Yes
07 and 17	Yes	Yes	No

3.3.2 Experiences and Perceptions with regard to the Utilisation of the EAP

- **Employee perceptions of using the EAP:** The intention here was to obtain insight with regard to employees' views of the EAP and how they felt about making use of the service. The noticeable trend identified here was that the respondents unanimously believed that the programme should be continued as a benefit to the staff, despite none of them having made use of the service in the past. The general view was that there was a need for the programme, even though only two (DPS 04 and DPS 11) of the respondents were aware of anyone who had actually made use of the service.

    Researcher: "Should Peaking continue with the EAP?"

    DPS 08: "People don't know about the EAP, people must be informed about how it works. People are having problems but don't know about the EAP."

DPS 15: "Yes, I think they must do it. 'Cause if you have problems, what you usually do is go outside. If they [Peaking] can help then…people have lost hope…such a thing will help them."

DPS 17: "Yes, I think ESKOM should keep it for the people. In my opinion, even though the person does not have a big problem…I can have something that keeps me from my work…then that sort of help is needed."

Another trend identified was that twenty-two of the respondents also indicated that they would be prepared to use the service, if they needed it, however, some respondents did indicate that they had reservations in using the service. The researcher neglected to enquire into this aspect, with DPS 20.

Researcher: "Would you use the EAP, if you had a problem?"

DPS 08: "Like I said this is new to me, I don't know how it works."

DPS 11: "Yes. I think it would be the last resort. I think its human nature, you end up trying to sort things out with your own life first."

DPS 22: "Yes, I think the more a person becomes involved with this type of thing and become more familiar with it, obviously you suggest to a person to go and use it, but if you don't know much about it then you send them to see psychiatrist or something."

Harris and Fennel (1988: 434) found that significant predictors to employee willingness to participate in an EAP were trust, perceptions of personal attention and familiarity with the EAP. The implication being that only once these and other concerns, discussed later in the chapter, are addressed will employee utilisation increase.

Twenty-one respondents also indicated their willingness to refer a friend/colleague/family member to the programme, however, a large portion (48%) of these responses were single yes responses, with no justification and very little conviction. Two respondents (DPS 09 and DPS 21) indicated they were reluctant to refer and one indicated that he would not refer someone.

> DPS 09: "I never seen this thing, helping others. I never had in my life; they did help the people from my company. I never heard what they have done with it. Later on we must use them, there are more people with confidential problems."

> DPS 21: "Yes, of course I will, if I can't help them, I must…but it depends on if they want help or not."

As illustrate by the next quote, another theme that the researcher identified was that many respondents (DPS 05; DPS 09; DPS 10; DPS 11; DPS 13; DPS 14; DPS 18 and DPS 19) were under the impression that the EAP is to be used, only as a last resort in problem resolution.

> DPS 11: "Yes. I think it would be as a last resort. I think its human nature; you end up trying to sort things out with your own life first…you don't want to bring your problems to work and have them known to your employer."

> DPS 13: "It would be the last thing I do."

> DPS 18: "Yes, but first I must find somebody to help me. See my family and my friends…to sort it out, then EAP."

Employees were also asked to describe the potential users of the EAP. This question should have been more clearly formulated, but this unfortunately was not picked up in the pilot study, and appeared to be clear enough. The researcher also omitted to explore this aspect with DPS 01 and DPS 09. Despite of this, though, most employees interviewed (DPS 02; DPS 10; DPS

13; DPS 15; DPS 17; DPS 22 and DPS 23) were able to recognise that the services were for employees and their family members, who were experiencing personal problems.

> DPS 17: "In my understanding it's for all the workers and their families.

> DPS 19: "…I would say everyone can use it, even the manager, as long as his got he need, he can use it."

> DPS 23 "…it seems like anyone can use it, as long as they work for ESKOM, and their direct families, if they have problems."

The one evident theme that can be highlighted again here (when read in conjunction with what was found in the previous theme with regard to family awareness) is that employees' are very much aware that their families can also make use of the service, but tended not to inform family members of the availability of the service. This means that a large part of the EAP's target group, that is the families of the employees, did not access the service, purely because they are not aware of its existence.

Their knowledge as to how to access the EAP was also explored with the employees. Cited below are four different themes, which were identified in this section.

Typical themes resulting from this question:
- "I've had no idea" – Respondents   DPS 01, DPS 02, DPS 03, DPS 06, DPS 08, DPS 09, DPS 12, DPS 19 (Eight in total)
    > DPS 01: "No, don't know about that thing, don't know anything about it."
- "I'd phone the toll-free number" – Respondents DPS 04, DPS 05, DPS 07, DPS 10, DPS 14, DPS 15, DPS 17, DPS 18 (Eight in total)
    > DPS 10: "Yes, I think you just phone that number on the card, if you got a problem."

- "I would phone…although not having the number" – Respondents DPS 22 and DPS 23 (Two in total)

  > DPS 22: "I suppose you pick up the phone, but what number do I use?"

- "Access through/via manager or HR department" – respondents DPS 11, DPS 13, DPS 16, DPS 20, DPS 21 (Five in total)

  > DSP 21: "…I would imagine, if you had a problem you go to [manager] or to [Human Resources] and they will point you in the right direction."

The theme of concern here is employees belief that they need to access the EAP via the Human Resources department or their manager, since this has much broader implications apart from just restricting utilisation, in that it affects employees' perceptions with regard to the confidentiality of the services, which, is as described in the next section, a cornerstone of any successful EAP.

Later in his interview DPS 20, sums up the problem of having to access the EAP through management or Human Resources, nicely:

> DPS 20: "Ek was altyd onder die indruk dat jy gaan na HR toe. Ek was nie eens bewus dat jy self na hulle toe kan gaan nie. Dieplakkate moet uit-een sit jy hoef nie na HR toe te gaan nie. As jy bewus is daarvan gaan jy makliker die probleem oplos, party mense is trots, party mense is skaam."

As a result of only 44% of the sample recognising that they needed to call the toll-free number on the wallet card, despite this being a well-deployed marketing tool, the researcher identified a further theme that employees were unclear about the purpose and function of the wallet card.

DPS 06: "The people here they don't speak about the EAP. Even the people who have the cards, they don't know what is the meaning of those cards."

The lack of clarity might be due to the two previously mentioned factors, that 1) These cards were often not accompanied by the supplementary information required to understand the purpose of the card – DPS 01: "I got card, nobody told me about the card. They just give me the card." 2) These cards were not accessible in Zulu – DPS: "…they need to translate into Zulu most blacks here are they speaking Zulu, few people here communicate well in English or in Afrikaans."

Lastly, the researcher explored with the employees what changes they felt should be made to the programme. This was the one area where most of the sample was quite animated in their responses, and many useful suggestions came out of the discussions, including more frequent presentations about the EAP, and its related services, preferably in various work sections and in the mother tongue of employees, and more visible posters, brochures and pamphlets and EAP practitioners. The employees' requests are substantiated by the view held by Stanley, Murphy and Peters (1988: 234) "It is important that the EAP maintain a high level of visibility within the organizational structure. This is achieved by offering a series of ongoing seminar to the employee population, so that the EAP representative is recognizable both by voice and face. Additionally, the rotation of…posters, newsletters and employee brochures maintain a high level of visibility." Below are extracts from employee interviews, highlighting their requirements:

DPS 04: "It should just be known better, they should come down and do a presentation to all staff, and tell them what its all about. I don't think most people know what it is all about. Maybe it should be sign posted, or put somewhere they can see it. They don't exactly know what it can do for them. Was it explained to them, in Zulu? Maybe they did not understand properly. Maybe do two presentations one in

English and one in Zulu. Tell them what he service is and what it can do for them."

DPS 05: "Maybe the guy can come again, it takes time to understand things, but at the end of the day it helps. A lot of people are afraid to come out with something, I think it good to come section-by-section, easy to talk and get information. If it's thirty/forty, people over there may be afraid to raise their hands, can I ask that question? People can sometimes be shy…when you see things on the notice board, its not always clear."

DPS 06: "…I feel it's right to call the meeting but in the departments, small meeting. Some of us do not understand the language. May be some one to interpret."

DPS 11: "The hotline number should be on the notice board, I may not have a problem now, and I might forget about it, but I should be able to go to the notice board to find it, that my way say of advertising it, and making it available, whereas, I can't recall that I've seen it...There should be more people from HR on it, doing a road show, maybe even once a year. I would like to see something on a piece of paper to see how it works."

DPS 13: "I think we need to know more of EAP, I can be in a situation where I can use EAP; at that time I don't think of using the EAP, more advertising, encouraging people to use the EAP. More of service stuff, more documentation, information on the internet of what services are available and maybe if it is necessary, to set up meeting, take things to office that make people aware, it is there."

DPS 16: "Firstly, that it's free; maybe they should tell us how much it costs ESKOM, so we can use it. I don't know how much they've emphasised confidentiality. Maybe they need to speak more about that, I don't know."

DPS 17: "It must be visible. Only one presentation is not enough, this is what we do with the medical aid…if we can get someone maybe once a month, just to come up and see the people and talk to them, hear what they are saying, we heard about it but what's going on with it, we don't know…Give something like pamphlets, whatever, that can encourage people. A once off presentation is not enough. You can ask people who were at that presentation, I don't think they can remember what was said; it's been a while."

DPS 18: "If you can just do the meeting, maybe once a month, in six months time it can come back to us. Like Bonitas [the company medical aid], we did not know anything about Bonitas but now because they come, we know they working hard and if things are change we know…EAP this year can be short term, maybe after February its finish, we don't know."

DPS 19: "Just to make people aware of the EAP. Give more information to the people, by placing those things on the notice board, not just ESKOM news, not all the people they read it."

DPS 21: "Who are these people, we don't know. People must be made aware, like you're doing. [How?] I honestly can't say. We know about things for a while, and then we forget about it. Nice to have something to remind you."

DPS 22: "Each family should receive something in the post…I think if there were things like that and maybe regular meetings, it would be far better...The family must also receive the information. The women are the ones who have the problems…"

According to Googins and Godfrey (1987: 126), "through brochures, presentations and articles in company newsletter, the EAP informs the employees of what EAP is and how to use it." It was evident that effort had been made to

ensure the programme was visible, both on the part of CHD and ESKOM: Peaking Generation, however, these have not been completely successful, some of the possible reasons were outlined in the previous section. In addition the use of electronic and printed media, targets only a small percentage of the staff at this station.

Since none of the selected sample had made use of the service, in the past, the issue of customer satisfaction could, unfortunately, not be explored, at all. The researcher could possibly have asked the respondents what they perceived other people's impression to be of the service, those who knew people who used the EAP, and this might have given some insight into people's experience of service provision, which would have been more significant. However, only two respondents' indicated that they were aware of someone who had made of the service, so it would not have made a major impact.

- **Employee description of the EAP:** This theme provided insight into how the sample described the EAP services. Most employees, who had some information about the EAP, were also aware of the broad range of services that were offered by the EAP (DPS 04, DPS 08, DPS 10, DPS 13, DPS 14, DPS 16, DPS 18, DPS 19, DPS 20 and DPS 23). Dickman and Emerson (1988: 280), Riediger (1985: 404) and Dickman (1988:119) all maintain that EAPs must be designed to deal with a comprehensive range of personal problems.

  > DPS 13: "Maybe alcoholic problems, maybe family problems, problems at work, drugs. Most types of problems."

  > DPS 16: "Anything, mental problems, schizio, nutcase, emotional break down, stress, death in the family, work gets to much, don't get paid enough, pretty much to do with emotional problems, to put it under that category."

  > DPS 20: "As die werknemer miskien buite-kant enige persoonlike probleme optel, stress, wat sy werk of ander kollegas affekteer. Persoonlike probleem, huislike probleem, geldlike probleem, daai tipe

probleem miskien en ook werk probleem as die ou nêrens het om te gaan nie."

Another theme highlighted here, was that most of the respondents understood that the EAP was a counselling service, if work and personal problems arise (DPS 04, DPS 05, DPS 13, DPS 14, DPS 15, DPS 16, DPS 17, DPS 18, DPS 19, DPS 20, DPS 21 and DPS 23).

> DPS 14: "They can counsel the guy, give him the idea of some ways of controlling that problem, or to assist him with that problem. If he is not satisfied, or the problem is not resolved, then maybe he can phone them again. They said they normally do it on the telephone and then maybe face to face."

> DPS 17: "They just go through that person's problem and try to help as much as possible. They say they have people like social workers, those are the people that can are qualified in helping people, whatever their problem are and try to make the person see what is in front of them, how came the help to overcome problems and give guidelines how to over come whatever situation is in front of that person."

> DPS 20: "Ek weet nie, maar as ek moet sê dan seker maar inligting of sekere maniere om te help om die probleem te bowe te kom, om dit maklik te maak."

An opposing theme identified, however, was not so sure about the scope of services, expecting it to include home visits, legal services and money lending.

> DPS 02: "This EAP the way he understands it this company is there as a lawyer, that will always help us."

> DPS 10: "…Do they just help you with the knowledge or do they lend you money?"

DPS 18: "To help them, if they have a problem. Me, on my own to help solve problem, I can phone them … I can ask them advice, can they come to my house? Where can I go?"

As a trend, many employees were aware that they could themselves access the EAP or that they could refer a family member, friend or colleagues. Their responses may, however, have been influenced by the questions previously asked in the session, which could have acted as prompts. For example, previous questions around family awareness and whether or not they would be prepared to refer a colleague or a family member.

Only the odd respondent was aware that their supervisor or manager could suggest they go or that their supervisor could refer them, directly to the EAP, if they were not reaching job performance standards. This, however, does not have a direct impact on the utilisation of employees, and as a result, their lack of awareness is not deemed significant. What is deemed as significant was that six employees (DPS 10, DPS 11, DPS 13, DPS 16, DPS 19 and DPS 22), who had previously indicated that they had been aware of the EAP, did not know, how to access the service.

- **Employee concerns about confidentiality:** An exploration of whether or not the employees' perceived the service was confidential or not, was conducted because confidentiality is widely considered to be a vital component of EAP success. Compare Smith (1993: 34), Dickman (1988: 110-122), Dickman and Challenger (1988: 279-280, Googins and Godfrey (1987: 162), Chiabotta (1987: 20-21) and Myers (1984: 75). Of the 17 employees who previously indicated that they knew of the EAP's existence, seven (41% DPS 04, DPS 05, DPS 14, DPS 16, DPS 17, DPS 18 and DPS 20) felt that the service was indeed confidential, four (24% DPS 02, DPS 09, DPS 11, and DPS 15) felt it was possibly not confidential, another four (24% DPS 10, DPS 13, DPS 19 and DPS 23) employees were unsure, in this regard and two respondents (12% DPS 07 and DPS 22) felt they did not know enough about the programme to answer the question. The six respondents, who previously indicated that they were not aware of the service, its purposes and functions, were not questioned

with regard to this aspect. This means that 70% of the total sample remained unconvinced about the programme's ability to maintain its commitment to confidentiality.

Graph 3-2 An illustration of the employees perceptions with regards to confidentiality
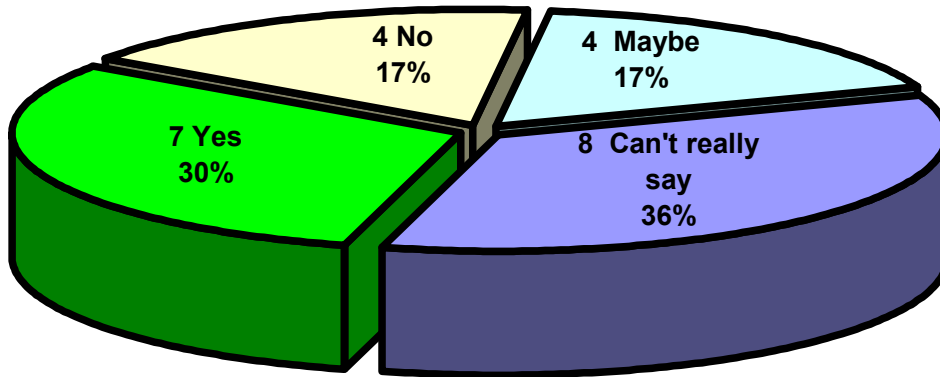
Of the ten respondents who indicated they had concerns about confidentiality, seven were Zulu speaking employees (DPS 02, DPS 09, DPS 10, DPS 13, DPS 15 and DPS 19). This would seem to suggest that concerns with regard to confidentiality might be greatly reduced if the information regarding the EAP were communicated in the employees' mother tongue.

> *"Programme success and credibility hinge, to a large extent on employee confidence that that the EAP respects individual privacy and adheres to confidential requirements and procedure"*
>
> *EAPA – USA Standards Document (1992: 26)*

Eight respondents (DPS 02, DPS 09, DPS 11, DPS 13, DPS 15, DPS 21 and DPS 23) indicated that they feared information being leaked to other parties, including supervisors, managers and colleagues. In a study conducted by Frost (1990: 53) he too found that a third to one-half of employees expressed concern about confidentiality. The next set quotes highlight some of their concerns.

DPS 23: "Yeah hey, but I don't think all people believe it, hey, because all might get back to ESKOM with a work problem."

R: "So people think ESKOM might have access to the information?"

DPS 23: "People fear information might reach management that is why many people rather go for their own money, for a cost, private."

R: "How do we make people understand the service is confidential?"

DPS 23: "I think, maybe because it's ESKOM, people feel confidentiality might be breached; to get that across is I don't know, basically the consequences of a breach in confidentiality. They should be able to see in…it's a matter of trust."

Throughout this section as well as in other sections respondents (DPS 04, DPS 11, DPS 16 and DPS 20) kept raising the theme of anonymity with regard to making use of EAP services. Anonymity to "providing protection so that the client's name will not be revealed without the client's permission"- Myers (1984: 75). The issue of asking for time-off, as well as having to access the contact number from a third party, meant that anonymity was threatened. The following excerpt serves to illustrate:

R: "How do we make people understand that the service is confidential?"

DPS 16: "Yes."

R: "Do you think people actually understand that?"

DPS 16: "I don't think everybody does understand that. Obviously there's a negative connotation, if you go to X and say listen I need the number of the EAP, or the guys don't have easy access, get the feeling if I go to whoever, how do I contact the EAP, they might think I'm a nut case, people think like that. Not me I got no problem going for therapy. Maybe we must have one phone, or one area dedicated, but then everybody will know you speaking to EAP."

R: "Who do you think knows what you tell the EAP?"

DPS 16: "No – one, it's confidential."

R: "How do we make people understand that it's a confidential service?"

DPS 16: "…lots of blokes on the floor don't have an office to go to…if there's a phone up here or in the office next door, and they very quietly speak away…you don't want your conversation overheard, in most instances, so yes some private area where they can have a quiet cry or conversation."

Having to ask for time off is a very real threat to anonymity, simply because of the practical issue around accessing the service, while living in a rural community, located 50km from the nearest town, this inevitable meant that staff attending counselling would have to ask for time-off, and would then have to show some form of confirmation that they were, in fact going for counselling. This meant even though employees would prefer not to inform their supervisors of their involvement in the EAP, they felt circumstances would dictate that they do so. This dilemma would, however, come into effect if the employee made use of a private practitioner or the EAP.

As demonstrated in the following quotes, the researcher found that this evaluative study also served as a marketing tool, for this particular EAP. Beidel (1999: 106) supported this finding stating, "an evaluation offers an EAP a unique opportunity…while not a traditional promotional activity [it] becomes an indirect means to communicate with the organization."

R: "Did you know Peaking has an EAP?"

DPS 08: "No. Not until you spoke to us on Friday, at the introductory meeting…to tell us what you were doing."

DPS 20: "Ek dink, net die feit dat jy dit hier kom noem, het baie oë oop gemaak…Toe jy die ander dag daarvan praat, was dit die eerste keur keer dat ek weer regtige daarvan gehoor het."

68

DPS 22: "…now that you here and being involved with it and doing more with it, maybe we will see what the whole thing is."

3.4 Analysis of data, findings and verification: Focus groups with supervisors

"Effective utilization of the programme rests almost squarely on the shoulders of the supervisor"- Reidiger (1985: 401)

Two focus groups were conducted with six supervisors, members A, B, C, D, E, and F respectively. Of worth to note is demographically speaking the supervisors were all white employees, except for one, with black employees as their subordinates. The first session was 75 minutes and the second session was 90 minutes, all six supervisors were present for both session. The focus of the first session was "The experiences and perceptions of supervisors with regard to utilising the EAP" and the focus of the second session was "The experiences and perceptions of supervisors with regard to supervisory training." The focus of each session was maintained by the use of an interview schedule, (see Appendix Three and Appendix Four).

An introductory session was held for supervisors and union representatives, to explain the purpose, purpose, benefits and ethical issues related to the research. However, the union representatives failed to attend the meeting (one was on leave for the period of the research) and their non-attendance was deemed as not willing to participate, and the research required voluntary participation. All six supervisors signed an informed consent form (Appendix One), and there after informal instruction was given with regard to group dynamics such as confidentiality, punctuality, respect and dignity and the value of their individual contributions, by emphasising the group need not reach consensus with regard to any information. The data gathered was analysed and is presented and discussed below. During the discussion extracts of group discussion is cited to highlight the point. A hash (#) is used to indicate the response of a new respondent, while a dash (-) is used to indicate an interjection during someone else's point.

3.4.1   Supervisors' experiences and perceptions with regard to the utilisation of the EAP

Supervisors were asked to broadly describe their understanding of the EAP and its services. As seen in the excerpt (Focus group 1, paragraph 1) below members generally seem to have a comprehensive understanding of the purpose of the EAP.

> # I think the supervisors are given the EAP programme to act as an agent, that it's between the employee and yourself to make a referral, because you know the situation. # Basically it's what (B) said. # On HR side I'm basically involved with that, if people need it, you advise them of that. # Obviously the reason you sending the person is to resolve the problem, you want to see a change in performance, and that would be there end result.

This serves to illustrate that supervisors tended to have some understanding of the EAP and its functions. However, a theme identified, was that they did not cotton on to the idea that the service could also be used if the employee experience some form of work related stress, this may be due to their deep seated belief that the EAP should only be used once they themselves are unable to deal with personal problems and that they should be able to deal with the work related issues. The following quote and excerpts from group discussion serve to illustrate.

> # I see the EAP as dealing with non-work related stuff, that they can sort out; work related they will never sort out. – Group member (F) – Focus group 2; paragraph 4)

> # I think in that case it would be say you got a guy that drinks, every Monday he stay off work, then you come to a point, if you want to keep your job, you must go to the EAP, I think you can as the supervisor. # I'm aware of that but as I say I think we're discussing EAP referral. [Implying that the previous member (A) was discussing something outside of the scope of EAP.] – Focus group 1, paragraph 5)

The following excerpt serves to illustrate the underlying theme being a lack of understanding of how the EAP can be effectively used, by linking it to drop in job performance and productivity, in their present day-to-day work functions, such as performance appraisals, pep programmes and constructive confrontation. Myers (1984: 232) confirms, "supervisors are frequently ill-trained and poorly prepared to handle the

70

confrontation interview."

> # I think confrontation is before disciplinary, as soon as something is wrong, it could be negative or positive, you use the confrontation to identify the need that there is. # This normally comes up with work, and that's different…in ESKOM you have the PA, which is done every month and if he is not performing, you put him on a pep program, and that's where you improve performance. # You can't just put a guy on a pep programme. You have to discuss it with him every month; it comes through the year with constructive confrontation. # The pep programme is for a person who is not performing, he hasn't got a problem, he is just not performing - # But he might have a problem. (Focus group 2, paragraph 4)

They also seem to have insight into the fact that the EAP practitioner could assist with a broad range of personal problems, however, there was a strong feeling that referral to the programme should only be once the problem has become unmanageable for the supervisor and as a last resort. A similar theme was found from the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews conducted with the non-supervisory employees. As discussed previously it is essential for an EAP to be perceived to be able to assist with a broad range of interpersonal problem, if it is going to be accepted within an organisation, however, these supervisors only associated the EAP with personal problems. Later, in the chapter, the distinction drawn between work and personal problems is discussed, at length. The extract below gives an indication of the broad spectrum of problems with which supervisors feel the EAP can help:

> # Family problems # Divorce # Abuse # Drinking # AIDS # Bereavement # Finances or debts # This thing EAP and counselling, it's not so much the financial thing but also if you go on pension, it's an enormous stage, where you not going to work, now all of a sudden you don't know what to do with yourself, I think that's more of a challenge. # It's your future what you going to do, those kinds of aspects. # Also budgeting through the EAP – (Focus group1, paragraph 4)

Two of supervisors had previously suggested to employees that they contact the EAP. Of these one made regular referrals in his capacity as the Human Resources Officer.

Typically, both of them had serious reservations with regards to the present system of functioning of the EAP, which were echoed by other group members. These were based on several themes, which could be identified, including 1) the nature of the service, 2) the visibility of the service, 3) the lack of information about the service, 4) the fear of the telephone, 5) cultural issues, 6) lack of relationship between the EAP and the station and 7) issues of confidentiality versus issues of anonymity. What follows is a discussion of the themes as they were identified.

- **Nature of service:** The supervisors were all in agreement that there should be a person on-site to deal with the personal problems as experienced by the staff and to create awareness of the service. Dickman (1988: 113) echoes their sentiments "a good way to increase EAP visibility is for the coordinator/contractor to regularly visit the plant." Stanley, Murphy and Peters (1988: 233) also offer support for their plight, "the EAP needs to be accessible to the supervisor and be able to respond to the requests of supervisors with a direct face-to-face intervention for the employee or a consultation with the supervisor."

> # They have to do it themselves, you can't do it for them as the supervisor [phone the call centre], that's where the problem comes, they will never do that themselves, they will rather come and see people. # That's where it boils back you need somebody on-site, to set it up, start it off and build that trust and then it will be used (nods & echoes of agreement) # You need to have site visits, can go weekly and there after taper off, cause once you've built that up, then the person's got a contact number to phone person. – (Focus group 1, paragraph 2)

To illustrate their point, they described the nature of two services currently been rendered on the station, the medical aid service and bio-kineticist [the wellness programme]:

> # We can just take the two examples here [the Bonitas Representative coming to visit and the bio-kineticist], they must get used to the person before they use the facility. # It's like the bio-kineticist, she can tell them [what] to do, they'll do it, they have one on one with her. # The ideal system for me will be like

Bonitas…that's our agent, comes and visits once a month, but if there's a problem they all get the number – (Focus group 1, paragraph 2)

- **Lack of visibility of service:** Tying in with the nature of the service, this theme was highlighted by the supervisors' opinion that the EAP was a relatively new concept to the staff and the supervisors, and until they were familiar with the service and the staff providing the service, the EAP would not be used. Stanley, Murphy and Peters (1988: 234) confirmed the need for high visibility of an EAP, would influence the programme's utilisation rates. Googins and Godfrey held a similar view "no programme can survive without visibility, recognition and exposure." Some supervisors went as far as stating that even the actual concept of going for counselling was new to some of the staff, as well.

    # It's something new; people don't know about it, the company [ESKOM] don't give recognition to introduce it to people. # I'm inclined to agree with (F), they haven't got confidence in the system, and the only way they're get confidence in it, [is] when they see more of the people and deal more with the people, then they'll learn to trust them, they don't want to open up because they're not sure who it is they're talking to. # It's quite a new thing for them, they have not experienced it at all, they haven't gone to counselling to somebody about something like that. – (Focus group 1, paragraph 2)

- **Lack of information:** "Misconceptions and lack of understanding about EAPs have been found to inhibit utilisation," Olesen (1986), in Frost (1990: 46), verified what identified as a trend, that there was not adequate information made available familiarise the staff with the services of the EAP and the EAP Company. Two of the supervisor questioned the reputation of the Company, based on this lack of information.

    # You talk about EAP, EAP we have no background of the EAP actually, I really don't know about EAP and I don't know who is EAP,

> I personally, I will not use it, # That's true – # We all have EAP – but we got no proof – # what's behind it – we haven't seen it. # That's because nobody's really used it up 'til now and that's why we don't know about it, how it works # What's the quality of there counsellors, I personally don't know, I think every body here, you don't know what is really behind the EAP, is it really proper counselling, because is it maybe one person as a dummy thing, have a look. – (Focus group 2, paragraph 1)

Also identified here, as a theme, was that some supervisors had more information than others, it appeared that those supervisors who had presentations done by the EAP Company were more informed that those inducted by the ESKOM staff.

> # They have registered counsellors working with them, that's how I understand it # The telephone service only for – # putting you in contact with the right person - discussing of problem, see what is your problem, and then connecting you with the correct person, that's how I understand it. # If you need counselling, won't the EAP appoint somebody that's near to Drakensberg to come and see you? # I think they have people who are contracted to them. – (Focus group 2, paragraph 1)

- **The voluntary use of the service:** Also identified as a trend was that supervisors believed that the voluntary use of the service, the fact that in their opinion they could not force employees to go for counselling, combined with the fact that employees needed to personally telephone the call centre, hampered the use of the service. This serves to reinforce that the supervisors generally did not understand the nature of the service, the concept of choice, its impact on the treatment process, and the aspects of supervisory of management referrals. The following quote reflects the feeling of despondency and exasperation expressed by group member (B) who had attempted to suggest referral to the employees.

74

> # The EAP is based on the individual, [he] needs to open up. Depending if the guy open's up to you or not, I think that's very tough on us to make referral, you can give the guy the phone number and refer to the EAP but you can't force him to go. As long as you cannot force the person, I cannot see the EAP working well…how else do you get the guy to go, for counselling…I actually had to situations that I referred to the EAP, the guy just won't go but the EAP as well, its meant to be unilateral, you can only go to that point, then its that's person's choice. – (Focus group 1, paragraph 2)

- **The fear of the telephone:** From the discussion, it was highlighted, that a general fear of speaking on the telephone was prevalent amongst the staff. This made a telephonic service less viable at the station, than in the city, since the staff were less likely to discuss personal matters over the telephone. The following excerpt from the group discussion captures the sentiments expressed by the supervisors.

> # When there's face to face interaction they open-up but with the telephonic thing, you should look at Kwazulu Natal itself, if you look at Johannesburg, you'll find that that culture is much more open…they're much more primitive here…there's a fear of telephones, although they'll speak chit chat, when it comes to serious problems not going to speak. (Group members tended to gesture assent intimating they are in agreement with what was said.) # I think it's very true actually what (B) is saying, its fine if they know who they talking to [but] they don't just want to pick up the phone. – (Focus group 1, paragraph 2)

This was not evident from the data gathered during the semi-structured interviews, however, the data did highlight that although employees had access to the promotional wallet card, containing the toll-free telephone number, many employees were unaware of how to use it to access the EAP. This together with the language issue might offer some insight into why this marketing strategy was not effective. Beidel (199: 114) believes "the EAP that

recognizes the influence of cultural differences in the workplace…will be more successful…with an appropriately developed and comparably tailored array of promotional materials and marketing strategies."

- **Cultural differences:** The discussion gave rise to the theme that the black staff (in the view of supervisors) was inclined to access traditional problem solving mechanisms, rather than opt for something new, when in crisis.

> # There's a family a barrier also, they can't speak up, their brothers do things for them, they keep it in the family. # They will not make use of that facility; they will go to their families. (Focus group 1, paragraph 2)

This was confirmed by the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews:

> DPS 09: "As blacks we use to our family, what must I do if it's like this, not too much? This thing is new to us."

- **Family awareness:** The fact that employees did not tell their families about the availability of the EAP was identified as a theme. This was confirmed by the data collected from the non-supervisory employees.
  > # I'm not sure they're taking it home to there families. # I very much doubt it. I very much doubt that the family know (non-verbal gestures of agreement amongst the group members) exactly what is going on. – (Focus group1, paragraph 2)

- **No relationship between the staff and CHD:** There exists a strong sense amongst the supervisors that the lack of a visible relationship or connection with the EAP or the EAP Company, accounted for the staff not accessing the service. Googins and Godfrey (1987: 279-280) identified establishing a relationship with the client, to play a major role in establishing a successful programme. The excerpts below clearly shows the themes identified – 1) that there is no confidence and trust in the EAP 2) the EAP does not know the station, and 3) there should be on-site contact – in this regard:

Until that relationship is built up and that trust factor is there, they will not make use of the facility. # Confidence and trust, build it up and you're away. # It's the relationship factor, it's very important. – # Because you speaking about personal problems. – (Focus group 1, paragraph 2)

They've got to come to the normal worker and come and see the staff on site – # come and see the workplace, what's Drakensberg, where's Drakensberg # Because Drakensberg totally different to a station near Johannesburg – # yeah – # we're in the sticks – # different situation, each site has got a unique. – (Focus group 2, paragraph 1)

I propose one contact person here, who contacts a specific EAP contact, who then delegates the case. # I support that idea, but it doesn't matter who reports to that CHD person, but as long as we have one person that link is vital. – (Focus group 1, paragraph 6)

Also, if you come once a month, he knows who [the person] is, # He will phone [the person], because he knows who she is. # You can discuss it with him and say you must phone [the person]; knows and recognises her as the EAP. – (Focus group 1, paragraph 6)

- **Confidentiality versus anonymity:** The data obtained from the non-supervisory employees also identified this theme, and as previously discussed, this is a key element in promoting the utilisation of the programme. Dickman (1988: 113) clarifies "unless absolute confidentiality is guaranteed, at all levels, the EAP will not be successful." Generally, supervisors were split in the views on the confidentiality of services, and how involved the supervisors should be, in the employee's dealings with the EAP, as a result anonymity was again discussed.

As a theme it was identified, that it was fine to enquire how the employee was experiencing the process, especially if you had suggested the referral. They are

77

supported by Myers (1984: 75) who maintains "confidentiality differs from anonymity…a supervisor may refer an employee to the EAP…[where] the employee's presence in the EAP is known to the supervisor, so anonymity is not involved. However, anything that transpires in counselling is confidential." One group member wanted no involvement, once the employee was been seen by the EAP, and tended to confuse the concepts of confidentiality and anonymity. The following excerpts serve to highlight the dilemma.

> # It's confidential it must stay there. # He has to ask you for time off. # All the supervisor needs to know is that he is attending. # We give the number to refer to that people, then its up to him, from there it's nothing to do with nobody else. – (Focus group 2, paragraph 1)

> # You probably want to claim your mileage # All you need to say then is bring me a letter of proof, you don't have to know what the reason it's for, but you just need to know he is going to a counsellor. – (Focus group 2, paragraph 3)

As in the case of the non-supervisory employees, the location of the station arose as a theme resulting in concerns about anonymity, concerning the need to ask for time-off to attend sessions and to claim for mileage travelled to attend the sessions.

Supervisors were also asked with regard to their perceptions about ESKOM: Peaking Generation's involvement with the provision of assistance to employees with personal problems. The theme identified here was that the involvement was valid since personal problems did affect productivity and job performance, and supervisors agreed there was a need for the programme.

> # It has an impact on your time keeping, your performance and if you look at problems, its personal…we can only go that far…beyond that I don't know what to do…at least they have this programme they can actually go to. # Your productivity gets affected by a person that's stressed, then ESKOM will benefit getting a person right…collectively productivity should be up. – (Focus group 1, paragraph 3)

78

A further theme arising from discussions was that the programme could assist them in the daily job functions.

> # If you got an employee, that's really in need of help, and he comes to you, it would be a great relief, if you can refer him to somebody who can help him. # What is a bigger help, you can advise but beyond that you cannot get involved, but now you know there's somebody who's trained, that can actually help. (Focus group 1, paragraph 8)

As a trend supervisors were comfortable to suggest referral to employees, if they could no longer help, but the concept of mandatory referrals was more contentious; and supervisors displayed some reluctance to consider the type of referral. Further identified as a theme, was that the information supervisors received was minimal and as a result they did not fully understand the term. The following extract from the group discussion serves to illustrate:

> # I think in that case it would be say you got a guy that drinks, then you come to a point, if you want to keep your job, you must go to the EAP, I think you can as the supervisor. # I'm aware of that but I think we're discussing EAP referral. # That's the way I understood it, if his performance is not up to standard, then the supervisor goes to the manager and makes a referral. # I don't understand that when I tried to do that, I was refused, I was told the individual must call. # I think as a supervisor or management you have the right to tell you have to go for counselling. # Personally, I don't think I'll ever make a supervisory referral. – (Focus group 1, paragraph 5)

3.4.2 Experiences and perceptions with regard to supervisory training

"Supervisors are not going to commit themselves to an EAP, unless they are sensitized to the program's objectives through training"

Myers (1984: 235)

Generally, supervisors recognised their potential to be key figures in the EAP; however, they did not see them as presently fulfilling a key role in the EAP.

> # You have a responsibility to encourage the person, even if the response is negative, you might just be able to help with a situation they don't know how to handle. # I think its because we can spot the need… because of our relationship with the individual. # I also think the supervisor can drive the guy to go to the EAP, if it's one of my guys…I know he went there, I will try to motivate him. # We can be their eyes, to counsellor…what is going on. – (Focus group 1, paragraph 4)

Supervisors' resistance to refer: Typically, supervisors claim not to reluctant to referring employees to the EAP. Two supervisors claimed not to be resistant to refer, but reluctant to personally, use the service, since they had strong reservations about the EAP Company and the type of service they might provide. Both CHD (Year unknown: 25) and Myers (1984: 234) maintain that this attitude in itself would make a supervisor reluctant to refer and employee to the EAP.

There does, however, seem to be an underlying theme of resistance to refer, based on feelings of personal responsibility to help employees with personal problems, the myth around *"Esprit de Corps"* that is protecting group spirit, concerns about confidentiality and a sense of betraying a valuable employee. These themes reflect more adequately the lack of referrals from the supervisors. These themes were not verbalised by supervisors, but was reflected in their overall responses and attitudes. These are described by the CHD referral agent's handbook, as very normal supervisors' responses (Year Unknown: 25). Another previously undocumented theme was that there seem to be general consensus amongst this group that a referral to the EAP should come as a last resort.

> # You can help that person, people see themselves as a team, they will not feel out, if there's such a problem and they bring it out. If they have a drinking problem that's the only time I think I'll refer. # You will first talk to him as a supervisor confront him, - # Yeah - I think that's a vital issue, you first discuss it with him, if the person have trust in you, you can help or advise. # As a supervisor I will never be able to tell a guy he must go, but with the disciplinary action, he doesn't listen to what you tell him, I'm sure then the manager will then tell him, you got a choice, either you go for counselling or you will be dismissed. – (Focus group 2, paragraph 4)

This extract highlights the following themes with regard to supervisors' reluctance to refer. 1) Myers (1984: 234), "cohesive work groups will protect individuals and attempt to influences member deviant behaviour through group sanction", CHD (Year unknown: 25) refers to this behaviour as "*Esprit de Corpse*"; 2) The fear that management will not support their decision, this is indicative of the supervisor belief that the decision to refer to the EAP, is deferred to the manager, absolving the supervisor from the task at hand; and 3) their personal need to resolve the employee's personal issues, whereby they believe they should first attempt to help or advise the employee before they refer them to the EAP.

> # I think this is something the supervisor must deal with on there own, I don't think it's for EAP, unless it's a serious problem, if the guy had a drinking problem. # I think if problems come up we sort it out mostly ourselves, if it's a serious problem we send to HR. **#** He will talk to you first before anyone else…all in the normal line of work. # It's just part of my job to do it. – (Focus group 1, paragraph 4)

The passage above illustrates the theme that supervisors regard referring to the EAP as a last resort option. Dickman (1988: 117) found "that supervisors need to hear…that a 'little' problem can grow." The theme arises again that it is part of their job description, that is, it is their responsibility to intercede when the employee experiences personal problems.

> # I'm not comfortable at all with the knowledge I have of the EAP, I don't know the people behind it, I know a lot about EAP, I tell people about it and I forward the number to them, but I'll never use it, I'm not confident about it. How are they dealing with it? Are they dealing quickly with it? # You are not sure…# not enough personal knowledge, I agree, my blokes I'll send them, if they want to go, but myself I won't, 'cause you don't know, you know nothing about it. – (Focus group 2, paragraph 4)

This excerpt gives rise to another theme, that is, the supervisors' lack of understanding of EAP philosophy, purpose, and functions, which play a role in their reluctance to refer employees. Myers (1984: 235) and CHD (Year: unknown: 25), also indicated that a lack of information regarding the EAP may cause reluctance on the part of the supervisor to refer.

Supervisory Training: Supervisors who have insight into the functioning of the EAP and perceive it to be beneficial will make appropriate referrals. See Peters (199: 96), Dayoff (1996: 29), Roman (1995: 50), and Myers (1984: 235). Consequently, the experiences and perceptions of supervisors with regard to supervisory training were explored. As a trend, there exist lots of confusion about what training was held, for whom and when. It would appear as if two supervisory presentations were held, one by ESKOM representative and one by an EAP representative. Two of the supervisors had not attended any supervisory presentations. Romano (1995: 50) provided a possible explanation when she held that "it's [supervisory training] amongst the most difficult technologies to implement and prioritise."

Discussions were chaotic, which seemed to be indicative of the theme that the EAP introductions and presentations were held in conjunction with other activities, including AIDS, presentations, wellness day and the new logo promotion, and Netcare 911 promotions. This theme was also a concern amongst the non-supervisory employees. As stated previously, the timing of promotional activities is key to the success of the EAP – Beidel (1999: 113), and the resultant chaos, misinformation and ignorance about the EAP are reflected by the cited passage from the group transcripts.

EAP presentation, EAP, two years ago, it was a lady. # In [the previous manager's} time presentation on EAP, for supervisors # He's the sports and rec guy. # No, it was a lady from the EAP Company, for supervisors. # I think [the bio-kineticist] organised it last time. # I think we're confusing the Netcare story, and CHD, EAP. # There was a lady she presented and she told us all about, if they got a problem they will appoint somebody, that will counsel you and all that! # Last year supervisors sat in the presentation with staff cause I can still recall. – (Focus group 2, paragraph 4)

"The intent of regular scheduled training sessions is to encourage supervisors to fulfill their role in the early recognition, intervention, and appropriate referral to the EAP"

EAPA – USA (1992:43)

Generally speaking, the trend was that members did not recall what information had been shared at the various presentations. Romano (1995: 50) maintains, "most people forget at least 75% of what they heard at the training within days", which makes a case for ongoing training rather than once off training, especially since this lack of understanding of the EAP was bound to affect the level of commitment that supervisors display to the EAP – Myers (1984: 235).

However, another theme did seem that those who attended presentations with the EAP Company, were more informed about the EAP. None of the supervisors had attended more than one EAP presentation, and supervisors indicated that they felt in need of a "refresher". Dickman (1988: 116) supported their request and recommended, "supervisory training be conducted once a year and certainly extensively as the program is initially instituted."

You didn't have enough time with the EAP. # I got an article [manual] that gives you guidelines about show it works, that's the one I have with me now [she actually went to employee presentation, by the EAP Company] which gives the reason and what your role is, and what should be done and how to use it in the future, the whole process # The one we went to you only got a little pamphlet

thing. # Hmm # That was the EAP with staff but they gave the booklet to everybody. # Never seen it # Never seen it # Never seen it # I seen it, I had one but I threw it away, because I don't use it at all. # At least you are honest. # Is the information still the same? # They just gave us brochures; we just got touched on lightly. # Ours was quick! # No man it was half a day. # The only reason I know is 'cause I keep my book there; otherwise it will slip my mind. # I think maybe the time frame. # It was so long ago. # I think maybe we need a refresher, every year. – (Focus grooup2, paragraph 5)

This inherent lack of understanding of the purpose and functioning of the EAP, how to refer to the EAP invariable will impact on the willingness to make supervisory or mandatory referral as was shown earlier, this group of supervisors would rather deal with employee personal issues themselves than refer to the EAP.

The supervisor role: Supervisors were then asked about their understanding with regard to EAP services, including early identification of problems, constructive confrontation, follow-up and job re-entry, where they were expected to fulfil a specific role. The general consensus was that they had not heard the latter two terms before the group discussion. They did, however, recognise the confrontation as a supervisory function, outside of the EAP context, and made a vague link of possible use in EAP referral, in earlier group discussion. They had also previously affirmed that because of their unique relationship with the employee, they were often amongst the first to notice the development of a problem, but they were unable to link it to constructive confrontation with regard to impaired work performance, to facilitate referral to the EAP. Riediger (1985: 404) found "supervisors lacked any appreciation for their own potential value in enhancing the treatment process, through modification of the work environment, ongoing monitoring and the provision of rewards for improved job performance."

Googins and Godfrey (1987: 127) states that an underlying assumption of the EAP is that "employee problems will manifest themselves in negative behaviour in the workplace and that deteriorating job performance will indicate signs of underlying behavioural problems," and this is the basis for supervisor/mandatory referrals. Riediger (1985: 402) found "supervisors had no problem in determining which employees were not performing adequately…however, they were most reluctant to formally identify these employees for

program involvement." Without understanding their role, supervisors are unlikely to make appropriate referrals to the EAP.

The need for information: The researcher also explored with the group, which information they required, to be able to effectively use the service. They indicated that they required information with regard to the nature of the service, feedback about utilisation rates as well as background information about the service provider.

> # Background, legitimacy, what services they have. # Various contact numbers, new manuals # Updates, overall figures, obviously they cannot discuss case-by-case, statistics. # Maybe, they can just give you a percentage rate. – (Focus group 2, paragraph 7)

Finally, the researcher examined the needs of supervisors with regard to further supervisor training. As a trend, supervisors were ambivalent with regard to this issue, initially it was felt that just basic information was required but on a regular basis, later they recognised they lacked vital information with regard to their role in the EAP. One of the members felt strongly that *supervisors could not be trained in the EAP.*

> # Yes, maybe just some information! # Yes, I think they've got to. # Yea # Hmm # I think maybe a workshop is in order. # Not a thorough thing – *training,* they can't really train you. # They can inform you! # They can tell you about what they are doing, what it's all about! # What is the services they provide? # How it work actually! – (Focus group 2, paragraph 9)
>
> **#** Then we're talking about a different thing, I don't think any of us here has the training to do that, not me. # If the supervisor is as important as they say then maybe we must get some training? # Yeah # Yeah # Information must be within ESKOM rules, so we can use it! – (Focus group 2, paragraph 9)

Literature recognises supervisors as a key players in a successful EAP, see Dayoff (1996: 29), Romano (1995: 50), Dickman and Challenger (1988: 110) and Chiabotta (1987: 20). This message has not been brought across to the supervisors, nor do they have the information needed to fulfil this role. Googins and Godfrey (1987: 126) recognised the positive impact using training to promote a programme and maintained, "without this

component [Supervisory training], the EAP will be less effective with supervisors…who might otherwise understand how to best work with and utilise the EAP." This supports the theme that supervisors are reluctant to refer.

3.5 Conclusion

Chapter two, a review of related literature, described the key elements of an effective EAP. This study evaluated the EAP with regard to the following components: 1) Employee Awareness, 2) Marketing strategies, 3) Family Awareness, 4) Employee Description of EAP and 5) Concerns about Confidentiality, through the exploration of the experiences and perceptions of 23 employees. These affect programme utilisation.

It was found that although employees were aware of the service, they were unfamiliar with the purpose and functioning of the EAP and how to access the service. It was also found that although a varied array of marketing strategies have been employed to promote the service and provide employee education, it was largely unsuccessful in encouraging utilisation, since it failed to take into account that more than 40% percent of the staff on the station was Zulu speaking and many only had basic literacy and numeracy skills. This means that traditional printed material and electronic media did not target a large percentage of the staff at the station. Alternatively, it would seem as that the staff requires the more personal approach of having a person on-site, which would allow them to become familiar with the EAP practitioner and the service. The lack of awareness, information and familiarity, was further reflected in the employees' failure to communicate the existence of the EAP to their families.

Most employees felt that in a time of crisis they would be inclined to use the service or recommend to a colleague or family member to use the service, but they also informed that the service was relatively new and relatively unknown. They required a lot more information regarding the service.

Another key aspect of the EAP is the provision of a confidential counselling service, it would appear, however, as if this key component of the service has not been absorbed by the staff, with 70% of the employees interviewed being unsure if the if the service was confidential. As shown from literature these are bound to impact on the employee's decision to utilise the EAP

The focus groups for supervisors explored their experiences and perceptions with regard to the utilisation of services and the supervisory training. Although supervisors claimed they were not unwilling to refer employees to the EAP, their resistance was reflected in their need to take personal responsibility for employee problems, the belief in the myth *"esprit de corps"* as well as their general resistance to making supervisory referrals to the EAP based on poor job performance. In light of the lack of information these supervisors have with regard to the purpose and functioning of the EAP, their attitude is somewhat expected.

EAP literature holds that the key to supervisor acceptance of the EAP is ongoing supervisory training, regular contact and consultation with the EAP. To date there has been *adhoc* supervisory training and most of the supervisors were "trained" by "ESKOM's sports and rec guy" and did not remember the information shared. Supervisors do not have the information and training to fulfill their key function in EAP. Supervisors were eager for future training in the EAP

Both supervisors and non-supervisory employees expressed concerns with regard to issues of confidentiality and the lack of visibility of the EAP within the station. The supervisors felt strongly that the staff would only utilise the service if the EAP were based on site.

CHAPTER FOUR
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Summary

This two part Evaluation Study, focusing on employees' experiences and perceptions of the EAP will provide valuable feedback for the Centre for Human Development (and ESKOM: Peaking Generation) regarding their efforts to inform employees about Employee Assistance Programme. Findings from data obtained from twenty-three non-supervisory employees, indicate that, although employees may be aware of the existence of the EAP, this does not in itself ensure utilisation of the service by the employees. The visibility of the EAP, employees understanding of its purpose and functioning, employees' familiarity with policies and procedures, access to information, as well as accessibility of the service and employee concerns about the EAP's ability to ensure confidentiality all play a role in the employee's decision to utilise the service.

Findings also indicate that, from a supervisor's perspective, the lack of thorough supervisory training sessions resulted in supervisors being inadvertently reluctant to refer employees, either due to a lack of information or misinformation. They were also not familiar enough with the EAP policies and procedures to effectively use the EAP as a tool in the routine daily tasks. This lack of education also had an impact on the integrity of the EAP, in that some supervisors were reluctant to refer employees, questioned the nature of the service and the EAP Company, as well as the EAP's ability to maintain confidentiality.

The first part of this study focused on the exploration of the experiences and perceptions of 23 non-supervisory employees, through semi-structured interviews with regard to the following components which has an effect on programme utilisation: 1) Employee Awareness, 2) Marketing strategies, 3) Family Awareness, 4) Employee Description of EAP and 5) Concerns about Confidentiality.

The second part of the study focused on the experiences and perceptions of supervisors with regard to utilisation of the EAP, supervisors' resistance to refer employees to the EAP and supervisory training. Supervisors indicated that they were not reluctant to refer, however, they did not believe that they would make supervisor/mandatory referrals, by

linking it to drop in work performance. Their general position is based on a lack of information and misinformation, which reflects the lack of supervisory training and exposure to the EAP.

The rest of this chapter will focus on the conclusions drawn from the findings of the study, together with possible recommendations to address any shortcomings. Once again this will be presented in two parts, due to the different data collection methods and target groups.

4.2 Conclusions and Recommendations: Semi-Structured Interviews

Conclusion 1: Although employees are aware of the existence of the EAP, they are unfamiliar with the purpose and functioning of the programme, and how to access the service.

Recommendation: The programme needs to be more visible to the employees; this will require a more aggressive and a more appropriate marketing strategy, designed on the needs and expectations, as well as the demographics of the employees, at the station. Specifically, the frequency, the language issue and the need for smaller group information sessions need to be addressed.

Conclusion 2: The employees at the station are unfamiliar with the ESKOM: Peaking Generation EAP Policy Statement, which outlines the benefits, purpose and functioning of the programme, as well as how to access the services.

Recommendation: The EAP Policy Statement should be highly visible within the organisation and the station. This one page document should be placed on notice boards and in tearooms for the literate employees or be explained in detail on a regular basis, to the less literate employees. This will help create awareness, not only on the existence of the EAP, but also insight into the purpose and functioning of the EAP, as well as address any concerns with regard to confidentiality.

Conclusion 3: Although a broad range of marketing strategies has been employed to promote the service and to provide employees with information, both by ESKOM: Peaking Generation and the Centre for Human Development, a large portion of the staff remain unaware of the existence of the service, how to access the EAP and what the actual

purpose and functioning is of the programme.

Recommendation: The marketing strategies for this EAP, to these employees seem to require a different more personal approach such as having an EAP practitioner on-site, on a regular basis, marketing the programme through their presence and their impression. This would enhance the visibility of the programme and allow employees to become familiar with the EAP practitioner and the service. This could take the form of either an EAP practitioner rendering either a counselling service or an assessment and referral service or, if not that, then having a designated person to the station, who visits on a regular basis to provide updated information and training and acts as a liaison between the call centre and the employees of the station. It is further recommended that initially the marketing strategies aimed at promoting the EAP, be not combined with other promotional activities, until such time that it has an established identity of its own.

Conclusion 4: A large portion of the staff only has basic literacy and numeracy skills, which means that traditional marketing strategies through printed material and electronic media only reached a small segment of the employees at the station.

Recommendation: To reach these employees one would once again need to look at the possibility of more interactive, personal approach on a more regular basis. This could be addressed through regular, small group education sessions. It would also be effective, should there be a designated, on-site EAP practitioner, for the station.

Conclusion 5: Employees are inclined to use the service or recommend to a colleague or family member to use the service, in a time of crisis, but consider the service to be relatively new and relatively unknown, since they are not familiar with the nature of the service, indicating that there is some resistance to using the service.

Recommendation: This once again pertains to the lack of visibility of the current EAP. These needs could be met through more regular personal contact from the EAP Company, to familiarise employees with the service, and more appropriate marketing strategies, which focus on building trust and establishing a relationship between the CHD and the employees at the station.

Conclusion 6: Majority of the employees interviewed, had doubts as to whether the service provided by the EAP was confidential or not.

Recommendation: Employees are unlikely to make use of the service if they are concerned about confidentiality aspects. Providing staff with the contents of the EAP Policy Statement, by aggressively promoting CHD as an external service provider, and establishing a trust relationship, through familiarity, should address this.

Conclusion 7: The majority of employees interviewed failed to communicate the existence of the EAP to their families.

Recommendation: The Centre for Human Development must extend its marketing campaign to include strategies, which target family members directly, such as mailgrams or posting leaflets and brochures or being visible on the family days held at the station.

4.3 Conclusions and Recommendations: Focus Groups

Conclusion 1: Supervisors are unfamiliar with the ESKOM: Peaking Generation EAP Policy Statement and are suspicious of the EAP.

Recommendation: ESKOM: Peaking Generation EAP Policy Statement must be made available to supervisors and discussed at length during supervisory training. This document is key to understanding EAP principles and procedures and provides insight at all levels. Many questions and concerns could have been eliminated had supervisors been exposed to the policy statement.

Conclusion 2: There is the belief that the present system of accessing the EAP service via the telephone does not work, due to the fear of speaking on the telephone that exists for less sophisticated employees.

Recommendation: Once again there were indications that for the EAP to be effectively utilised there need to be someone on-site to act as a link between the EAP and the station, to create awareness and to promote the services.

Conclusion 3: The EAP lacks visibility and familiarity within the organisation.

Recommendation: The EAP Company must maintain regular contact with the station, to provide information, establish a trust relationship with the employees and to monitor the situation so that problems can be addressed as they arise.

Conclusion 4: Supervisors did not believe that non-supervisory employees informed their families of the availability of services. This was confirmed by the data obtained from said employees.

Recommendation: The EAP Company must take responsibility for marketing the programme to the families of employees, since the employees are not inclined to inform their families of the existence of the programme.

Conclusion 5: Supervisors expressed concerns with regard to issues of confidentiality and the lack of visibility of the EAP within the station. The supervisors felt strongly that the staff would only utilise the service if the EAP were based on-site.

Recommendation: As recommended previously this can be addressed by providing supervisors with the detail of the ESKOM: Peaking Generation EAP Policy Statement as well as aggressively marketing CHD as an external service provider, with no link to the employer. In the case of supervisors these questions can also be extensively addressed in the supervisory training sessions.

Conclusion 6: Supervisors have as yet not embraced the EAP as a tool to assist them in effectively fulfilling their day-to-day job functions.

Conclusion 7: Supervisors lacked any appreciation for their own potential value in the EAP processes. The supervisors do not have the information and training to effectively fulfill their key function in creating a successful EAP.

Conclusion 8: Supervisors are subversive to their own efforts to refer employees to the EAP. Their resistance was reflected in their need to take personal responsibility for employee problems, the belief in the myth *"esprit de corps"* as well as their general resistance to making supervisory referrals to the EAP based on poor job performance.

Conclusion 9: Supervisors do not have sufficient understanding into the purpose and functioning of the EAP, creating confusion when to linking the EAP to other labour practices such as performance appraisals and disciplinary hearings.

Recommendation: In light of the lack of information these supervisors have with regard to the purpose and functioning of the EAP, their attitude is to be expected. All of the above conclusions can be addressed through extensive, on-going supervisory training, focusing on all aspects of the EAP and regular contact and consultation with the supervisors. Supervisors requested that information provided during these training sessions, must take into account ESKOM policies and procedures, so that the EAP policies and procedures link up, making it useable to them. A recommended curriculum for the initial in-depth supervisory training should include goals and functions of the EAP, rationale for implanting the EAP, endorsement by top management and unions, benefits of programme to supervisors, EAP Policy Statement, explanation of how programme ties in with normal supervisory activities, emphasis on poor work performance as a criterion for referral, constructive confrontation of employees, the role of supervisors in handling troubled employees and referral procedures.

Conclusion 10: Supervisors trained by the EAP Company are more knowledgeable of services than those trained by ESKOM.

Recommendation: The EAP Company must take responsibility for ensuring that supervisors are trained in respect of the EAP.

Conclusion 11: There are indications from both supervisors and non-supervisory employees, that they have difficulty with accessing the EAP, via a telephonic service, even though the reasoning and the dynamics of the two groups are vastly different.

Recommendation: This requires further investigation since the telephonic service, with its direct access to the call centre, is the backbone of the current EAP

Conclusion 12: Consistent with other research, the evaluation also served as a marketing tool for the programme.

Recommendation: Regular follow-up evaluations to ensure that the service rendering remain on track, and that employees receive the full benefit of the programme. This type of evaluation can also be extended to other programmes, provided by CHD.

4.4 Concluding Remarks

The over-arching aim to determine the experiences and perceptions of employees with regard to the EAP has been successfully attained, and through extensive data collated, the researcher was able to determine and analyse some of the reasons for the under-utilisation of the service, as set out in the previous two sections.

As described below, the outlined objectives for the study were achieved.

- ❏ Objective 1: To determine the employees of Drakensberg Power Station's level of awareness of the EAP. It was determined that although employees were aware of the service, they were not familiar with the purpose and functioning of the programme, nor were they familiar with how to access the service.
- ❏ Objective 2 and 3: To determine the extent to which supervisors are willing to refer employees to the EAP and to determine and analyse the reasons supervisors are reluctant to refer to the EAP. It was determined that supervisors did not consider themselves to be reluctant to refer employees, however, their underlying negative attitudes towards the EAP, the lack of information about the EAP, their sense of personal responsibility in dealing with employee personal problems and the lack of supervisory training, may play a role in the fact that they have not made referrals.
- ❏ Objective 4: To determine and analyse the experiences and perceptions of supervisors with regard to EAP supervisory training. It was determined that supervisors had received *adhoc* supervisory training, some from the EAP Company and some from ESKOM: Peaking Generation staff. Those who received their information from the EAP Company were more informed that those who received their information from the ESKOM: Peaking Generation staff, however the general consensus was that the training was not adequate in terms of frequency and content.

❑ Objective 5: To evaluate and analyse the experiences and perceptions of employees at the Station with regard to the utilisation of the EAP. It was found that generally employees perceived programme to be invisible despite extensive marketing strategies, employees did not inform their families of the availability of services and that they had concerns about the EAPs ability to maintain confidentiality.

In conclusion, it is deemed evident that the overall aims and objectives, as described in Chapter One, has been achieved, through the execution of the study.

REFERENCES

1. **The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language**. 2000. Fourth Edition. Houghton Miffin Company. http://www.dictionary.com

2. Arkava, M.L. and Lane, T.A. 1983. **Beginning Social Work Research.** Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

3. Beidel, B.E. 1999. Internal Marketing Strategies to Maximize EAP Visibility and Effectiveness, in **The Employee Assistance Handbook,** Edited by J.M. OHer. U.S.A.: John Wiley and sons.

4. Butterworth, I.E. 2001. The Components and Impact of Stigma Associated with EAP Counseling, in **Employee Assistance Quarterly.** Vol. 16 (3) pp. 1-8.

5. The Centre for Human Development (PTY) LTD. Year Unknown. **Employee Assistant Programme: Referral Agent Handbook.** Copyright CHD/PPC International. Private Publisher.

6. Chiabotta, W. 1987. **Employee Assistance Programmes: How to make them Work for You.** USA: Business and Legal Reports.

7. Cohen, M. 1985. EAP Training to Integrate Performance Appraisals, Evaluation Systems, and Problem – Solving Skills, in **The Human Resources Handbook: Principles and Practice of Employee Assistance Programs,** edited by Klarriech, Francek and Moore. New York: Praeger.

8. **The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English.** 1998. Seventh Edition. Oxford. Clarendon Press.

9. Csiernik, R. 1995. A Review of Research Methods Used to Examine Employee Assistance Programme Delivery Options, in **Evaluation and Program Planning.** Vol.18 (1). Pp.25-36.

10. Dayoff, M. 1996. The Seven Practices of Highly Effective EAPs: Advice for Programme – and Personal – Survival, in **EAP Digest.** March/April, pp 28-29.

11. de Vos, A.S. 1998a. Combined Quantitative and Qualitative Approach, in **Research at Grass Roots: A Primer for the Caring Professions,** edited by de Vos, A.S. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

12. de Vos, A.S. 1998b. Programme Evaluation, in **Research at Grass Roots: A Primer for the Caring Professions,** edited by de Vos, A.S. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

13. Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. 1994. **Handbook of Qualitative Research,** California: Sage.

14. Dickman, F. 1988. Ingredients of an Effective EAP, in **Employee Assistance Programmes: A Basic Text,** edited by Dickman, Challenger, Emener and Hutchinson. USA: Charles C. Thomas Publishers.

15. Dickman, F. and Emener, W.G. 1988. Employee Assistance Programs: Basic Concepts, Attributes and an Evaluation, in **Employee Assistance Programmes: A Basic Text,** edited by Dickman, Challenger, Emener and Hutchinson. USA: Charles C. Thomas Publishers.

16. Durkin, W.G. 1985. Evaluation of EAP Programming, in **The Human Resources Management Handbook: Principles and Practice of Employee Assistance Programs,** edited by Klarriech, Francek and Moore. New York: Praeger.

17. Durrheim, K. and Wassenaar, D. 1999. Putting Design into Practice: Writing and Evaluating Research Proposals, in **Research in Practice**, edited by Terre Blanche and Durrheim. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

18. **EAP Master's Programme at University of Pretoria: Class Discussions.** May 2001.

19. Emener, W.G. and Yegedis, B.L. 1988. Program Planning and Evaluation of Employee Assistance Programs Foundation and Concepts, in **Employee Assistance Programmes: A Basic Text,** edited by Dickman, Challenger, Emener and Hutchinson. USA: Charles C. Thomas Publishers.

20. The Employee Assistance Professionals Association. 1992. **EAPA Standards for Employee Assistance Programmes, Part II: Professional Guidelines.** USA: The Employee Assistance Professionals Association, Incorporated.

21. Farkas, A.J. 1990. Using Evaluation to Improve Services, in **EAP Digest.** March/April, pp. 30-36.

22. Fouche, C.B. and de Vos, A.S. 1998. Problem Formulation, in **Research at Grass Roots: A Primer for the Caring Professions,** edited by de Vos, A.S. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

23. Francek, J.L. 1985. Marketing an EAP for Success, in **The Human Resources Management Handbook: Principles and Practice of Employee Assistance Programs,** edited by Klarreich, Francek and Moore. New York: Praeger.

24. Frost, A.K. 1990. Assessing Employees' Awareness: A First step to Utilisation, in **Employee Assistance Quarterly.** Vol.6 (1) pp. 45-54.

25. Geis, G.L. and Smith, M.E.1992.The Function of Evaluation, in **The Handbook of Performance Technology: A Comprehensive Guide for Analyzing and Solving Performance Problems in Organizations,** edited by Stolvitch and Keeps. San Francisco: Jossey – Bass Publishers.

26. Googins, B. & Godfrey, J. 1987. **Occupational Social Work,** New Jersey: Prentice – Hall.

27. Grinnell Jr, R.M. 1997. **Social Work Research and Evaluation: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches.** Illinois: F.E. Peacock Publishers, Incorporated.

28. Harris, M.M. and Fennel, M.L. 1988. Perceptions of an Employee Assistance Program and Employees' Willingness to Participate, in **The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science,** Vol. 24 (4), pp. 423-438.

29. Harper, T. 1999. Employee Assistance Programming and Professional Developments in the South Africa, in **Employee Assistance Services in the New South Africa,** edited by Maiden. USA: Haworth Press.

30. Highley, J.C. and Cooper, C.L. 1994. Evaluating EAPs, in **Personnel Review.** Vol. 23 (7), pp. 46-59.

31. Kettner, P.M.; Moroney, R.M. and Martiin, L.L. 1999. **Designing and Managing Programs: An Effectiveness – Based Approach.** London: Sage Publications.

32. Kim, D.S. 1988. Assessing Employment Assistance Programs: Evaluation Typology and Models, in **Employee Assistance Quarterly.** Vol. 3(3/4), pp.169-187.

33. Maiden, R.M. 1992. First World EAPs Serving Third World Clients: A U.S. Perspective of the South African Experience, in **Employee Assistance Programs in South Africa,** edited by Maiden. U.S.A.: The Haworth Press.

34. Masi, D.A. 1994. **Evaluating Your Employee Assistance and Behavioral Care Program.** Michigan: Performance Resource Press.

35. Mathews, G. 1990. Multiple Measures for Evaluating Programs, in **EAP Digest.** March/April, pp 40-45.

36. Matteson, M. T and Ivancevich, J. M. 1987. **Controlling Work Stress.** San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers

37. Milne, S.H.: Blum, T.C. and Roman, P.M. 1994. Factors Influencing Employees' Propensity to Use an Employee Assistance Program, in **The Journal of Personnel Psychology.** No.47, pp. 123-143.

38. Mouton, J. and Marais, H.C. 1990. **Basic Concepts in the Methodology of the Social Sciences.** Pretoria: Human Science Research Council.

39. Myers, D.W. 1984. **Establishing and Building Employee Assistance Programs.** Connecticut: Quorum Books.

40. Ntsamai, N.M. 1991. Mental Health in the Workplace, in **Social Work Practice.** Issue 1, pp. 19-21.

41. OHer, J.M. 1993. Survey Research to Measure EAP Customer Satisfaction: A Quality Improvement Tool, in **Employee Assistance Quarterly.** Vol. 8 (4) pp. 41-75.

42. Peters, H.J. 1999. A Value Driven Approach to the Operations of a South African EAP Vendor, in **Employee Assistance Services in the New South Africa,** edited by Maiden. USA: Haworth Press.

43. Romano, M.E. 1995. Redefining Supervisory, Shop Steward Training, in **EAP Digest,** January/February. P. 50.

44. Schurink, W.J.; Schurink, E.M. and Poggenpoel, M. 1998. Focus Group Interviewing and Audio-Visual Methodology in Qualitative Research, in **Research at Grass Roots: A Primer for Caring Professionals,** edited by de Vos. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

45. Smith, G.L. and Geis, M.E. 1992. Planning an Evaluation Study, in **Handbook of Human Performance Technology: A Comprehensive Guide for Analyzing and Solving Performance Problems,** edited by Stolvitch and Keeps**.** San Francisco: Jossey – Bass Publishers.

46. Smith, L. 1993. Hard to Reach Populations and How to Reach Them, in **EAP Digest.** November/December, pp. 32-48.

47. Smith, M.L. 1988. Social Work in the Workplace: An overview, in **Social Work in the Workplace,** edited by Gould and Smith. New York: Springer Publishing Company, Incorporated.

48. Standards Committee of EAPA-South Africa.1999. **Standards for Employee Assistance Programmes in South Africa.** (Draft Unpublished).

49. Stanley, C.E.; Murphy, M. and Peters, R.J. 1988. One Organisation's Experience in a Case Management/EAP Program: Implications for Monitoring and Evaluation, in **Employee Assistance Quarterly.** Vol. 3(3/4), pp. 229-241.

50. Strydom, H. 1998. Writing a Research Report, in **Research at Grass Roots: A Primer for the Caring Professions,** edited by de Vos, A.S. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

51. Strydom, H. and de Vos, A.S. 1998. Sampling and Sampling Methods, in **Research at Grass Roots: A Primer for the Caring Professions,** edited by de Vos, A.S. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

52. Tripodi, T. 1983. **Evaluative Research for Social Workers.** New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

53. Wright, D.A. 1985. Policy and Procedures: The Essential Elements in an EAP, in **The Human Resources Management Handbook: Principles and Practice of Employee Assistance Programs,** edited by Klarriech, S. H.; Francek, J.L. and Moore, C.E. New York: Praeger

54. UK Employee Assistance Professional Association. 1998. **Standards of Practice and Professional Guidelines for Employee Assistance Programmes.** (Draft Unpublished).

APPENDIX ONE

RESEARCH: DRAKENSBERG POWER STATION
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

PARTICIPANT'S NAME: **DATE: /   /**

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Lesley-Ann Roman - University of Pretoria

56 Cottonwood Street, Jagersrust, Kwazulu Natal

INFORMED CONSENT

1. **Title of the study:** The experiences and perceptions of employees with regard to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) at Drakensberg Power Station.
2. **Purpose of study:** The purpose of the study is to determine and analyse the experiences and perceptions of employees (supervisors and non-supervisors), at Drakensberg Power Station, toward the EAP services provided to them by the external service provider, the Centre for Human Development.
3. **Procedures:** I will be asked to partake in a 20-minute interview/focus group sessions (two or three 45-minute sessions) to discuss my experiences and perceptions with regard to the functioning of the EAP, the contents of which will be recorded. The appointments will be arranged at my convenience.
4. **Risks and discomforts:** There are no medical and emotional risks or discomforts attached to this study, as I will be discussing only my own experiences and perceptions and I understand the contents of the interviews will be confidential and I will not be victimised for partaking in the study.
5. **Benefits:** I understand that there will be no direct benefit to myself but the results of the study may help to improve the EAP services that are rendered to my colleagues and myself.
6. **Participant's rights:** I understand that participation in this study is voluntary and that I may withdraw from participating in the study at any time.
7. **Financial compensation:** I understand that there will be no financial reimbursement for my participation in the study.
8. **Confidentiality:** The sessions will be recorded, via audiotape, to ensure accurate documentation. Only the principal investigator, the Zulu translator (if applicable) and the research supervisor at the University of Pretoria, will hear the tape. I understand the contents will be confidential but that the results will be published and made available to Management and CHD. My records and identity will not be revealed unless required by law.
9. If I have any questions or concerns I may call Ms Roman at 083 6706 538 at any time during the day or night.

I understand my rights as a research subject and I voluntary consent to

participation in this study. I understand what this is about and how and why it is

being done. I will receive a signed copy of this consent form.

----------------------   /   /
Subject's signature   Date

Signature if Investigator

APPENDIX TWO

<div align="center">

RESEARCH: DRAKENSBERG POWER STATION

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: FOCUS GROUP 1

(SUPERVISORS)
</div>

TOPIC: The experiences and perceptions of supervisors with regard to the utilisation of the EAP.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

Opening Question: How long have each of you worked at the Power Station, and when were you appointed in you supervisory position?

Introductory Question: What do you understand by the term EAP? Your idea and why it exists?

Transitional Question: How do you perceive the utilisation of the EAP amongst employees? On what do you base your perception?

Key Questions:
1. In your opinion, should ESKOM: Peaking provide assistance to employees with personal problems? Discuss.
2. With what type of problems do you think the EAP can provide assistance?
3. How can employees end up at the EAP office?
4. What would motivate or encourage you to refer an employee to the EAP?
5. Have you referred any employees to the EAP? If yes, Discuss…

   - Motivation for yes/no answers.
   - Reasons for referral.
   - Yes, discuss how you experienced the EAP, in terms of its functioning (referral process, treatment, re-entry into the workplace) and interaction the EAP staff.

6.Can the EAP help supervisors with their daily job functions? In what way?

Ending Question: All things considered, what are the most important aspects of today's discussion?

APPENDIX THREE

<div align="center">

RESEARCH: DRAKENSBERG POWER STATION

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: FOCUS GROUP 2

(SUPERVISORS)

</div>

TOPIC: Experiences and perceptions with regard to supervisory training

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

Opening Question: Follow – up from previous group discussion.

- What do you expect to happen when you refer someone to the EAP

- You spoke about no confidence in the system; do you think people believe the service is confidentiality? I mean was municipality for counselling, but not the EAP?

Introductory Question: Supervisors are considered to be key figures, in implementing a successful EAP, why do you think that is?

Transitional Question: Do supervisors have reservations about referring employees to the EAP? If so, discuss reasons why supervisors are reluctant to refer.
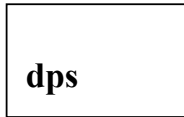
Key Questions:

1. Have supervisors received supervisory training? Discuss supervisors' experience of supervisory training, if applicable.

2. If supervisors did not receive supervisory training, how did they obtain their knowledge/information about the EAP?

3. Is it necessary for supervisors to be knowledgeable about the EAP? What do they need to know?

4. What do you understand by the terms:

    - Referral

    - Follow-up

    - Re-entry

5. What are your thoughts with regard to further EAP training?

Ending Question: All things considered, what are the most important aspects of today's discussion?

APPENDIX FOUR

RESEARCH: DRAKENSBERG POWER STATION

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: SEMI – STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

(NON- SUPERVISORY EMPLOYEES)

dps

Code

DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS:

Race: **Education Level:**

Language: **Job Description:**

TOPICS AND GUIDING QUESTIONS:

❑ **Employee Awareness of the EAP.**

    o The visibility of the EAP.

        1. Did you know Peaking has an Employee Assistance Program?   [Y] [N]

        2. Do you know which company provides the EAP?   [Y] [N]

        3. What is it called?

        4. When and where did you first hear about the EAP?

        5. Have you seen any promotional material for the service? If yes, what type of material?   [Y] [N]

        6. Have you seen a Peaking EAP Policy Statement?   [Y] [N]

    o EAP awareness amongst family members.

        1. Did you know that your immediate family could also use the EAP?   [Y] [Y]

        2. Have you told your family about the EAP?   [Y] [N]

        3. If not, please motivate your answer.

        4. Have you given them the hotline number?   [Y] [N]

        5. If no, please motivate your answer.

❑ **Experiences and Perceptions with regard to Utilisation of the EAP.**

- o Employee perceptions of using the EAP.
  1. Who do you think should utilise the EAP services?
  2. Do you know anyone who used the EAP? | Y | N |
  3. Would you use the EAP, if you had a problem? | Y | N |
  4. How does one get into contact with an EAP counsellor? | Y | N |
  5. Have you used the EAP?
  6. If yes, were you satisfied with the service? Please motivate your answer.
  7. Would you advise a friend/colleague/family member to | Y | N | use the EAP? Please motivate your answer.
  8. Should any changes be made to the EAP? If yes, what would you suggest?
  9. Should ESKOM continue with the EAP? | Y | N |

- o The employee description of EAP.
  1. What do you think EAP services are?
  2. Who can refer people to the EAP?
  3. What type of problems do you think the EAP deal with?

- o Employee concerns about confidentiality.
  1. Are services perceived as being confidential? Please | Y | N | motivate your answer.
  2. Who do you think knows what you tell the EAP practitioner?
  3. In your opinion, how could the confidentiality of EAP matters be enhanced?