

The role of the Employee Assistance Programme in addressing job performance of educators

By

Tobana Benedicta Guqaza

A mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree:

Master of Social Sciences: Employee Assistance Programme

MSocSci: EAP

In the Department of Social Work and Criminology at the:

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SUPERVISOR: PROF DR. L.S. TERBLANCHE

October 2012

The role of the Employee Assistance Programme in addressing job performance of educators

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	5
ABSTRACT	6
LIST OF TABLES	7
CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM FORMULATION	8
1.1 Introduction to the research problem	8
1.2 Problem formulation	12
1.3 Goals and objectives of the study	14
1.4 Research question of the study	16
1.5 Research approach	16
1.6 Type of research	17
1.7 Research design and methodology	17
1.8 Pilot study	19
1.9 Description of the population. Sample and sampling method	20
1.10 Ethical aspects	22
1.11 Definition of key concepts	25
1.12 Limitations of the study	28
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	29
2.1 Introduction	29
2.2 Use of EAP in organizations	31
2.3 The Department of Basic Education as an organization	34
2.4 Challenges facing educators	37
2.5 The impact of a number of challenges on the health and the job performance of educators	58

2.6 The role of the Employee Assistance Programme in addressing employee performance problems	64
2.7 Summary	73
CHAPTER 3: EMPIRICAL STUDY-PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS	75
CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	112
4.1 Conclusion	112
4.2 Recommendations	114
REFERENCES	116
APPENDICES:	123
A. Permission letter from the Ethics Committee	
B. Informed consent letter and blank consent form	
C. Interview schedule for the focus groups	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Let me take this opportunity to express my gratitude and appreciation to:

My Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ of Nazareth: It is only by Your grace and favour on my life that I've been able to achieve this milestone. Without You Lord I am nothing.

Doctor Lourie Terblanche, my supervisor: For giving me the chance to enrol for this course, your continued support throughout the chapters, and for believing in me when there were delays along the way.

All the authors of sources quoted in this study: Without you I wouldn't have the foundation to build on.

The principals and educators of the schools: For allowing me to encroach on your tuition time. Even though the debate touched on sore thumbs, I believe it was worth the while as a step towards finding the 'Balm in Gilead' for our beloved Eastern Cape Department of Education.

Last but not least, my boys, David-Musasizi & James-Ntando, and my entire family: For your unwavering support and inspiration in all my endeavours.

ABSTRACT

The study was aimed at exploring the role of the Employee Assistance Programme in addressing the job performance of educators in the Eastern Cape Department of Education as it is affected by both personal and work related challenges.

Non-probability purposive sampling was used to select schools that had once utilized the EAP and had more than ten educators in their staff establishment. One school was selected from each of the 3 clusters into which the province is divided, with cluster C having two schools chosen because of its size and demographics. A focus group interview method was used to collect the data.

According to the findings of this study most educators are frustrated and demoralized due to various challenges they encounter in both their personal and work lives but, what was outstanding was the fact that they were blaming the new political dispensation for the deteriorating culture of teaching and learning. Among the things they mentioned as the source of their frustration were the lack of support by both the government and the parents, lack of learner discipline and commitment, too many curriculum changes, lack of incentives and opportunities for promotion, and lack of resources.

It transpired that even though they were faced with so many challenges, they had no coping mechanisms and were not aware of any EAP services available in the department. They all admitted to have been taken to team buildings when they had conflicts in their respective schools and that relationships improved after that, but were not aware that it was a service available from EAP since they were organized by their EDOs.

From this study it was clear that EAP was not marketed well enough to the intended beneficiaries hence it was not fully utilized and seemed not to be playing its role in improving job performance of educators in the department.

There were no differences in the views shared by participants based on school location but there were more negative emotions on the older participants compared with the younger ones.

One challenge that became obvious in the execution of the EAP mandate was the absence of a specific EAP Act.

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
Table 3.3.1: Focus Group 1	70
Table 3.3.2: Focus Group 2	71
Table 3.3.3: Focus Group 3	72
Table 3.3.4: Focus Group 4	73

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM FORMULATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Since the 1980s many South African companies have recognized the potential of EAPs to play a role in improving employees' performance by improving their health, mental health and life-management knowledge and skills (Harper, 1999:1).

In his foreword to a report on *'Evaluation of Employee Assistance Programme in the Public Service'* published by the Public Service Commission in 2006, Sangwini states that "in the light of the growing number of employees needing assistance due to organisational transformation, increased work stresses, as well as the impact of HIV and AIDS in the workplace, it is imperative to ensure the optimal functioning of EAPs in the Public Service".

Sonnenstuhl and Trice (in Hartwell, Steele, French, Potter, Rodman & Zarkin, 1996:804), define EAPs as "job-based programs operating within a work organization for the purposes of identifying 'troubled employees', motivating them to resolve their troubles, and providing access to counseling or treatment for those employees who need these services".

EAPA-SA (2005:7) defines EAP as "a worksite based programme, designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employees impaired by personal concerns including, but not limited to: health, drug, legal, emotional, stress or other personal concerns which may adversely affect employee job performance".

The first definition by Sonnenstuhl and Trice is narrow in that it refers only to identifying a troubled employee and says nothing about the prevention strategies that make EAP a proactive programme. According to the researcher's opinion, the second definition misses one other important objective of EAP- 'the assisting of the employee in **the**

improvement of his social functioning'. This is as equally important as the increasing of productivity, since problems at home and/or with colleagues can impact on job performance.

The researcher would like to define EAP as a work-site based programme that utilizes 7 specific core technologies/competencies to assist in the prevention, identification and resolution of employee personal and work related problems that impact negatively on job performance, and whose ultimate goal is the improvement of productivity and service delivery in the organization and social functioning of the employee.

The above definitions indicate special features of EAP which makes it a specialized programme within the workplace. EAP uses specific core technologies, addresses all kinds of challenges facing the employee, and has a dual responsibility to both the employer and the employee. For the employer the aim is to improve productivity, and for the employee, it is to improve both productivity and social functioning. This notion is supported by Harper (1999:11) when she describes an EAP as a management tool with two aims: helping an individual employee to overcome mental and bio psychosocial problems that affect performance and well-being; and assisting employers to have a healthier and more productive workforce.

A comprehensive EAP target market focuses on supporting and developing the present and potential capacity of employees, as well as recognizing the interrelationship between the individual, his family and/or community and the well-being and ability of the employee to function productively (Harper, 1999:10).

According to Tiner (2006) one of the key assets of an EAP is the training of supervisors on 'constructive confrontation', which provides them with a valuable and practical tool for handling troubled employees and helping retain formerly productive workers. EAP therefore, functions optimally when there is good cooperation from supervisors since they are the ones who are in a position to identify timeously employees struggling with issues. According to Harper (1999:6), the long-term viability and adaptability of an EAP is dependent on a strong management and administrative system that is able to monitor the changing needs and goals of employees and the organization and to respond to them. In her study, Harper also discovered that although most South African companies have an EAP, many companies appear to be unaware of the scope and role of the EAPs and of the role that professionals can and should be playing in their organizations. The EAP

infrastructure has not been perceived by decision-makers as an integral and essential part of effective human resource management or as an ideal vehicle for taking an integrated approach to managing the impact of AIDS, violence, substance abuse, transformation, etc., on employee functioning and the pursuit of business objectives (Harper, 1999:2).

This ignorance about the role of EAP has a huge bearing on the success of the EAP programmes in the various organizations. The success of any EAP is measured to a certain extent by its utilization statistics but most importantly its impact in improving job performance of the employees in that particular company.

For an EAP to be considered as part of the core business it needs to ensure that the services contribute to addressing the issues that are given priority by decision-makers in their organizations and failure to do so could lead to the under-utilization of the EAP and its practitioners (Harper, 1999:11, 17). It is from this point that the study emanates.

According to the researcher, the status of EAP in the Eastern Cape Department of Education has not changed much from the findings made by Harper in the study she conducted in 1999 about EAPs in South African companies. EAPs are regarded as a convenience rather than a core component of effective human resource management (Harper, 1999:5).

The core business of the Department of Education is 'teaching and learning'. Educators are the key role-players in this core business in that they are the ones who teach so that learners can learn and pass. In other words, educators are the core drivers of the mandate of the department. The role of support programmes like the EAP can however not be over emphasized. Workers need to be healthy physically, psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually in order to perform optimally. As stated above, EAP is the programme designed to take care of the wellness of employees while they are taking care of the core business of the department and thereby ensuring a better productivity for the whole department.

Educators, like all other employees face a lot of challenges both at home and at work, which can affect negatively their job performance. The unprofessional behaviour and poor job performance of educators have been a public debate for quite some time now in the media, for example in television programmes such as 'the cutting edge' and radio talk

shows such as 'Twelve-Down' of Umhlobo Wenene. Some reports, in the form of referrals are brought to the attention of the Employee Assistance Programme by relatives of educators themselves, the school principals, the Education Development Officers, and the labour relations officers (all whose names cannot be mentioned due to confidentiality). Such behaviour includes among others, too much absenteeism/presenteeism which leads to very little contact time between the educator and the learner, alcohol abuse during school hours or educators who come to school drunk, inability to finish the prescribed syllabi, educators either not giving the required number of tasks expected per term/year or not marking the work given to learners, as a result some educators disappear with no trace when it is time for continuous assessment moderation. All this leads to high failure rate of learners at the end of the year.

According to the researcher's experience with assessments of the referred cases, all of the problems mentioned above are usually symptoms of bigger underlying problems which need to be addressed through the interventions of an EAP rather than only a disciplinary action. Surprisingly, there is very much under-utilization of the EAP in the Eastern Cape Department of Education especially by educators. At the end of 2009/10 financial year, EAP utilization statistics stood at 0, 84% of the total employee population. This could be caused by a lack of integration of the EAP to the department's core business (not being made a key performance area of every manager), or lack of understanding of EAP on the part of managers and supervisors, or a lack of awareness about the existence and the benefits of an EAP on the part of the educators. Lack of awareness was the major reason mentioned in a needs assessment conducted in 2007 which the researcher was part of.

A previous study conducted by Mzamo (2004:57) in the Libode area of the Eastern Cape, indicated that teachers are suffering from a lot of stress and that EAP is non-existent. This was true then but now at least in every district there is a care taker of EAP even if s/he is not employed full time as an EAP practitioner with appropriate qualifications in social sciences.

The rationale for this study therefore was to look at the personal and work related challenges that affect the job performance of educators and then get their perception regarding the role of EAP in addressing these challenges.

The results of the study will assist in identifying gaps in the educators' knowledge of EAP and its role in supporting the departmental core business of 'learning and teaching'. The views of the educators will also inform future planning for the EAP so that services rendered are relevant to the needs of the employees and thus increase programme utilization and improve job performance of educators.

1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION

The researcher in this study used to be an Assistant Director of the Employee Assistance Programme, based at Zwelitsha, the Head Office of the Eastern Cape Department of Education. The main function of the researcher was to coordinate the Employee Assistance Programme in the whole province. This includes designing intervention programmes and cascading them down to all the 23 districts of the province for the implementation by the district EAP coordinators. All referrals needing counselling and some needing rehabs were faxed or e-mailed to the Head Office for assessment and referral to independent health professionals. The reason for this being the delay in the awarding of a Life Management Programme tender to relevant EAP vendors for 24/7 counselling, centralization of the budget at Head Office, as well as a lack of expertise in most coordinators to handle cases.

The results of the study would therefore assist the EAP of the department in designing interventions that are tailor-made to the needs of the educators which form the biggest clientele of the EAP.

The purpose of problem formulation is to establish the problem leading to the study, to cast the problem within the larger scholarly literature, to discuss deficiencies in the literature about the problem, and lastly to target an audience and note the significance of the problem for the audience (Punch, 2006:64).

The problem at hand was the job performance of educators which seemed to have fallen below the expected standard according to the public opinion due to various challenges,

and the underutilization of the EAP which is supposed to be playing a big role in assisting these educators and thus improve their job performance.

Hosking (1998:9) paints a bleak picture of South African schools when he quotes the South African Institute of Race Relations saying:

There is little or no adherence to the timetable. Teachers decide for themselves when the next lesson is to begin, and it is often skipped altogether. Teachers spend lengthy periods sitting outside and some even frequent shebeens during school hours. In many black schools it is estimated that as few as 100 actual teaching days out of a possible 195 are realized in practice. A critical reason for this is the high incidence of absenteeism among pupils, teachers and (most serious of all) the principals themselves.

As indicated previously, such behaviour is usually the symptom rather than the cause. This means that when addressed, various reasons could come up as the main cause of such deviant behaviour.

From a case management database compiled by the researcher, here are some of the presenting challenges that usually affect the job performance of employees who come to the EAP:

Work-related challenges-

- Interpersonal conflicts and workplace violence;
- Poor management styles portrayed by inconsistency in dealing with cases of misconduct;
- Work overload leading to stress and anger;
- Inability to adapt to change brought by the Outcomes Based Education (OBE) and the New Curriculum Statement (NCS) leading to low professional self-esteem;
- Unsafe and unhealthy working environment;
- HIV and AIDS pandemic which makes educators to play parental and social support roles they are not equipped for.

Personal challenges-

- Marriage/relationship problems;
- Diseases of lifestyle such as hypertension;
- Parenting;
- Lack of personal financial management skill which leads to over-indebtedness;

- Grief and loss;
- Being HIV infected and/or affected.

Malan (1997) as cited in Mzamo (2004:1) states that:

Since 1994, teachers in South Africa have been subject to major policy changes that have transformed not only the schools, but also the way teachers have to do their work. Key to these changes was the introduction of the outcomes-based education (OBE), which demanded that educators should adopt new teaching and assessment methods. He goes on further to say that whilst OBE gave teachers more freedom to exercise their own creativity, it also demands a higher degree of responsibility, accountability and professionalism.

Psychological preparedness of educators through programmes such as the EAP is usually necessary when such changes are about to be introduced, in order to avoid resistance to change and the stress that comes with it.

The question then was: what role should an EAP play in addressing these challenges that affect the job performance of educators. Secondly, are the educators aware of such role? (In other words are they aware of the assistance available from the EAP in the department?) If yes, why are they not fully utilizing the programme?

The main units of analysis in this research were the educators, while the main focus of the study was their personal and work related challenges as well as their views regarding the role of EAP in addressing such challenges that affect their job performance.

1.3 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

THE GOAL:

According to Fouché and De Vos (2005:104) a goal is the same as the purpose or the aim of the study. It is the end product or result one wants to achieve when conducting research. This end result determines whether research is basic or applied.

The goal of the study was to explore the understanding of the educators about the role of the EAP in addressing their job performance, with the ultimate intention of increasing their utilization of the programme.

THE OBJECTIVES:

Fouché and De Vos (2005:104) define 'objective' as the more concrete, measurable and more speedily attainable conception of the 'goal'. It is the steps one has to take, one by one, realistically at grass-roots level, within a certain time span, in order to attain the goal. The researcher clearly specifies what s/he needs to find out (goal), and then s/he needs to determine the best way to do it (objectives) (Babbie, 2007:115).

According to Fouche and De Vos (2005:105), there are three primary objectives: exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory.

- Exploration is the attempt to develop an initial, rough understanding of some phenomenon of which little is known;
- "Descriptive research attempts to describe systematically a situation, problem, phenomenon, service or program, or provides information about, say, the living conditions of a community, or describes attitudes towards an issue (Kumar, 2005: 10)".
- In explanatory research, the researcher encounters an issue that is already known and has a description of it, but he is prompted to ask why things are the way they are. It therefore builds on exploratory and descriptive research (Fouche & De Vos, 2005:106).

Fouché and De Vos (2005:106) continue to say that studies may have multiple objectives, but one objective is usually dominant. The objectives of a study need to be specific, measurable, attainable, and time-bound. Kumar (2005:50) is of the opinion that the objectives should start with words such as 'to determine', 'to find out', 'to ascertain', 'to measure' and 'to explore', and this will guide the researcher to the type of research design he/she needs to adopt to achieve them.

The objectives of this study were:

1. To conceptualize EAP utilization with reference to job performance;
2. To explore and describe personal and work related challenges facing educators;
3. To explore educators' awareness and understanding of the role of EAP; and
4. To give recommendations with regard to the role of EAP in addressing the problems affecting the job performance of educators.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION OF THE STUDY

According to Mouton (2001:4) three factors determine the formulation of a research question: the unit of analysis; the research goal (or the type of research question); and the research approach.

There needs to always be a correlation between the research topic, the research goal and the research question. Qualitative research asks different sorts of questions-not those relating to outcomes or strengths of association, but questions about process, understandings and beliefs, and the questions can evolve as the project unfolds (Barbour, 2008:31).

The research question for this study was:

What are personal and work related challenges facing educators in the Eastern Cape, and what is their understanding with regard to the role of the EAP in assisting them to address these challenges so as to improve their job performance?

1.5 RESEARCH APPROACH

Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:9) describe qualitative research as the research that tries to achieve an insider's view by talking to subjects using unstructured interviewing. Qualitative research is concerned with understanding the processes and the social cultural contexts which underlie various behavioural patterns and is mostly concerned with exploring the "why" questions of research with the intention of developing an understanding of the meaning imparted by the participants.

In line with Yates' (2004:138) description of a qualitative research, this study was aimed at:

- Exploring how the educators give meaning to and express their understanding of themselves, their experiences and their personal or work related challenges;

- Finding out and describing in detail deviant behaviour shown by some educators as well as exploring the reasons for such behaviour and its impact on their job performance;
- Achieving an in-depth understanding and detailed description of the educators' perceptions regarding the role of EAP in addressing their job performance challenges.

As a qualitative research this study had to produce descriptive data in the educators' own spoken words, thus identifying their beliefs and values that underlie the phenomena (Fouché & Delport, 2005:74).

1.6 TYPE OF RESEARCH

The type of research is determined by the goal of the research. If the goal is to extend the knowledge base of that particular discipline or theory building, such a research becomes a pure or basic research.

Applied research is designed to offer practical solutions to a concrete problem or addresses the immediate and specific needs of clinicians or practitioners (Neuman, 2006:25). Neuman further states that applied researchers rely on a quick, small-scale study that provides practical results that people can use in the short term.

Applied research was then deemed suitable for this study since the goal of the study was to explore the understanding of the educators about the role of the EAP in addressing their job performance, with the ultimate intention of increasing their utilization of the programme.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN:

A research design refers to those groups of small worked-out formulas from which researchers can select or develop one (or more) suitable to their specific research goals and objectives e.g. experimental or case study design (Fouché, 2005:268). It implies certain procedures or the overall plan the researcher will follow to conduct the investigation.

Fouché (2005:272) states that, in a case study there is an exploration and description of the case through detailed, in-depth data collection methods, involving multiple sources of information that are rich in context. These may include interviews, documents, observations or archival records.

For this particular study a **collective case study design** was used because it was deemed appropriate to further the understanding of the researcher about challenges impacting on the job performance of educators as well as their perceptions on the role of EAP in addressing these challenges. The perceptions were then to be compared according to the regions or clusters from where the educators were selected.

DATA COLLECTION:

Kvale (in Greeff, 2005:287) defines a qualitative interview as “an attempt to understand the world from the participants’ point of view, to unfold the meaning of people’s experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations”.

A focus group is a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions, points of view, experiences, wishes and concerns on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment (Greeff, 2005:298).

Barbour (2008:18) raises an alarm against researchers who mistakenly use the term focus group yet they conduct a group interview. Rather than allowing focus group discussions to focus on the interaction between participants they structurally put each question to each of the participants in turn.

Semi-structured interviews are used to gain a detailed picture of a participant’s beliefs about, or perceptions or accounts of, a particular topic. Semi-structured interviews give both the researcher and the participant much more flexibility in that the researcher is able to follow up particular interesting avenues that emerge in the interview, while also there is allowance for the ordering of questions to take account of the priority accorded each topic by the interviewee (Greeff, 2005:296).

In this study data was collected through focus group interviews using a semi structured interview schedule.

DATA ANALYSIS:

According to Creswell's (1998) analytic spiral in De Vos (2005:334-339) data analysis away from the site involves the following:

- Organizing the data: this involves transcribing the responses of educators verbatim from the tape recorder;
- Generating categories, themes, and patterns is the core of data analysis: it is about identifying salient themes, recurring ideas or language, and patterns of belief that link the educators together (De Vos, 2005:338);
- This is followed by the coding of the data to identify similar themes in all the transcripts, describing them, testing emergent understanding of the content of the themes, verifying them by direct quotations from the respondents, using the literature to interpret one's description of the themes, and searching for alternative explanations or other themes if one fails to understand a theme.

1.8 PILOT STUDY

A pilot study is "a small study conducted prior to a larger piece of research to determine whether the methodology, sampling, instruments and analysis are adequate and appropriate (Strydom, 2005a:206).

PILOT TESTING:

Pilot testing is about trying out the research instruments such as questionnaires or interview schedule on a small number of people with the same characteristics as the population of study. This allows the researcher an opportunity to edit the schedule and change ambiguous questions as noted by the responses of the pilot group, before taking it to the main study.

According to Greeff (2005:309), pilot testing the interview schedule on focus groups is difficult because the questions used in focus group interviews are hard to separate from the environment and that the true pilot test is the first focus group with the participants. In other words, the views, perceptions, ideas that will come out of each focus group will always differ according to factors affecting each particular group and can never be accurately predicted.

Two educators from the King Williams Town schools were used to form a focus group pilot test.

FEASIBILITY OF THE STUDY:

The study was considered feasible from the beginning since the researcher was employed in the Provincial Employee Assistance Programme of the Eastern Cape Department of Education, and that feasibility was not hindered even though the researcher had moved to another department by the time she conducted the study.

1.9 DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION, SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD

POPULATION:

The population encompasses the total collection of all units of analysis about which the researcher wishes to make specific conclusions (Welman *et al.*, 2005:52). The units of analysis could be individuals, groups, organizations, human products, or events. To define the population, a researcher specifies the unit being sampled, the geographical location, and the temporal boundaries of populations.

The populations of this study were all the educators in the Eastern Cape Department of Education.

SAMPLE:

It is not possible for a researcher to use the whole population for a study because that would cost him/her a lot of money and time. Therefore a sample is usually selected from the population. A sample is a smaller set of cases a researcher selects from a larger pool and generalized to the population (Neuman, 2006:219).

This study involved a sample of 4 focus groups with between 10-14 educators in each group, with group 4 having two non-teaching staff, an admin officer and a general assistant.

SAMPLING METHOD:

In non-probability sampling the odds of selecting a particular individual are not known because the researcher does not know the population size or the members of the population (Gravetter & Forzano, 2003:118).

Purposive sampling is based on the judgment of the researcher regarding the characteristics of a representative sample. A sample is chosen on the basis of what the researcher considers to be typical units (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2006:106).

Non-probability purposive sampling was appropriate because the researcher had no information regarding all the schools in the province, their location, their accessibility, and their staff establishments but at least wanted schools that have once utilized the EAP and have more than ten educators in their staff establishment. This was done through the assistance of the district EAP coordinators. These schools were also selected according to the 3 clusters into which the province is divided (cluster A, B, and C) so as to cater for the different demographics of the province and ensure representativity of the sample and one school was chosen from each cluster (with an extra school from cluster C because of the vastness of the cluster, combining the former Ciskei and the old RSA). From that chosen school, all educators were briefed on the research purpose and the consent letter was read and those who were not willing to participate were allowed to leave and fortunately no school had less than ten educators willing to participate.

1.10 ETHICAL ASPECTS

“Ethics is a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students (Strydom, 2005b: 57).

1.10.1 AVOIDANCE OF HARM

If respondents could experience physical, psychological or emotional harm by the research, they need to be informed beforehand so that they can decide if they want to continue or withdraw. Emotional harm is more difficult to detect than physical harm, yet emotional harm is most probable in social work research. Recalling to memory the negative behaviour of the past could lead to renewed personal harassment or embarrassment (Strydom, 2005b:58).

No harm was anticipated in this study and no harm was done to participants.

1.10.2 DECEPTION OF SUBJECTS

According to Neuman (2000:229), deception occurs when a researcher deliberately misleads subjects by way of written or verbal instructions, the actions of other people, or certain aspects of the setting. Strydom (2005b:60) says that should there be any deception of which the researcher was not aware, or which may have crept into the investigation; it must be rectified immediately after or during the debriefing interview.

There was no deliberate deception of participants in this study as the intention was explained in the letters requesting permission from the principals and in the informed consent letter, (yet in the last school which seemed to be riddled with conflict they mistakenly assumed that since the researcher was in EAP she had come to sort out their conflict. This was then corrected during the conclusion of the interview).

1.10.3 INFORMED CONSENT

The researcher must explain beforehand to the participants the purpose of the study, how they were chosen, and their right to refuse to participate and withdraw from the study should they feel uncomfortable (Bless *et al.*, 2006:142; Yates, 2004:160).

A consent letter was read out to all educators present, and those who were willing to participate were then given a consent form to sign. Permission was requested to use a digital voice recorder during the focus group interviews to assist in data analysis and for storage of data at the University of Pretoria.

1.10.4 PRIVACY/ANONIMITY/CONFIDENTIALITY

The right to privacy means that people have the right to refuse to be interviewed, to answer telephonic or e-mail questionnaires, or to answer any question. It also means that people should not be interviewed at mealtimes, at night, and for long periods (Mouton, 2001:243).

Privacy was respected since all who were not comfortable with the study were allowed to leave. The interviews did not take more than an hour and were not conducted during lunch hours. In some cases the school gave permission to interview during short breaks but snacks were available

Anonymity means that the respondents should be assured that there is no way that the response could be linked to him/her if he wants to remain anonymous. In other words, anonymity says that even the researcher should not know which respondent gave which response.

Anonymity was not possible in this study since it used focus groups.

Confidentiality means that the researcher and his technical assistants may know who gave what response, but they should never divulge the respondents' responses and names in the study to anyone who was not involved in the study. The information, especially sensitive and personal information should not be released in a way that

permits linking specific individuals to responses (Neuman, 2006:139; Bless *et al.*, 2006:143; Mouton, 2001:243).

Confidentiality was guaranteed in the informed consent stage.

1.10.5 COMPETENCE OF THE RESEARCHER

Strydom (2005b:63) says that the researcher must refrain from value judgments about the points of view and actions of subjects, even if they conflict directly with his.

A researcher has an ethical obligation towards all colleagues in the scientific community to report correctly on the analysis of the data and the results of the study and should constantly be aware of his ethical responsibility (Babbie, 2001:475).

The research process was conducted competently and honestly by the researcher.

1.10.6 RELEASE OF FINDINGS

Researchers are accountable to give accurate, objective, clear and unambiguous information (Creswell, 2003:66; Strydom, 2005b:66). Plagiarism is a fraud and should be avoided by giving due recognition to sources consulted and people who collaborated (Neuman, 2006:130). Direct quotations from sources should be indicated as such. Any limitations and errors in the study must be admitted.

All data has been presented accurately and sources consulted in this study are acknowledged. Any limitations of the study are mentioned.

1.10.7 DEBRIEFING OF PARTICIPANTS

Debriefing sessions after the focus group interviews provide participants with an opportunity to work through their experience and its aftermath and minimize any harm that might have occurred (Judd *et al.* (1991) as quoted by Strydom, 2005b:66). This author believes that for the debriefing to be effective, it needs to take place in a

supportive or therapeutic context. During the debriefing the researcher gets to rectify any misconceptions that might have arisen in the minds of participants after the completion of the research project.

There was no indication that participants experienced emotional harm during the study.

1.11 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (EAP)

Mabe (1999:27) speaks of a 'systems or ecological approach' of the EAPs which involves looking at the larger picture of the employee's lives, including both personal and work life. He states that some problems arise from intra-personal, interpersonal, institutional, and socio-cultural which necessitate a treatment of not only the individual but also the system around him/her.

EAPs typically provide a broad range of work- and life-related assistance for employees and family members. Coming from a history of being the programme for alcoholics in the workplace, EAPs have continuously evolved to include more services such as referrals for legal or financial counselling and child/elder care, conducting mental health educational sessions at the worksite, as well as assessment, referral, and brief interventions for behavioural health conditions (Azzone, McCann, Merrick, Hiatt, Hodgkin & Horgan, 2009: 345).

EAPA-SA (2010:1) defines Employee Assistance Programme as "the work organization's resource based on core technologies or functions to enhance employee and workplace effectiveness through prevention, identification, and resolution of personal and productivity issues".

In the Eastern Cape Department of Education most employees refer to EAP as "Wellness" since EAP is one of the legs of the bigger programme called 'Employee Health and Wellness'.

EDUCATOR:

An educator is the one who is skilled in teaching, giving intellectual, moral and social instruction to a learner (*Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 2004:455).

According to *The Chambers Dictionary* (2006:477) an educator is a teacher who facilitates education for an individual student, whose role is often formal and on-going, carried out by way of occupation or profession at a school or other place of formal education.

The above definitions show that the word 'educator' is synonymous with the word 'teacher'. In South Africa the word 'educator' has been mostly preferred in the recent years of 90s with the introduction of the Outcomes Based Education.

JOB PERFORMANCE:

Collins English Dictionary (2003: 86) defines job performance as a work performance in terms of quantity and quality expected from each employee according to the standards set by the employer and /or the supervisor.

An individual job performance is an extremely important criterion that relates to organizational outcomes and success. Job performance does not have to be directly observable actions of an individual. It can consist of mental productions such as answers or decisions as in the case of top management positions.

ROLE:

A 'role' is defined as "The actions and activities assigned to or required of a person or group (*Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 2004:904)."

Collins English Dictionary (2003:100) defines a 'role' as a prescribed behaviour associated with a particular position or status in a group or organization.

In this study, role of EAP means the expected functions or services to be rendered by EAP to the department and its employees in support of the departmental mandate of teaching and learning.

STRESS:

Dunham (in Mzamo, 2004:8) defines stress as process of behavioural, emotional and physical reactions caused by prolonged, increasing or new pressures, which are significantly greater than coping resources.

According to Kyriacou (2000:3-4), stress can be defined as the degree of mismatch between the demands made on a person and the person's ability to meet those demands. How much it affects an individual depends on his/her perception of the mismatch. This author goes on to define teacher stress as the experience by a teacher of unpleasant negative emotions, such as anger, frustration, anxiety, depression and nervousness, resulting from some aspects of their work as a teacher.

BURNOUT:

Dale (in Travers & Cooper, 1996:24) define burnout as a reaction to job-related stress that varies in nature with the intensity and duration of the stress itself, resulting on workers becoming emotionally detached from their jobs altogether.

In the same source above, burnout among educators is explained as total emotional exhaustion resulting from long-term effect of teacher stress which may lead to out-of-school apathy, alienation from work and withdrawal into a number of defensive strategies. It is a type of chronic response to the cumulative long-term negative impact of work stress, different from short-term acute stress, far more intense, and refers to the negative working conditions, when job stress seems unavoidable to an individual, and sources of satisfaction or relief appear unavailable.

This means that burnout is more severe than stress. A good distinction found in Mzamo (2004:9) says that somebody who was stressed could take an extended vacation and

return rejuvenated and ready to work, while someone who had burnout would after few days of returning from vacation begin to feel as miserable as before the vacation.

1.12 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Some participants who are shy were not free to talk in these focus groups however much you encouraged them while talkative ones were dominating.
- Most participants were not willing to talk about personal challenges in a group setting
- Time permitted by schools was limited, either during breaks or towards the end of the school day. When the bell rung educators were distracted and this forced the researcher to sometimes dictate the interview when time was passing and participants were quiet.
- In some instances one could see that educators were not willing to voice out their views when the cause of work related challenges was the principal himself and his HODs, especially where they were part of the interview.
- Participants in the study were taken from public schools only and there was no group that belonged to the former model C schools. This was due to their non-availability and their non-utilization of the EAP. This could in a way limit generalization of the results.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE CHALLENGES FACING EDUCATORS AND THE USE OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME IN ADDRESSING PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter comprises a literature review on the definition and use of the Employee Assistance Programme in organizations, the challenges facing educators in both their personal lives and their teaching careers, the behavioural problems and ill-health that emanate from the inability to deal with those challenges and their impact on job performance and on the productivity of the department, and finally the role of the EAP in addressing performance problems (using the core technologies) is discussed.

Most of the review will be based on the results of previous studies conducted by other researchers on problems facing the Department of Education in post-apartheid South Africa, as well as on sources written about stressors in the life of an educator.

It is important to start with an explanation of an 'Employee Assistance Programme', and an 'educator' in the context of this chapter.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (EAP)

Since the 1980s, many South African companies have recognized the potential of EAPs to play a role in improving employee performance by improving their health, mental health and life-management knowledge and skills (Harper, 1999: 1).

Sonnenstuhl and Trice (in Hartwell, Steele, French, Potter, Rodman & Zarkin, 1996:804) define EAPs as "job-based programmes operating within a work organization for the purposes of identifying 'troubled employees', motivating them to resolve their troubles, and providing access to counselling or treatment for those employees who need these services".

EAPA-SA (2005:7) defines EAP as “a worksite-based programme, designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employees impaired by personal concerns, including, but not limited to, health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress, or other personal issues that may adversely affect employee job performance”.

The latest definition by the EAPA-SA (2010:1) states that the Employee Assistance Programme is “the work organization’s resource based on core technologies or functions to enhance employee and workplace effectiveness through prevention, identification, and resolution of personal and productivity issues”.

The above definitions indicate the special features of the EAP that make it a specialized programme in the workplace. The EAP uses specific core technologies, addresses all kinds of challenges facing the employee, and has a dual responsibility to both the employer and the employee. As far as the employer is concerned, the aim is to improve productivity, while for the employee it is to improve both job performance and social functioning. The EAP functions optimally when there is good support and cooperation from supervisors, as they are in a position to identify timeously employees struggling with issues.

EAPs typically provide a broad range of work- and life-related assistance for employees and family members. With a history of being the programme for alcoholics in the workplace, the EAP has continuously evolved to include more services, such as referrals for legal or financial counselling and child/elder care, conducting mental health educational sessions at the worksite, as well as assessment, referral, and brief interventions for behavioural health conditions (Azzone, McCann, Merrick, Hiatt, Hodgkin & Horgan, 2009: 345).

Mabe (1999:27) speaks of the ‘systems or ecological approach’ by the EAP, which involves looking at the larger picture of employees’ lives, including both their personal and work lives. He states that some problems arise from intra-personal, interpersonal, institutional, and socio-cultural sources which necessitate a treatment of not only the individual but also the system around him/her.

EDUCATOR

An educator is one who is skilled in teaching, giving intellectual, moral and social instruction to a learner (*Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 2004:455).

According to *Chambers Dictionary* (2006:477), an educator is a teacher who facilitates education for an individual student, whose role is often formal and on-going, carried out by way of occupation or profession at a school or other place of formal education.

In South Africa, the word 'educator' was mostly preferred during the recent 90s decade, with the introduction of Outcomes Based Education. The term 'educator' is therefore going to be used throughout this document, except in cases of direct quotations from other sources that use the word 'teacher'.

2.2 USE OF EAP IN ORGANIZATIONS

In his foreword to a report on '*Evaluation of Employee Assistance Programme in the Public Service*', published by the Public Service Commission in 2006, Sangwini states that "in the light of the growing number of employees needing assistance due to organizational transformation, increased work stresses, as well as the impact of HIV and AIDS in the workplace, it is imperative to ensure the optimal functioning of EAPs in the Public Service". Optimal functioning is determined largely by the employees' awareness and perceptions of the services rendered by the EAP, and can be measured only by statistics and impact assessments.

Although the clinical efficacy and availability of therapeutic interventions for substance use and mental disorders are well established, these treatments remain chronically underutilized, and the vision of EAPs as a gateway to early, effective behavioural health treatment has not been fully realized (Masi *et al.*, 2004 as quoted by Azzone *et al.*, 2009: 345).

In his study on the use of the EAP in the Eastern Cape Department of Agriculture, Musoke (2007:30-32) discovered that various factors played a role in the use of an EAP by its intended beneficiaries, the employees. For example, the more the programme is advocated to the employees and the more their supervisors are trained in 'constructive

confrontation', the more misconceptions will be cleared and programme use will increase. Supervisors are likely to show enthusiasm and initiative regarding the EAP when the training offered outlines first their role in the entire EAP referral process and then how they can retain links with their EAP for follow-ups on referred employees. He further states that, when organized labour and management jointly demonstrate that 'to be troubled is normal', a more trusting environment will exist and employees will feel more comfortable to approach the EAP for assistance. This indicates that the EAP needs a buy-in from both labour unions and the management.

Although there has been limited involvement by the labour unions in the enhancement of Employee Assistance Programmes in South Africa, the unions are currently showing an interest in being trained for the EAP. This suggests that, should they be exposed to such training, they could play a greater role in promoting the concept of Employee Assistance on behalf of their members who are in need of assistance (Terblanche, 2009a: 205-206). Xaba, as quoted by Terblanche in the same source, also concurs that, for any successful establishment and implementation of EAP, there must be proper consultation with the unions.

In situations where employees are not well informed about the role of the EAP, it is easy for them to confuse it with Labour Relations, so they think that asking for help will incriminate them and lead to job loss or jeopardizing their chances of future promotion. In his study, Musoke found that only 37,5% of employees used the EAP, one of the reasons cited being lack of proper clarity on the scope of services offered by the programme. Musoke also believes that the EAP model used may not be suitable for employees on account of the location of the EAP offices, which do not seem to offer confidentiality. One important finding in the study was that relatives made a noticeable number of referrals to the EAP once they were cited and had been made aware of the existence of a programme that would assist in securing their breadwinners' jobs.

Studies conducted on the use of EAP reveal that confidentiality is another crucial consideration. Employees usually approach the EAP with delicate personal matters which they want to remain secret. This means that as soon as the EAP environment fails to guarantee confidentiality there is the likelihood of its being under-used by the employees.

In a study conducted by Harper (1999), it was discovered that, although most South African companies have an EAP, many appear unaware of its scope and role and of the role that professionals can and should be playing in their organizations. EAPs need to initiate policies and guidelines that spell out clearly their procedures when dealing with the various problems facing their employees. Failing this, they are ultimately called “black boxes” by their companies (Lindquist, Clinton-Sherrod, Keshia, Lasater & Walters, 2010:47).

The EAP infrastructure has not been perceived by decision-makers as an integral and essential aspect of effective human resource management or as an ideal vehicle for taking an integrated approach to managing the impact of, inter alia, HIV and AIDS, violence, substance abuse, transformation on employee functioning and the pursuit of business objectives (Harper, 1999:2).

This ‘grey area’ surrounding the role of the EAP has a considerable bearing on the success of the Employee Assistance Programmes in organizations. The success of any EAP is measured to a certain extent by its utilisation statistics but most importantly its impact on improving employee job performance in a particular company.

A further factor which may impact the use of the EAP is whether or not EAP programmes and interventions are tailor-made to the needs of the different categories of employees in a particular organization. One-size-fits-all does not apply in EAP services. There have to be separate ways of intervention for married working mothers, single parents, executive management, newly appointed employees, those about to retire, and so on. This shows the importance of taking cognisance of the demographics of the workforce when designing EAP programmes.

Emener (2003:144) points out that, in addition to collecting data about the clientele to be serviced by the EAP, the practitioner should be someone who knows the organization- its culture, its people, and its goals, and someone who has the respect and trust of both the people and the management. This notion immediately presents a challenge to the Eastern Cape departments, where most practitioners are administrative officers who may not be in a position to take part in the organization’s strategic planning sessions.

2.3 THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION AS AN ORGANIZATION

THE CORE BUSINESS

The core business of the Department of Education is 'effective teaching and learning'. The aim is to produce quality leaders of tomorrow through quality education for a better economy. The impact of the failure to do so will start with the learner, spread to the community and ultimately affect the economy. All structures, systems, and processes in the department must work together for the sake of this mandate. Every employee, be it the educator, the cleaner, the grounds-man, the security guard, the administrative clerk, directors, superintendent-general, and the MEC, must be conscious of his/her role in ensuring that the department executes its mandate and achieve its goals (Department of Education, 2005).

THE VISION, MISSION, AND THE GOALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

Vision: "Our vision is to offer a quality public education system that transforms schools into centres of community and promotes shared moral values, good governance and sustainable development" (Department of Education, 2005).

Mission: The Department of Education provides quality education for sustainable development through:

- providing socially relevant and economically responsive programmes that address the human resource of the province and the country;
- enhancing the skills base for agrarian transformation, manufacturing diversification and tourism in order to meet the needs of the second economy;
- providing quality programmes to build the capacity of all employees;
- encouraging a participatory decision-making process which will empower the whole community at all levels.

Goals of the Department of Education:

Strategic Goal 1: Access to basic education for all learners regardless of race, gender, disability, geographical location and socio-economic status.

Strategic Goal 2: Equity in opportunity and educational achievement for all learners regardless of race, gender, disability, geographical location and socio-economic status.

Strategic Goal 3: The empowerment of all learners to become responsible citizens by equipping them with skills, knowledge and values to contribute positively to the development of both the individual and society.

Strategic Goal 4: Improved quality of teaching and learning at all educational institutions to develop them into thriving centres of excellence.

Strategic Goal 5: Improved institutional efficiency by means of enhanced management systems and integrated service delivery at all organizational levels (National, Provincial, District, Circuit and School).

Strategic Goal 6: Economical, effective, efficient and equitable resourcing within the education system to meet the key educational outcomes and impact (i.e. access to and equity and quality of Education).

Strategic Goal 7: Cohesive and sustainable communities built through co-operation with all stakeholders in Education.

Looking at the goals above, it becomes clear that the department can never achieve them without a healthy, capacitated, motivated, fulfilled and productive workforce, starting from schools up to the provincial office. This is where EAP comes in to bring interventions that will ensure that such a workforce exists. There can be no quality teaching and learning or institutional efficiency if employees are troubled by personal and work related challenges without anyone to turn to for support in the workplace. Some of the goals are likely to be achieved easily when there is higher job satisfaction among the employees and one of the factors that increase job satisfaction is when employees feel that the employer cares for them by putting in place well-resourced benefit programmes like the EAP.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EDUCATORS AS KEY ROLE-PLAYERS IN THE DEPARTMENT'S CORE BUSINESS

The duties and responsibilities of an educator include, but are not limited to, teaching (which includes planning lessons, coordinating, controlling, administering, evaluating, and reporting on learners' academic progress), organizing extra-curricular activities, carrying out administrative work (such as controlling stock and equipment, acting as secretary in staff meetings, conducting fire drill and first aid, timetabling, collecting fees, looking after staff welfare), interacting with stakeholders, and communicating with colleagues of all grades, collaborating with educators from other schools in organizing extra and co-curricular activities, meeting parents and discussing their children's conduct and progress, and participating in departmental seminars (*South African Council for Educators, 2001:55*).

Educators are professionally accountable for children's education. However, according to Burgess (in Maile, 2002:329), professional accountability remains the weakest of all the forms of accountability, while it should probably be contributing more to quality. Maile (2002:329) quotes Lethoko, saying that this weak professional accountability is one of the factors that have led to the decline in the culture of teaching and learning. High-quality teaching demands increasing professional examination.

He states further that educators should:

- acknowledge the noble calling of their profession to educate and train the learners in our country;
- acknowledge that the attitude, dedication, self-discipline, ideals, training and conduct of the teaching profession determine the quality of education in this country;
- acknowledge, uphold and promote basic human rights, as embodied in the Constitution of South Africa;
- do all within their power, in exercising their professional duties, to act in accordance with the ideals of their profession as expressed in the code of conduct; and
- act in a proper and becoming way so that their behaviour does not bring the teaching profession into disrepute.

According to this author, educators also owe contractual accountability to the Department of Education as their employer. They are expected to perform optimally the duties they are employed to do, which includes imparting knowledge and skills to learners, following the prescribed syllabi to the end, conducting assessments and any other duties allocated to them by the principals, such as the supervision of learners during studies and extra-curricular activities. The questions are then:

- 'Are educators fulfilling the above roles and responsibilities?
- Do they uphold this professional and contractual accountability?
- If not, why not?
- What can be done to remedy this situation?

2.4 CHALLENGES FACING EDUCATORS

2.4.1 PERSONAL CHALLENGES

Various authors concur that employees' job performance is affected not only by what happens in the workplace, but also by everything else that happens in their personal lives (Mzamo, 2004:20). Anything that brings sleepless nights will result in a tired employee who cannot perform at his/her optimum level at work. Below is some of the challenges educators encounter outside the working environment, which has an enormous bearing on their productivity.

2.4.1.1 INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE (IPV)

Intimate partner violence (IPV), frequently known as domestic violence or gender-based violence, is a social problem with consequences that extend far beyond the adverse effects experienced directly by the victims. It has been estimated that companies bear 52% of the economic costs of intimate partner violence through health care costs provided to IPV victims and other direct workplace effects, such as absenteeism, decreased employee productivity, errors, turnover and time spent away from work to address IPV issues (Lindquist et al., 2010:47).

These authors continue by saying that the National Violence against Women Survey (NVAWS) found lifetime prevalence of physical assault victimization of women by an intimate partner is about 22% and that 5.3 million victimizations occur annually for adult women.

In several cases the IPV spills over to the workplace, as the perpetrators know where their victims work and believe that, by targeting them at work, they can ultimately make victims more dependent on them by threatening their employment stability. There are quite a number of cases in which an educator has been assaulted or shot in front of the learners on the school premises. These events leave everybody traumatized and teaching is affected for a week or two.

2.4.1.2 HIV AND AIDS AND OTHER CHRONIC DISEASES

South Africa has some of the highest levels of both IPV and HIV worldwide and there is extensive public awareness of the connection between the two epidemics (Ghanotakis, Mayhew, & Watts, 2009:359). IPV poses barriers to the adoption of safer sexual practices and is associated with increased risk of HIV.

In an International Labour Organization (ILO) convention held in Geneva, December 2003, it was maintained that the HIV and AIDS epidemic has its primary impact on the working-age population, which means that those with important economic and social roles, both men and women, are prevented from making their full contribution to economic development. However, the effects not only relate to lost labour, but also have deeper implications for family structure, the survival of communities and longer-term issues of sustaining productivity capacity. A research report presented by the World Bank and the University of Heidelberg on the macroeconomic costs of AIDS showed that these are going to be more damaging than previously thought and that countries facing an HIV and AIDS epidemic on the scale of the South African epidemic could face economic collapse within several generations, with family incomes halved (*Workplace Action on HIV and AIDS*, 2003:7).

According to the University of Pretoria's Centre for the Study of AIDS (2006:6), since the manifestation of AIDS in 1981, more than 60 million people have been infected with HIV, and an estimated 24 million people have died. It further states that HIV infections are now concentrated in the developing world and two-thirds of all people living with HIV resides in sub-Saharan Africa (around 25.8 million people). The studies conducted by this Centre reveal that the South African epidemic was the last to develop in Africa but is now one of the most severe in the world. The 2004 antenatal survey indicated an average HIV prevalence of 29.5% for all women attending these clinics, ranging from 15.4% in the Western Cape to 40% in KwaZulu-Natal. Another study, the 2nd Nelson Mandela/HSRC Study of HIV and AIDS carried out in 2002 and 2005 estimated that roughly 10.8% of all South Africans aged two years and older are infected with HIV, with a higher prevalence rate among females (13.3%) than among males (8.2%). Of great concern is the finding from these studies which says one of the factors contributing to the South African epidemic is "the disruption of family and communal life resulting from apartheid and migrant labour". However, in the case of educators, the disruption of family life was not brought about by apartheid but by the process of re-deployment, whereby educators were moved away from their families to rural schools in the former Transkei.

A study conducted by Zungu-Dirwayi, Shisana, Louw, and Dana in 2004 in the Department of Education (2007:1299) showed that 13% of educators in South Africa were HIV positive. These authors also revealed the importance of a family support system when they discovered that the prevalence was high among female educators, those who started teaching when they were single, and those who moved away from their family support to teach in other villages. These authors maintain that these female educators go to teach in villages far from their homes where their economic status becomes higher than that of the local girls. This means that the local men are attracted to them for their social and economic status.

Similar results were also shown by a survey done by the Office of the Premier in the Eastern Cape in 2006, which showed that HIV prevalence was 14% in the Eastern Cape Department of Education. Recent figures available from the Government Employees' Medical Scheme also portrayed the same picture of HIV prevalence in the department, even though not only educators but all employees of the department were involved. In most studies, black educators are more often infected by HIV, which necessitates

culture-oriented interventions if EAPs are to be effective in their strategies for combatting HIV in the department.

Another reason could be that young single females tend to behave inappropriately when they first experience the freedom of being independent and living away from their parents. At the same time those who were leaving colleges or universities without steady partners or fiancés become desperate for marriage, so they are eager to do anything (even having sex without a condom) to please a man who promises them marriage.

The reality of the devastating impact of HIV and AIDS pandemic in our schools is captured by the following statement (Theron, 2005:59):

The face of education has changed. The previous paradigm of generally healthy educators with low absenteeism and high commitment has expired. The *status quo* of educators grappling with AIDS-related illnesses, related trauma and concomitant flagging teaching standards is the current reality.

Although in this study the majority of educators who were participants did not show any signs of prejudice and discrimination against HIV positive colleagues, 8.1% of respondents suggested that HIV positive educators were immoral and irresponsible or that they should be barred from teaching, while 20% of all responses suggested avoiding contact with HIV positive educators. It is this 28.1% that makes many HIV positive people, including educators themselves, feel stigmatized. Their misery begins when they start to show signs of opportunistic infections without having disclosed their status to their colleagues. This results in more stress and they finally stay away from school to hide until recognizable symptoms like shingles disappear.

A list follows of other negative factors mentioned in the study that were associated with HIV positive educators in schools:

- The general wellness of the school is considered negative;
- HIV positive educators are physically and emotionally ill, with concomitant poor teaching;
- Absenteeism and curriculum disruption with an ultimate deterioration in school standards;
- Schools' reputations suffer, resulting in a decline in learner enrolments;

- HIV positive educators create tension which stems from a desire to avoid them or because of general discomfort in their presence or from the stress of providing support for them.

The issue of HIV is not only a challenge when the educator is infected, but also when the learners are infected and affected. Educators feel a lot of stress when dealing with these HIV-orphaned learners as they look to their teachers as their only source of hope. Educators find themselves having to play the additional roles of parents and social workers to the learners (Schulze & Steyn, 2007:693). The domestic commitments at home also add to educators' stressful lives.

2.4.2 WORK RELATED CHALLENGES

A lot of research has been done by various authors on the organizational stressors in the life of an educator and have identified many factors that induce stress. Kyriacou and Mzamo (2004:12) identified six major common sources of workplace stress for educators: poor motivation in pupils, pupil indiscipline, poor working conditions, time pressures, low status, and conflict with colleagues.

According to Schulze and Steyn (2007:691) South African educators in general currently experience the following as stressors: uninvolved parents, poor learner discipline and lack of learner motivation, learners' negative attitudes towards themselves, redeployment and retrenchment of educators, large learner-educator ratios, new curriculum approaches, and lack of self-esteem.

It is surprising to find that educators in other countries are facing almost the same challenges as those in South Africa. Holmes (2005:44) lists the following issues that are inherently stressful in teaching, as demonstrated by callers to the Teacher Support Line in the UK:

- poor workplace environments;
- excessive working time and workload;
- lack of personal fulfilment and career prospects;
- internal politics and conflict with colleagues;
- excessive bureaucracy;

- poor communication;
- low morale;
- resistance to change or excessive change;
- a blame culture.

Holmes continues to say that it is not surprising that teaching is termed a 'stressful profession', considering what an educator has to do every day, the sheer number of people with whom they must communicate, what they are held accountable for, and the extent to which the job encroaches on their personal lives. He concludes by saying that not only weak or struggling educators are affected by the demands of the job, but also many extremely competent educators, who find the act of juggling chores and tasks beyond the classroom too difficult to reconcile with their own personal sense of well-being.

In line with the considerations identified by the various authors above, this review will discuss the following factors as the major challenges facing educators, especially in post-apartheid South Africa:

- right-sizing;
- redeployment;
- work overload;
- reduced parental involvement;
- curriculum changes;
- political effects on school governance;
- poor working conditions;
- workplace violence;
- lack of proper management skills in principals;
- few opportunities for promotion and career development;
- low salary levels.

2.4.2.1 RIGHT-SIZING, REDEPLOYMENT AND WORK OVERLOAD

A morale-killer for employees is policies that involve drastic changes being imposed on them without their being mentally and emotionally prepared for the impact of those changes. An example of such policies was the 'right-sizing' and 'redeployment' of educators. Right-sizing meant a shift to a pupil-teacher ratio of 35:1 in secondary schools and 40:1 in primary schools by the year 2000 (Hosking, 1998:5). Right-sizing therefore meant that those schools with a lower ratio were considered to be over-staffed and had to identify excess educators so that they could be redeployed to schools with higher ratios. Over the years, students have become engaged in an 'exodus' from township schools to urban schools because of better facilities, while others move from the former homelands to major cities like Cape Town and Johannesburg, where they live with their migrant parents. This has led to a tremendous drop in learner enrolments at these township and rural schools, with a subsequent redeployment of educators to schools with higher numbers. Families were ripped apart by this process. Male educators who were separated from their wives resorted to alcohol abuse, which could have led to many other problems, such as marital and financial troubles and the spread of HIV and AIDS (*Department of Education EAP Case Management Database, 2009*).

Those educators left behind had to struggle with a large workload of teaching up to three learning areas in various grades, which became very stressful. *The Teacher (1995)* was quoted by Hosking (1998:5), who said that those educators left behind could down-scale their teaching standards, setting fewer tests and assignments, in order to cope with increased class sizes.

Educators in the study conducted by Singh, Mbokodi and Msila (2004:304) cited work overload as the source of dissatisfaction among educators. This was also indicated in a study conducted by Schulze and Steyn (2007:694), in which educators expressed their concern that they often did not have enough time to achieve the standards of teaching and learning they would like, or to meet the needs of their learners. Some educators had to take a lot of their work home, which was not good for a work-life balance. In fact, according to Holmes (2005:47), there is no educator who does not take their work home. If it is not literally in the form of marking, planning and assessment, it is in the form of mentally replaying scenes from the day, going over interactions with pupils and preparing

for the challenges of the day ahead. This usually affects their relationships with their partners.

The following extract written by an educator with fifteen years' experience as quoted by Holmes supports the statement above:

I can tell you exactly what would improve the quality of my working life, and that would be having a home life! I can't remember the last time my wife and I actually sat down together to talk. I feel like I don't know her any more. There's something very wrong when it's not possible to get your working day completed in a reasonable number of hours. What if I just said, 'No, I can't mark these books, because I'm going to go home and relax, spend some time with my wife and kids and watch a bit of TV? People do that, don't they?

From this extract, it is clear that a successful working life comes from a successful home life and vice versa. The question, then, is: "What is the Department of Basic Education doing to answer this desperate educator's question so as to ensure a good work-life balance and better productivity?"

Esteve (in Mzamo, 2004:18) lists the following tasks that an educator has to perform in his/her daily or weekly schedule:

- maintaining discipline and a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom;
- giving individual attention to both brighter and slower students;
- planning the work to be done;
- assessing students and marking exams;
- keeping parents informed on their children's progress;
- organizing and managing extra-curricular activities;
- attending staff and administrative meetings;
- attending workshops.

In this age of more orphans and vulnerable children and child-headed homes due to the HIV and AIDS epidemic, one needs to add to the above tasks the responsibility of acting as counsellors and "social workers", which can be very stressful if one does not have proper training in that field.

In a study conducted by Kyriacou (2000:32), educators expressed their dissatisfaction with the administrative tasks they had to do in relation to their role as classroom-teachers or as departmental heads, saying that sometimes the free time allocated to them for these tasks was not enough.

The introduction of rationalization (right sizing) and the new learner–teacher ratios has resulted in teachers having to deal with extremely large classes. The educators' greatest complaints focus on the demands of having to deal with large numbers of learners (in some cases up to 60 at a time), and the lack of space, infrastructure and resources. This situation leads to more disciplinary problems and teachers have to tolerate a high noise level and general rowdiness in the class. This can lead to feelings of frustration and helplessness (Olivier & Venter, 2003:190).

Kyriacou (2000:26) points to the combination of a heavy workload and tight deadlines as one of the serious challenges to teaching. An educator who fails to meet the deadlines receives complaints from the management and colleagues who make him/her feel inadequate, while students may show boredom and restlessness should they see that the educator is ill-prepared for the lesson.

2.4.2.2 ILL-DISCIPLINE AND LACK OF MOTIVATION AMONG LEARNERS

Lack of discipline and commitment among learners is one of the greatest challenges facing educators today. It was rated second to the lack of facilities in a study conducted by Legotlo, Maaga, Sebego, Van der Westhuizen, Mosoge, Nieuwoudt, and Steyn (2002:115-117) on the causes of poor matric performance. In this study, one learner respondent was quoted as saying:

Lack of respect for educators is the main cause of discipline problems in the classroom. When students are asked to do something in class, they protest, and refuse to carry out the instruction. Most students abuse the so-called 'rights' and the teachers are unable to curb this situation, more especially after the abolition of corporal punishment. Because they do not respect teachers, this leads to the process whereby a teacher chucks the student out of the class and he or she loses a lot. So, teachers spend

more time on student discipline issues. Students relax and neglect their school work until the last minute.

In fact, according to Cosgrove (2000:50), pupils' poor attitudes towards school and their lack of motivation have consistently been identified as the greatest challenge facing educators in various studies. In a study conducted by Olivier and Venter (2003:190), educators expressed concern about the fact that learners do not achieve better results, which they blame on the learners' lack of discipline and motivation - a fact that causes educators a great deal of stress. To a great extent they blame the lack of discipline on the fact that corporal punishment has been abolished.

A number of educators feel exposed and vulnerable owing to the abolition of corporal punishment, which has increased the breakdown of order and discipline in schools instead of creating a human rights-friendly learning climate (Fataar & Patterson, 2001:31). The abolition of corporal punishment intermittently appears amongst educators as one of the causes of stress in the classroom because educators know no other way of enforcing discipline. Further, some of the methods which are effective in disciplining white learners, such as detention, do not work with black learners. This situation can wear dedicated educators down and can become unbearable, along with other negative implications like burn-out or health problems. According to Wilson (2004:25), after the abolition of corporal punishment in his school, some inexperienced educators were adrift in a sea of uncertainty and insecurity, as there was no consensus about school rules or expectations of classroom behaviour and few sanctions were open to the educator. For these educators, asking for support to manage pupil behaviour was a mark of incompetence, especially if it meant disrupting another educator's lesson by asking his assistance in managing bad behaviour. What made matters worse was that there were no clear guidelines as to what behaviour was considered bad enough to warrant calling for help from the senior management.

There is no doubt that lack of discipline is not conducive to the successful implementation of the new National Curriculum Statement, whose vision is to make educators mediators of learning by helping learners to construct their own knowledge, solve problems on their own and to understand their own thinking processes (Fraser in Grosser & de Waal, 2008:41).

Kyriacou, in his book *'Stress-busting for educators (2000:23)*, captures their sentiments when he says: "It is the sheer effort of trying to animate pupils who lack interest that is the single greatest cause of their feelings of physical and emotional tiredness at the end of a school day". This is sometimes made worse by parents who often complain that the school gives too much homework. Kyriacou continues to say that teaching difficult classes in difficult schools can sometimes involve very serious incidents of misbehaviour which can escalate into a heated confrontation, verbal abuse from the pupil, and even physical attacks.

2.4.2.3 REDUCED PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The concept of moral accountability emerges from acknowledgement that parents are the primary educators. According to Burgess in Maile (2002:329), a parent ought to accept responsibility for the development of a child's principles and attitudes, including attitudes to school, educators, other children and other adults. It would help the child in many ways if the parents were to talk about school problems in a constructive manner. Maile continues by saying that most parents apparently abdicate their responsibility when their children enrol at schools. This is evident when parents are called for a meeting and do not turn up. It is not common for parents to visit schools voluntarily to talk to educators or the principal. Parents most often visit schools when their children have violated the rules. Parents do not supervise their children's books, so schools are fraught with problems emanating from lack of parental accountability. Democracy in education emphasizes the importance of the participation of all constituencies in the accountability process. For instance, educators alone cannot be blamed for children's late arrival.

In another study conducted by Singh, Mbokodi and Msila on 'Black parental involvement in schools' (2004:301-307), it was discovered that the socio-economic status and the education level of the parents have a bearing on whether they will be involved in their children's education or not. Sixty eight percent of parents in this study, mostly poor and uneducated, complained of not understanding the language used in school meetings and said they lacked the knowledge to assist their children with homework. Educators, on the other hand, felt extremely frustrated by what they saw as an abdication of responsibility by parents who never showed up when called in about their children's academic progress. However, they shoulder all the blame when the learners fail. This parental non-

involvement puts a lot of pressure on educators, especially when dealing with unruly behaviour on the part of learners whom they feel have too many rights in this new democracy. Educators who participated in a study conducted by Mpahla (2009:97) also cited the lack of parental support on matters pertaining to child discipline as a challenge facing them as educators.

When parents are detached from the school, it is easy for them to blame educators for everything that goes wrong in the school, even the lack of discipline in their own children. Such accusations and lack of appreciation drain away even the little enthusiasm that remains in some educators, as is shown by the following statement by an educator (in Msila [sa]:135):

Well here I only come to teach and I leave. I do not care about any extra-mural activity, that's not for me. Sometimes you want to try out what you have learnt when you were at college but the conditions make that difficult. How do you teach when your laboratory is not equipped? How do you teach when you do not get the necessary support from the learners and their parents?

This problem of reduced parental involvement is exacerbated by the HIV and AIDS epidemic, which has left many child-headed homes, as well as the migrant labour system which means that parents work in the major cities and leave children to look after themselves in the villages with no parental supervision and guidance.

2.4.2.4 CURRICULUM CHANGES

The fall of apartheid in 1994 led to the democratic government hastily making moves to eradicate systems that were associated with the Bantu Education of the apartheid era. Although this was done in good faith, the method and timing were not appropriate and led to what the then Acting Director General, Rolf Du Preez, called 'changing the tyres while the car is moving' (Sehoole, 2003:139). The change started in 1996 with the introduction of Outcomes Based Education, which was later modified and given different names, such as the 'Nated Curriculum 2005', 'Revised National Curriculum Statement', and the 'National Curriculum Statement'. Throughout all these changes, educators, who were supposed to be the implementers, were never consulted, nor were they given thorough training and psychological conditioning to help them adjust to change. The

majority of them were consequently overwhelmed, becoming stressed and indifferent to the new system.

In an article, Rangraje, van der Merwe, Urbani and van der Walt (2005:41) state that more than half of the educators (out of 150) in their study expressed concern that they were not coping well with the changes in education, there was too much uncertainty in the teaching profession, and personal conflict was a common occurrence among the staff members. This notion is supported by the study conducted by Mpahla (2009:96), in which 75% of the educators who were respondents complained about the lack of support and monitoring in the implementation of the new curriculum. They claimed that no support was forthcoming from their internal management or the district office when it came to the implementation of continuous assessment and the provision of teaching resources for the successful implementation of OBE.

Another negative aspect of this change was what could be called 'throwing out the baby with the bath water'. This meant that the introduction of the new education system was executed so that even the good aspects of the old system, including the valuable human expertise, were discarded without considering their integration into the new system. Itumeleng Mosala, former Head of Higher Education in the Department of Education, boasted of this error of judgment when he was interviewed by Sehoole (2003:142) for his article, saying that 'those old bureaucrats had no understanding of the political objectives of the new government, and even where they did understand, they had an ideological difference, they were like robots stuck in the old and their world was just another world'. He sums up by saying that that bureaucracy could not exist in the new government. Whether or not that is true, the influence stemming from such a mentality is being felt by the educator, who has to implement the bottom line. A considerable number of educators express their desperate desire to leave the profession. Some have resorted to seeking greener pastures overseas and about 4000 of them have left the country for Britain since 1994 (Xaba, 2003: 287).

Sehoole concludes by saying that, for the purpose of continuity within the new bureaucracy, a combination of the old and the new bureaucracies was required in the department.

Malan (in Mzamo, 2004:1) states that educators in South Africa have been subject to major policy changes that have transformed not only the schools, but also the way in which educators do their work. An example would be Outcomes-Based Education, which not only gave teachers more freedom to exercise their own creativity, but also demanded a higher degree of responsibility, accountability and professionalism. Other authors such as Esteve and Bondesio and de Wit (in Mzamo, 2004:2) also feel that increased responsibility is not always accompanied by the necessary changes in training to equip educators with skills to cope with new demands and that result in an imbalance between their psychological reserves and the demands of their career. The end-result is the development of the work stress syndrome.

The changes in the curriculum content and the methods of assessment and reporting are sometimes introduced so quickly that educators find themselves having to suddenly abandon their accustomed ways of working, which they had thought successful, to replace them with new ways of working about which they may be uncertain as well as being ill-prepared for the required implementation (Kyriacou, 2000:28). According to this author, the changes are not linked with adequate programmes for in-service training, while excessive criticism of the old methods made educators feel that they were under attack. Kyriacou continues by pointing to another form of change that leaves educators stressed, which is the merging or closing down of schools. This is never negotiated with the educators but is imposed on them by the department. The practice is mostly encountered in the former Transkei, from where there is an exodus of learners to the Western Cape and Gauteng, leaving the schools half empty.

Some educators felt that the new curriculum had brought too much administrative responsibility and paperwork and too little time in which to do it without seriously jeopardizing the quality of the work taking place in the classroom (Wilson, 2004:33). They also felt that the curriculum and the assessment requirements were often inappropriate to their pupils' needs, and denied teachers the freedom to select and deliver projects in the ways they judged most suitable for their particular classes. Such a statement seems to contrast with what Mzamo (2004:1) was saying above when he pointed out that the new OBE allowed educators the freedom to be creative.

Shortage of time usually has a bearing on responding flexibly and appropriately to all situations arising either inside the classroom, such as disturbances by restless, alienated pupils, or outside the classroom. According to Wilson (2004:34), in such situations, both the educator and the learner lack the opportunities to distance themselves from conflictual situations, to allow emotions to subside and to create space for considered actions and reactions. This could be shedding light on why some educators have perpetrated grievous bodily harm on some students when they were only trying to discipline them.

The recent curriculum may seem to pose more challenges for those educators who lack proper qualifications. In an article, *Untrained Teachers*, Thulas Nxesi is quoted as saying that between 50 000 and 80 000 educators in South Africa are under-qualified (Mzamo, 2004:15). The continuous advance of knowledge makes it so difficult for the educator to have an in-depth knowledge of any subject that it affects his/her self-confidence. As Esteve (in Mzamo, 2004:15) puts it, 'a rapid change in one's surroundings makes even the healthiest person find difficulty in avoiding the ensuing stresses. How much greater would the stress be for those who felt inadequate even before the change?

In one study conducted by Cox and his colleagues, it was shown how change brought stress to educators when they felt that it was beyond their control and they felt no involvement in the change process and no sense of ownership. Change was thus just imposed on them (Cosgrove, 2000:68).

2.4.2.5 EFFECTS OF POLITICS ON SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

In recent years there have been fundamental changes to and renewal of the education system; the levers of power at school level are affected significantly. There is a shift of emphasis from management to governance. A new framework of governance is built on accountability. It is clear that accountability involves reporting to other people voluntarily or compulsorily. The notion of accountability conjures up pictures of the power struggles that plague schools. Whereas in the past decisions were taken by the principal alone, this is no longer possible. Principals are no longer able to take decisions unilaterally because parents have more power in the school, especially when it comes to the School

Governing Body (SGB) (Maile, 2002:326). Although governing bodies have powers of governance, the principal remains accountable for the implementation of departmental policies.

According to Maile (2002:327), this is the crux of the problem, as conflict emerges owing to interpretive clashes over policies and the ambiguity of roles. Sometimes principals are compelled by their governing bodies to take harsh disciplinary steps over an educator's misconduct without following the correct procedures. Educators, on the other hand, blame principals for siding with the SGBs. Most often these cases bring in labour unions that support their educator members against the principal. All this has put a lot of pressure on principals, who assume instead a *laissez-faire* approach to managing the schools, to the detriment of proper teaching and learning.

The importance of knowing to whom one is accountable between the principal, the SGB, the parents, the learners and the inspector cannot be over emphasized. According to Holmes (2005:50), accountability appears to have a symbolic meaning separate from its literal meaning, which can strike fear at the heart of even the most conscientious of educators. It is these educators who suffer most from their own self-doubt and self-criticism, seeing accountability either as a regulatory mechanism or as something that needs to be externally applied in order for them to perform their duties according to acceptable standards.

Hammond (2001:48-49) uses the term 'bureaucratic accountability' and describes it thus:

Schools are agents of government that can be administered by hierarchical decision making and controls. Policies are made at the top of the system and handed down to administrators, who translate them into rules and procedures to be followed by the educators. In this bureaucratic model, educators are viewed as functionaries rather than as well-trained and highly skilled professionals. Little investment is made for their preparation, induction, or professional development and little time is afforded for joint planning or collegial consultation about problems of practice. The standard for accountability is compliance rather than effectiveness.

Such a system may not be conducive to educators' thriving and could lead to boredom and stress.

2.4.2.6 POOR WORKING CONDITIONS

Poor working conditions include

- *physical aspects* (such as dilapidated buildings with little or no proper sanitation and mud schools with no running water or electricity);
- *financial aspects* (such as reduced or delayed school budgets from the department, resulting in late requisitioning of school textbooks and equipment, with the municipality cutting off the electricity);
- *organizational aspects* (which include overcrowded classrooms, principals with poor management styles, nepotism when it comes to promotion, and conflicts either between the staff and the School Management Team or amongst educators themselves). These are the conflicts that sometimes lead to violence in the workplace.

Mzamo (2004:16) maintains that in most studies conducted on the causes of stress among educators the above problems are cited by the educators as the source of demotivation.

Classrooms are usually too small and unsuitable for mixed-ability classes, where anything other than rote learning in rigid rows may be taking place. Educators find themselves having to share crucial resources like classrooms, sometimes with no adequate space in which to organize the tools of their trade. They also have to function under inadequate lighting, cramming books into piles on the floor rather than on purpose-built shelves (Holmes, 2005:56).

Educators interviewed by Kyriacou (2000:33-34) also protested about poor working conditions, citing broken copying equipment, and the distances between the staffroom and the classroom so that the educators do not have an adequate coffee break. There is no noise insulation between classrooms, which are damp and have not been painted for years, making for extremely unattractive surroundings. The dilapidated mud-huts used as schools, which were shown in the programme 'Cutting Edge' by SABC 1 on 07 April 2011, leave one wondering about the well-being and self-esteem of the educators who are working there. Schools with flights of stairs can become a nightmare for those educators who suddenly become weak with ill-health or wheelchair-bound owing to an

accident. Fighting for reasonable accommodation under such circumstances could take months or even years.

Challenges such as lack of resources, dilapidated buildings, ill-discipline, vandalism and lack of safety are typical and more likely to affect educators in the black schools. However, Fataar and Paterson (2001:30) point out another cause of stress that is more likely to affect the former model C educators, which is the pressure brought by a fee-paying parent community's insistence on quality education and greater attention paid by governing bodies and professional leadership to ensure that teachers meet the demands.

2.4.2.7 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Violence in schools can manifest in various ways, perpetrated by different people in the school environment. High stress levels amongst educators can lead to violent behaviours, such as verbal or physical attack. Many schools are riddled with conflict caused by allegations of witchcraft, defiance and insubordination, fights over senior posts and so on. Conflict and violence of this nature are usually symptoms of a deeper underlying cause, which is usually 'stress' emanating from, inter alia, low trust, lack of cohesion, low levels of support, communication breakdowns, and lack of job satisfaction (Ivancevich & Matteson as quoted by Mzamo, 2004:14). Bondesio and de Witt (in Mzamo, 2004:17) trace the cause to the principal's management style when they say that "some educational leaders through their inability to provide effective management and leadership unconsciously behave in a manner that activates stress among their subordinates".

Another form of violence, subtle but prevalent, is that of bullying.

Educators who have been in the school for a long time bully the young ones from the college/university, or those who have just come through redeployment/transfer, especially if they are more highly qualified than them. They feel that the newcomers have come to take their senior posts and they usually go as far as instigating learners against that particular educator. Principals sometimes demand sexual favours from young educators in return for having hired them in their schools. When they refuse, they make their lives miserable (*DoE EAP case management database: 2009*). Holmes (2005:58-59) concurs when he says that educators form the largest occupational group among

those who contact the workplace bullying website and a survey conducted by a UK teachers' association found that 40% of respondents felt that their department or faculty head was responsible for the bullying they experienced. In over half of the reported cases, the head-master was identified as the perpetrator.

Sometimes a minor disagreement between two colleagues leads to the victimization and isolation of one of them if the other is influential enough to persuade the rest of the staff to gang up against him/her. One educator is quoted by Kyriacou (2000:30) as saying that more stress arises from dealing with associates than with children or the actual task of teaching, especially when the associates are not cooperative in tasks that he feels are important.

One other common form of violence these days is directed at educators by learners. This usually comes in the form of strikes and 'toyi-toyi', during which learners, when denied outings and farewells, throw stones and bottles at educators accusing them of misappropriating school funds.

Violence against educators also takes place when an educator is trying to discipline a learner who turns violent and punches or stabs the educator. In townships, gangsters sometimes enter the school premises and attack or rob learners and educators. This kind of violence is more common in the Western Cape.

Aggression towards an educator manifests as a challenge to his/her authority when parents defend their children. Holmes (2005:76) calls this removal of parental support for educators an uphill battle.

All this violence has robbed educators of their sense of security in their workplaces and discourages them from remaining behind in the afternoons to do extra work.

2.4.2.8 PRINCIPALS' POOR MANAGERIAL SKILLS

Although this problem was mentioned briefly above in connection with poor organizational aspects and the sources of conflict in schools, the researcher deemed it necessary to discuss it further as a cause for concern in our schools. Poor management of schools is quoted by Smith and Schalekamp (in Heystek & Lethoko,

2001:223) as one of the challenges facing educators. Having a leader without vision and proper managerial skills can frustrate and demoralize even the best-performing subordinate. Most educators who seek the assistance of the EAP because of a work-related stress usually mention that any innovative ideas suggested for the upliftment of the school are met with opposition, as they are seen as attempts to expose the incompetence of the principal. This was also supported by allegations that came up in an interview conducted by Msila ([sa]:132) with educators at a school in Port Elizabeth, where they described their principal as “killing the school” with his autocratic style. They claimed that they were given no chance to express their ideas. In research conducted by Holmes (2005:60), educators expressed their frustration at their sense of powerlessness arising from having little, if any, influence on decisions that were made that directly affected them and their jobs.

In a study conducted by Legotlo et al. (2002:116), it was observed that school principals did not generally have a wide range of management skills. In addition, it was clear from the data that some schools did not have clear policies relating to the instructional programme, such as classroom visits, homework policy, and comprehensive subject policies that included policy on the assessment and computation of final examination marks.

One of the weaknesses of principals as managers is their failure to acknowledge good behaviour and their subordinates ‘going the extra mile’, but, as soon as students fail or an educator faces personal challenges that impact negatively on their job, they are quick to point a finger and threaten punitive measures. This kills the professional self-esteem of a subordinate (Mzamo, 2004:17). In the same author, Ivancevich and Matteson, and Dunham, points out the importance of employees getting proper feedback from the supervisor as to what is expected of them, how well they are doing, their strengths and weaknesses, recognition of effort and achievement, awareness of personal growth and identification of training needs. Yet most of the time the feedback is given in a totalitarian manner and the criticism is more destructive than constructive.

For some educators, “the lack of positive feedback was experienced as a rejection of their particular skills and contribution to the profession, and therefore as a rejection of

themselves and the kind of teacher they wanted to be, leading to a certain amount of cynicism or alienation and a self-marginalization” (Wilson, 2004:27).

Autocratic principals sometimes put unnecessary stress on educators by forcing them to teach subjects in which they have not majored and in which they lack expertise (Holmes, 2005:63). This is equal to under-use of their skills in the subject they know best.

Principals, on the other hand, were also affected by the drastic changes in the education system, which left them confused, stressed, frustrated and overwhelmed. The change in curriculum, abolition of corporal punishment, redeployment of educators, involvement of parents, increased accountability of principals and more powers given to the school governing bodies were among the challenges mentioned by the principals in a study conducted by Mpahlele (2009: 4). In light of this statement, one would assume that certain principals who seem to be unpleasant to their staff are themselves victims of the same system and their behaviour is the result of their inability to cope with work stress.

2.4.2.9 FEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROMOTION AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND LOW SALARY LEVELS

It is well-known that, in teaching, it is possible for an educator to remain on level one for the rest of his/her teaching career. This is because there are fewer management posts than educator posts and there is no horizontal promotion according to the number of years in service. This has been the cry of educators for many years. Knowing that promotion goes with a salary increase, which is a motivator, hardworking educators who do not acquire senior posts ultimately become demotivated. There are even more hard feelings when schools with diligent educators who produce good results attract more students from other schools. More students mean a higher salary for the principal (who is paid according to student enrolment), and a heavier workload for the teachers. According to the researcher’s experience in dealing with EAP cases, this has led to a great deal of conflict and violence in schools, with educators fighting among themselves over vacant senior posts or fighting with newly-elected principals, as in the case of Greenpoint Senior Secondary School in East London where tuition was disrupted for weeks because some

educators and learners were fighting the appointment of a principal from outside instead of the one from the school who was already acting as principal (*Daily Dispatch*, 2010).

According to Kyriacou (in Mzamo, 2004:20), employees become stressed when they feel that progress in promotion is inadequate, or if they are generally dissatisfied with the match between career aspirations and their position. Consequently, lack of promotion opportunities has been cited in many studies as the greatest demotivating factor for most educators. Promotion determines the availability and extent of financial and material rewards, but of equal importance is the enhanced status resulting in higher levels of self-esteem and personal challenge (Tracey & Cooper, 1996:56).

Educators over the years have been lamenting their low salary levels in comparison with those of the administrative officers in the same department and in the private sector. This has led to many of them leaving the profession and very few are encouraging their children to take it up (Hosking, 1998:4). Educators believe that there are more chances for an administrative officer with grade 12 and ten years' experience to climb the corporate ladder and become a deputy director than there are chances for an educator with a Master's degree and the same experience to become a principal.

In the study conducted by Olivier and Venter (2003:190), educators indicated that inadequate salaries caused a great deal of stress, especially when taking into account the after-hours input their jobs demand of them and how negatively their salaries compare with those of people in the private sector and other government departments. These authors believe that this could be the reason why some educators embark on second jobs, mostly to the detriment of the school and the learners. Others look for other propositions and change to completely new jobs for the sake of better incomes.

2.5 THE IMPACT OF A NUMBER OF CHALLENGES ON THE HEALTH AND THE JOB PERFORMANCE OF EDUCATORS

2.5.1 STRESS

The greatest challenge for anybody with few or no coping mechanisms is that of 'stress'. An individual's coping strategy is constantly changing to be able to manage specific demands assessed as exceeding the person's resources. Coping with stress in the work

environment can, however, be less effective because many stressful aspects of the work situation tend to lie outside the individual's control (Kyriacou (1981) as quoted by Jackson & Rothmann, 2006: 76).

Educator's work is becoming more complex and demanding, leading to occupational stress, and its associated negative effects, such as job dissatisfaction, ill-health, absenteeism, drug use, higher turnover and lower productivity (Jackson & Rothmann, 2006: 75). These authors quote a number of news publications like *The Citizen* and *The Star*, saying that many South African educators are either quitting or are ready to quit owing to the OBE system.

The following extract from Cosgrove (2000:1) throws light on the magnitude of stress inflicted by the above challenges on the lives of educators:

In this time three of my head-teachers have to take time off for stress-induced illness. Twice I have been appointed to replace a teacher who has prematurely and abruptly left teaching through ill health brought on by stress. One former colleague simply went home at the start of one holiday and never returned to school. She has since attempted suicide on more than one occasion. Another colleague was discovered one Monday morning sitting in her car outside the school. She was in tears, unable to face the day ahead.

Different individuals manifest various types of stress, as in:

- *Emotional/psychological manifestations*, which include feelings of undefined anxiety, dissatisfaction, depression, fear, frustration and low self-esteem that could possibly lead to burnout;
- *physiological manifestations*, which could include heart disease, psychosomatic illness, chronic fatigue and depleted energy reserves (Tracey & Cooper, 1996:21); and
- *behavioural manifestations*, which include appetite disorders, excessive smoking and substance abuse, violence, insomnia, and withdrawal symptoms (which could lead to resignations at the worst).

2.5.1.1 EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL MANIFESTATIONS

Olivier and Venter (2003:190), in their study on the extent and causes of stress among teachers, found that emotional stress manifested in feelings of depression among some educators, could sometimes lead to suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts, long periods of absence from work resulting in work overload for other staff members, and eventually loss of their job. Some respondents also complained of cardiovascular and gastronomic symptoms, and fatigue.

According to Jackson and Rothmann (2006: 77), emotional or psychological stress can manifest itself in, inter alia, anxiety/panic attacks, irritability, difficulty in decision-making, loss of sense of humour, becoming easily angered, constant tiredness, feeling unable to cope, avoiding contact with other people, mood swings and inability to listen to others.

Some educators lack the coping mechanisms to combat excess stress effectively, and this in turn can lead to absenteeism, alcohol and drug abuse, depression, frustration, hypertension, and other serious physical conditions, such as heart disease (Olivier & Venter, 2003:186). Out of 132 educators who participated in the study conducted by these authors, 31.1% of the respondents recorded high scores for the emotional manifestation of stress, the greatest cause being the lack of discipline amongst learners and the educators subsequently being blamed for their failure.

According to Holmes (2005:65), several studies reveal that educators have to reach so far inside themselves to find solutions to the many challenges they confront each day that it becomes impossible to separate problems in the classroom or with some other aspects of the job from problems or issues of a more personal nature. The inevitable result of this is burnout. This author continues to say that there is a gap between social reality and some of the public's perceptions of educators and teaching as a profession, where it is believed that it is an easy job with 'short days' and frequent holidays. The communities criticize educators when they demand better salaries and working environments, which deplete their self-esteem as educators. Cosgrove (2000:53) concurs, saying that the third most important stressor in the life of an educator is 'time pressures'. He adds that it is "a complaint that might bring a hollow laugh from non-educationalists who enviously eye our thirteen weeks a year of holiday and who imagine that teachers work a five-day week between the hours of nine and half-past three (or four

o'clock)". He further points out that the time of standing in front of the class is not the problem here but the hidden hours of planning and other demands on the educator's time.

Emotional and or psychological impact of stress is the most critical because it is not easily identified by the other person. It is the individual him/herself who knows how s/he feels inside. According to the EAP this is the right time to seek professional help before the stress manifests physiologically and behaviourally. Unfortunately very few people realise or want to admit that things are getting out of hand or that they are not coping well, especially in the African community where seeing a counsellor or psychologist is still being associated with 'madness'.

As Jackson and Rothman above expound on the emotional and psychological manifestations of stress one may begin to understand why various schools have been ridden with conflict lately in the Eastern Cape especially after 1994 when there have been so many curriculum changes and 'learner rights' which frustrate the educators.

2.5.1.2 PHYSIOLOGICAL MANIFESTATIONS

According to Bondesio and de Witt (in Mzamo, 2004:21), most civilized people, such as educators, suppress their frustrations for a long time and until they manifest in psychosomatic illnesses like headaches, stomach ulcers and hypertension. Holmes (2005:72) concurs when he says educators, like many skilled and competent professionals, do not seek help when they most need it, possibly because they are so used to handling whatever comes their way on an hour-by-hour basis.

A health risk profile report presented by *Proactive Health Solutions*, who used to be the Health Risk Manager for the Eastern Cape Provincial Administration, showed that stress-related illnesses like hypertension, renal failure, diabetes and depression have been at the top of the list of reasons for applications for incapacity and ill-health retirement leave in the Department of Education (Proactive Health Solutions, 2007).

In a study of 21,307 educators from public schools in South Africa conducted by Peltzer, Shisana, Zuma, Van Wyk and Zungu-Dirwayi (2009: 247), results indicated that the

prevalence of stress-related illnesses was 15.6 per cent for hypertension, 9.1 per cent for stomach ulcers, 4.5 per cent for diabetes, 3.3 per cent for minor mental distress, 3.1 per cent for major mental distress and 3.5 per cent for asthma.

From experience as an EAP practitioner the researcher wouldn't agree with the fact that educators are suppressing their stress more than the fact that they do not know where to go to seek help when they feel stressed out. Another sad factor is that with physiological manifestations of stress most people do not identify stress as the underlying cause so they keep on treating the symptoms with no success. Even most General Practitioners capitalise on this ignorance by keeping on prescribing medication after medication for such psychosomatic illnesses without referring the patients to professional therapists.

2.5.1.3 BEHAVIOURAL MANIFESTATIONS

Educator commitment and morale is very low and is evident in the high rate of absenteeism and truancy (Legotlo et al, 2002:116).

The high stress levels among educators due to their inability to cope with the challenges they face in both their personal lives and working environments inevitably lead to:

- more conflict with school management and among themselves in the staffrooms;
- presenteeism (meaning they come to school but rarely go to class and teach);
- truancy in the form of alcohol abuse;
- high absenteeism without valid reasons or medical certificates;
- disciplinary actions, abscondment and even resignations.

In the study conducted by Mpahla (2009:89), absenteeism and alcohol abuse were cited as the leading factors putting pressure on teacher professionalism. Educators who were respondents in this study voiced their concern that the teaching profession has been put into disrepute by their colleagues who drink excessively and frequently absent themselves from school. They were also concerned about male educators who have sexual relations with schoolgirls. According to this researcher, various studies have found that educational policies and administration impact negatively on teaching performance and that, owing to lack of administrative support, educators resort to poor and irregular attendance.

According to Ngidi and Qwabe (2006:529), various studies have indicated that educators are evincing a number of behavioural problems which hamper their job performance and detract from the culture of teaching and learning at schools. Some of the problems mentioned are:

- non-commitment;
- no lesson preparations;
- poor knowledge of subject;
- abuse of alcohol;
- setting poor role models;
- conducting themselves unprofessionally;
- absenting themselves from classes;
- lack of discipline and professional work ethic.

In a study conducted at the Harry Gwala Secondary School, Maja (2001:11) described a very disturbing state of affairs whereby:

- the school has been badly vandalized over the years;
- drugs are abused in the school compound;
- township thugs enter the school at will;
- school assembly starts at eight o'clock when classes are supposed to be commencing, which leads to the first period being sacrificed;
- students usually go home after lunch because educators never go to classes in the afternoons;
- there is no uniformity or standardization of teaching for educators teaching the same subject in different classes of the same grade;
- there is poor communication between the management and the educators.

Jackson and Rothmann (2006: 76) believe that stress plays a significant role in absenteeism and the resignation of educators. This comes from the study they conducted in the North West Province Department of Education, where they discovered that between 2001 and 2002 there was an increase in the number of days used by educators for sick leave by 339.27% (or 57 666 days), the number of educators using such leave by 170.88% (or 3 686 educators) and the number of resignations by 82.74% (or 139 resignations).

Looking at the above report concerning the state of affairs in the schools one can see that the level of job satisfaction is very low in the education fraternity which could be caused by the various challenges already mentioned. All this perpetuates stress in all its manifestations, the more evident of them all being the high rate of absenteeism and alcohol abuse amongst educators. Sadly, the department only takes notice when stress manifests at this level and their first step is to take the misbehaving educator through a disciplinary hearing and if s/he is lucky, referral for counselling will come as a sanction out of the hearing.

The best way to address this is to capacitate the educators and all other employees with skills of how to identify stressors, the various coping mechanisms, and where to seek help when everything else fails. There is no other programme better placed in the department to fulfil such a role than the EAP.

2.6 THE ROLE OF THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME IN ADDRESSING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

Educators are working under a great deal of stress in the new dispensation, hence the adjustments made to the Labour Relations Act and the Employment of Educators Act to cater for “progressive discipline”, thereby ensuring fair treatment of the educator (Rossouw & De Waal, 2004:284).

According to Resolution 13 of the Education Labour Relations Council of 1999, an educator who does not meet the required performance standards should follow a programme of counselling or be sent to rehabilitation, which, depending on his challenge and dismissal, must be the last resort (Rossouw & De Waal, 2004:286). Owing to the similarities between the procedures of ‘progressive discipline’ and the counselling of ‘Resolution 13’ mentioned in the Acts, one cannot help but wonder whether these actually refer to the EAP and the services offered by the programme. One is tempted to ask why this is not spelt out clearly as such, if indeed the programme is actually mentioned.

This, then, prompts a number of questions about the Employee Assistance Programme, such as:

- If the educators are faced with such stress (as revealed by various studies), what is the EAP doing to assist them?
- Is the EAP succeeding in fulfilling its role in assisting troubled employees in the department in order to improve their job performance?
- Is there EAP legislation in South Africa?

The real answer to these questions is what the researcher is seeking to find in this study and will be the focus of the interviews to be conducted with various groups of educators. At the present moment, only theoretical answers will be given relating to what is supposed to be the role of the EAP and what South African legislation states about the EAP.

2.6.1 CORE TECHNOLOGIES OF THE EAP

Information in par 2.6.1 is solely provided to ensure the context of the EAP will be understood by the reader. Since the focus of the study is not on the EAP methodology and related information, no detailed discussion is presented here.

According to the *Standards for Employee Assistance Programme in South Africa* (2010:1), the role of the EAP is to assist troubled employees in performing better in the workplace, applying the EAP core technologies. Although other sources such as the *EAPA Standards and Professional Guidelines for Employee Assistance Programme* (2010:23-29) have 8 core technologies, the coverage is the same, it's just that EAPA SA has compressed some technologies into one group. For example problem identification, constructive confrontation, referral, monitoring and aftercare have been compressed into 'case management' by EAPA SA.

Since these core technologies serve as guidelines for the successful implementation of the EAP in any organisation, it is crucial to look at them individually so as to analyse how far the Department of Education has managed to put in place policies and standard operating procedures (SOP) according to these core technologies.

Department of Public Service and Administration (2010:1-41) has developed a Systems Monitoring Tool to be used by all departments to check their state of readiness in implementing the Employee Health and Wellness Programme which EAP is part of as one of the 4 pillars. One aspect that has been standing out is that even though most departments score high on implementation of the programme very few or none fair well when it comes to having SOPs in place. This is no surprise considering the fact that developing policies and procedure manuals is sometimes beyond the expertise of an EAP practitioner and therefore needs support from other stakeholders who are not fully committed to the programme. Sometimes it needs external stakeholders who come at a fee and this becomes a problem since it has been the outcry of almost all EAP practitioners in the Inter-departmental forum that their budget is usually little or even nil.

2.6.1.1 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The EAP assists the department by training and developing the managers and supervisors (Education Development Officers, principals, their deputies, and Heads-of-department) and the unions so that they can effectively manage the employee who is experiencing behavioural, emotional and wellness issues. This involves training these managers and supervisors in the skill of 'constructive confrontation' whereby they confront employees on poor performance and refer them informally or formally to an EAP. This is done in the strictest confidence.

Training and seminars: Delivery of training, seminars, and workshops to managers, human resources staff, and, in some cases, employees. Content typically includes the effect of IPV on the workplace, how to recognize the signs of IPV among employees, and where to direct employees who may be experiencing IPV. Training of employees on anger, stress, and financial management should also fall under this category. Training should also be organised for the EAP role players such as the peer educators and lay counsellors who assist the EAP practitioners.

Such training cannot be done in any haphazard manner. It needs to be documented in the EAP policy and have a standard operating procedure manual. Training needs need to

be identified through needs assessment and form part of the Workplace Skills Plan for the entire organisation. This ensures that it is properly budgeted for.

2.6.1.2 MARKETING

This involves outreach and promotion of EAP services (their availability and guarantees) to management, supervisors, unions, employees and their family members. They could also be in the form of Educational/awareness-raising activities concerning various health risks. An example could be the provision of activities intended to educate employees and raise awareness about IPV and its link to the spread of HIV & AIDS (e.g. IPV awareness monthly activities; online, searchable databases for information on various topics).

There is also a need as well to develop an SOP for marketing the EAP in the department and ensure that the educator in the most remote village is aware of the EAP services and knows how to access them.

Yes marketing is done when an opportunity arises such as when there are health screening days and events organised by the EDOs but there is no SOP that guides coordinated effort to reach so many targets by such and such a time and most of the time such marketing is done in the district offices and not in schools. This could be due to inadequate human and financial resources in the EAP.

2.6.1.3 CASE MANAGEMENT

Confidential and timely risk identification, assessment, motivation, short-term intervention, referral, monitoring, follow-up, reintegration and aftercare services for employees with personal and work-related concerns that may affect job performance. The EAP must address all employee concerns using available expertise as well as external, appropriately qualified specialists. Employees either refer themselves or are referred by colleagues, friends, family members and supervisors for assistance in the EAP. The EAP practitioner assesses the nature of the challenge/concern and then, depending on available expertise, provides short-term therapy, or refers out immediately to independent service providers. These could be, inter alia, social workers,

psychologists, psychiatrists, debt counsellors, rehabilitation centres or HIV support groups. However, the challenge is the absence of specific EAP Legislation in South Africa, which would enforce the assistance of these troubled educators. Instead, there is merely a suggestion of counselling in some of the Acts (See the section on EAP Legislation below).

The effect of the absence of an SOP for case management is evident in the lack of private confidential offices to be utilised by EAP practitioners for consultations. In some districts practitioners use their cars to consult with clients.

2.6.1.4 CONSULTATION WITH WORK ORGANIZATION

The EAP officials consult with work organizations to pro-actively address inherent trends stemming from personal or organizational issues. After the assessment and referral of employees, it is necessary to deal with those issues in the organization that are, for the most part, identified by the employees as the sources of stress in the working environment. It is not constructive to refer an employee for therapy and then bring him/her back to the same stressful situation, which would make him/her sick again. Any identified trends need to be addressed together with management, ranging from unhealthy eating habits, a harmful and hazardous working environment, conflict in sections, to bad managerial styles. The EAP encourages the availability of and access to employee health benefits covering medical and behavioural problems. They also assist in developing policies on these issues.

Consultation on policy development: An EAP could provide assistance in developing policies on workplace violence and IPV, such as zero-tolerance or mandatory reporting of IPV perpetration, employee time off to deal with IPV, and the company's response strategy for employees and managers.

Management/security staff consultation: Consultation with managers and/or security staff on either general procedures relating to violence or IPV (e.g. general workplace security consultation, the development of critical response procedures) or responses to specific incidents (e.g. advice on handling employees who are experiencing IPV, critical incident responses and post incident debriefings (Lindquist et al., 2010:56).

An SOP needs to be developed with regards to the processes and procedures for updating management and supervisors on inherent trends identified through referrals as well as imminent threats to the stability of the organisation.

2.6.1.5 NETWORKING

The EAP network establishes and maintains effective relations with internal and external role-players and service providers. The internal networks involve managers and supervisors, the organizational development section, and the Human Resource Administration section, which deals with sick leave and incapacity, and the Labour Relations Office, which deals with misconduct. The external role players and service providers are the medical aid schemes, clinics and hospitals, EAP vendors and independent health professionals. An EAP practitioner has to keep a database of all these groups as well as constantly liaising with them on various matters that may improve the services offered by the EAP.

The collaboration between EAP and all other sections whose mandate overlap with that of EAP such as HR Planning and Policy, Conditions of Service, Labour Relations, Risk Management and Security Management as well as outside stakeholders such as service providers and other departments need to be spelt out in the SOP for internal and external networking.

2.6.1.6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring the progress and evaluating the impact of a programme cannot be over emphasised.

EAPs can be evaluated on effort (whether policies, SOPs and manuals are in place and are working), utilisation (whether the intended beneficiaries are really making use of the service), and outcome or impact (the degree of individual symptom relief, reduced absenteeism and health care costs and increased productivity). It would be almost impossible to convince management of the importance and value-add of the programme if the interventions could not be monitored and evaluated. Statistics should be kept and

analysed, in terms of who accesses the programme and how their work and social functioning has improved following the EAP interventions or how many have relapsed.

According to Perry and Cayer (1992:328) 'effort evaluation' is concerned with the level of effort and commitment associated with program operations. It is the development of a resource expenditure schedule, involving the specification of the number and supervisory level of EAP personnel, estimates of levels of effort, equipment, and space assigned for program use and budget. The results of effort evaluation form baseline data that can be used to interpret program performance and process evaluation results, particularly when program performance is deemed to be inadequate. Two more important elements of effort evaluations include:

An assessment of the extent to which the EAP is actually integrated into the personnel decision-making process. This entails considering such issues as management commitment (in resources and attitude) to the EAP, their estimate of its utility as a means of dealing with troubled employees, and the extent to which data on EAP operation are collected and used in organizational allocations of human resources;

Secondly, it is necessary to document the organizational arrangements associated with the EAP, placing the EAP in the larger organization chart and tracing its relationships to different levels of management, the personnel office, and different organizational departments while estimating the time and resources invested in the EAP at each stage.

It is the results of such an effort evaluation that can drive the point home with regard to the need for more support of the EAP by the top management in terms of resourcing.

Human service programmes are generally evaluated with usage rates but it is asserted that such programmes are not best measured by activity but instead by levels of accomplishments, health, well-being or satisfaction of users. Whereas objective data regarding the levels of usage of an EAP is important for accountability, it is not the most valid way of determining the success of the programme (Shakespeare-Finch & Scully, 2004:74).

One need not forget that due to the sensitive nature of the programme sometimes it is not easy to have an independent objective evaluator of the utilisation statistics and impact of interventions because some clients do not want to be known that they utilise the programme. This leaves only the practitioner

with a right to evaluate the success of the interventions on his/her clients and may therefore cause some biasness.

Be that as it may, the bottom line is that there is a need to have an SOP for monitoring and evaluating the EAP in the department.

2.6.2 EAP POLICY AND LEGISLATION

For a programme to be successful, it should derive its strength from an Act of legislation. There are numerous Acts in South Africa that impact on the EAP, yet there is no EAP-specific Act. Some of the Acts that impact on EAP as quoted by Terblanche (2009b:3-67) are as follows:

- South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) mentions the right to have access to health services and appropriate social services;
- Public Service Regulations 1999 (*Gazette* no. 20271) says all departments/provincial administrations should be assigned the responsibility of rendering an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) to their employees. Initially EAP (which is now called Wellness Management) was a stand-alone programme but later on DPSA saw a need to integrate it with Occupational Health and Safety, Health and Productivity, and HIV & AIDS and TB into a fully-fledged Employee Health and Wellness programme that will take care of all the health and safety needs of the employees. Subsequently DPSA developed an Employee Health and Wellness Strategic Framework as a guideline to all departments on how to go about implementing the four pillars making up the EHW. Although an EAP policy guideline has been developed by DPSA it is not explicit with regard to procedures that must be followed to assist an underperforming employee or an employee with misconduct.
- Schedule 8 of the Code of Good Practice under the Labour Relations Act (No 66 of 1995) says:
 - There can be progressive discipline for misconduct, which means that efforts should be made to correct an employee's behaviour through a system of graduated disciplinary measures such as **counselling** and warnings.

- In the case of certain kinds of incapacity, for example alcoholism or drug abuse, **counselling** and rehabilitation **may** be appropriate steps for an employer to consider.
- An employee should not be dismissed for unsatisfactory performance unless the employer has given the employee appropriate evaluation, instruction, training, guidance or **counselling**.

The challenge with the Labour Relations Act and the Employment of Educators' Act is that they only look at the behavioural symptoms of stress as explained above (e.g. being under the influence of liquor while on duty or being absent from duty without leave or valid reason) and label them as misconduct and deal with them as such by instigating a disciplinary hearing without looking at the causal factors first and offer assistance to the troubled educator. Someone who knows depression would understand that it is possible for someone under major depression to disappear for that 14 days without a trace and the question would be: "would it be fair to dismiss someone at that time of his/her life?"

Some principals take advantage of the vagueness of the Labour Relations Act and the EEA with regard to counselling and take educators straight to Labour Relations for disciplinary proceedings, claiming that they did counsel the educator several times.

Another challenge is that this 'may' counsel does not indicate the duration of the counselling and the grace period given to the offender between commencement of counselling and expected behaviour change. As a result if by any chance the sanction happens to be a referral to EAP, the EAP practitioner finds him/herself pleading mercy with the principals/supervisors who become impatient towards the interventions and expect miracles over a short period yet they had allowed the behaviour to go on for many years.

- The Employment of Educators Act No 76 of 1998 states that:
 - An educator can be discharged from work due to misconduct such as absenting him/herself from work for a period of 14 days without permission or valid reason as well as for consuming alcohol while on duty;

- After instituting disciplinary proceedings for misconduct the employer may, in accordance with the disciplinary code and procedures contained in Schedule 2, impose a sanction of **counselling**;
- For reasons of poor performance, the employer should develop and initiate a **formal programme of counselling** and training to enable the educator to reach the required standard of performance;
- If the educator's cause for incapacity or ill-health is alcoholism or drug abuse, the employer **may counsel** the educator and encourage him/her to attend a rehabilitation centre.

Both the Labour Relations Act and the Employment of Educator's Act seem fair and just on the part of the employer towards his employees. It seems as if no employee is just dismissed without being given a fair hearing and offered some assistance in the form of counselling or rehabilitation, yet when one looks closer, there is nothing concrete about this suggested formal programme of counselling. It is not stated clearly as to who should be doing the counselling, and for what duration. As a result, some principals submit documents for sanctions or a dismissal of an educator claiming that 'they have counselled the educator several times'. The use of the word 'may' in the Employment of Educators Act is also another challenge which could lead to various interpretations and applications of the prescript by different people. The question arises... "Who has the right to give counselling without being registered with a statutory body as a psychologist, social worker or counsellor?" Such unethical counselling could end up doing more harm than good to the already troubled educator. Without an EAP Act in place, such harm could continue, which could compromise the integrity of the EAP, leaving educators not knowing the difference between the professional assistance rendered by the EAP and the so-called counselling offered by their principals.

The only way to win this battle meanwhile there is no specific EAP Act is for the EAPs to engage vigorously on supervisory training where they can equip the principals with skills of how to identify and deal with troubled educators and how to refer the educators timeously to the EAP in the department. In this way the word 'counselling' in these acts can have a better and appropriate meaning for everyone involved.

2.7 SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to look at what other authors say about the EAP as a programme designed to assist organizations in addressing employee personal and work-related challenges that impact negatively on their job performance. This included looking at:

- the rate of use of EAP in organizations and the determining factors;
- challenges facing educators and the impact of those challenges on their health and job performance;
- the role of the EAP in addressing these challenges in its effort to improve the job performance of educators, using the six core technologies.

Various authors agree that EAP is not maximally utilized in organizations owing to misconceptions and lack of understanding. This is more true of organizations in which the EAP does not have the buy-in of the top management.

Many challenges facing educators have been identified, which include the following:

- intimate partner violence;
- HIV and AIDS and other chronic diseases;
- redeployment, right-sizing, and work overload;
- reduced parental involvement;
- curriculum changes;
- political effects on school governance;
- principals' poor management skills;
- few opportunities for promotion and career development;
- low salary levels.

All these challenges manifest in various emotional, behavioural, and physiological disorders, ranging from acute stress to suicide attempts, from a high rate of absenteeism to abscondment, from hypertension to renal failure. Educators are generally demotivated and indifferent to their profession. As a programme, EAP is meant to use its six core technologies to assist both the employees in addressing their challenges so as to improve their job performance and the organization in addressing wellness.

An EAP-specific Act is necessary to regulate the implementation of the programme and ensure uniformity.

CHAPTER 3

EMPIRICAL STUDY

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This is a study on the role of the Employee Assistance Programme in addressing challenges affecting the job performance of educators in the Eastern Cape Department of Education. Educators, who form the majority of the workforce, are responsible for the core mandate of the department. The researcher saw the necessity of conducting this study after working as a Provincial EAP coordinator in the department and realizing that, even though previous literature and the public at large had made an outcry about the deteriorating culture of learning and teaching in the department, very few educators were using the EAP. The study was an attempt to find out more about the personal and work-related challenges facing these educators, as well as whether they were aware of the departmental EAP and the services it offers to help them cope with these challenges. The results would therefore inform the design of future intervention strategies to be used by the departmental EAP to make it relevant to the needs of the educators, thereby both increasing their use of the programme and encouraging the culture of learning and teaching.

The study used the focus group method to collect data from four schools chosen from the three different clusters into which the province is divided, with two schools from cluster C because of its size and different demographics. The schools were chosen randomly but had one thing in common - they had once experienced conflict and had been taken through a team-building programme.

3.2 PRESENTATION OF EMPIRICAL DATA

This chapter focuses on presenting and analysing the data collected during the focus group interviews to see how it provides answers to the research question. This data comprises the educators' responses to the interview schedule that guided the focus group sessions.

There were four groups with between 10-14 members in each group, who were interviewed. The profiles of each group follow:

3.3 PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

TABLE 3.3.1- FOCUS GROUP 1 (A primary school-Grade R-9, located in a township). Belongs to cluster C of the 3 clusters into which DoE districts are divided.

PARTICIPANT (P)	GENDER	AGE	HIGHEST QUALIFICATION	APPOINTMENT TYPE	JOB TITLE
1.A	F	41	Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.)	Permanent	Educator
1.B	F	39	Senior Primary Teacher's Diploma (SPTD)	"	Educator
1.C	F	46	B.Ed.	"	Educator
1.D	M	57	SPTD	"	HOD
1.E	F	48	B.A. Honours (Soc. Sc.)	"	Senior Teacher
1.F	F	53	B. Ed.	"	HOD
1.G	M	48	SPTD	"	Educator
1.H	F	43	BA & Higher Diploma in Education (HDE)	"	Educator
1.I	F	41	SPTD	"	Educator
1.J	M	61	SPTD	"	Principal
1.K	M	46	SPTD	"	Educator

TABLE 3.3.2- FOCUS GROUP 2 (A High School-Grades 10-12, located in a rural village.) Belongs to cluster B of the 3 clusters into which DoE districts are divided.

PARTICIPANT (P)	GENDER	AGE	HIGHEST QUALIFICATION	APPOINTMENT TYPE	JOB TITLE
2.A	M	49	National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) + Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE)	Permanent	Educator
2.B	M	39	B.Sc. + DIPL SCIENCE	Temporary	Educator
2.C	F	47	NPDE + N4	Permanent	Educator
2.D	F	39	B. Ed.	"	Educator
2.E	F	43	B. Ed.	"	HOD
2.F	F	38	B. Ed.	"	Educator
2.G	F	52	B.A.	"	Senior Teacher
2.H	F	42	B.A. & HDE	"	Educator
2.I	F	26	B. Ed.	"	Educator
2.J	M	41	B. Ed.	Temporary	Educator

TABLE 3.3.3 - FOCUS GROUP 3 (A High School-Grades 10-12, located in a rural village). Belongs to cluster A of the 3 clusters into which DoE districts are divided.

PARTICIPANT (P)	GENDER	AGE	HIGHEST QUALIFICATION	APPOINTMENT TYPE	JOB TITLE
3.A	M	40	B. Com + HDE	Permanent	HOD
3.B	M	22	Mechanical Engineering + Education Diploma	Temporary	Educator
3.C	F	22	B. Com. + ACE	Temporary	Educator
3.D	M	40	B. Com.	Permanent	Senior Educator
3.E	M	41	B.Ed. (Honours)	Permanent	Educator
3.F	F	29	Agriculture Diploma + ACE	Temporary	Educator
3.G	M	30	B. Sc.	Permanent	Educator
3.H	F	22	B. Sc.	Temporary	Educator
3.I	F	39	B.A. (Education)	Permanent	Educator
3.J	F	59	Master's in Education	Permanent	Deputy Principal
3.K	F	24	N6 in Maths	Temporary	Educator
3.L	F	25	Diploma in Education	Temporary	Educator
3.M	M	45	B.A. + HDE	Permanent	Educator
3.N	F	30	B.Ed. (Commerce)	Permanent	Educator

TABLE 3.3. 4- FOCUS GROUP 4 (A Junior Primary School-Grade R- 4, located in a township.) Belongs to cluster C of the 3 clusters into which DoE districts are divided.

PARTICIPANT (P)	GENDER	AGE	HIGHEST QUALIFICATION	APPOINTMENT TYPE	JOB TITLE
4.A	F	64	B.Ed. Management in Education	Permanent	Principal
4.B	F	56	Matric & Diploma in Education	Permanent	Educator
4.C	F	56	B.Tech. Management in Education	Permanent	Educator
4.D	F	63	Junior Primary Teacher's Diploma	Permanent	Educator
4.E	F	54	B.Tech. Management in Education	Permanent	Senior Educator
4.F	F	44	Matric	Permanent	GR R Practitioner
4.G	F	39	Matric	Contract	GR R Practitioner
4.H	F	42	Matric & Early Childhood Development	Contract	GR R Practitioner
4.I	F	25	IT & Business Management Diploma	Contract	School Clerk
4.J	F	53	Standard Six	Permanent	Cleaner

3.4 Challenges facing educators

3.4.1 PERSONAL CHALLENGES:

THEME 1: FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

Participants **2.G** and **3.M** stated that, besides their job of educating learners at school, they also have many other responsibilities in their families, where they play different roles as spouses, parents, children, sister/brother, community members and so on. For example, **P 2.G** said: **“I think as educators we have got many roles to play to an extent that it is difficult to share our time according because we must fulfil all these roles. We are not only educators but we are also mothers who have problems back at home, sometimes you may find that you may not be productive not because you don’t have the subject matter but because of the personal problems you encounter back at home.”**

SUB-THEME 1.1 FINANCES

Since family responsibilities come with financial responsibilities, **P 1.B** agreed that educators are usually over-indebted and are sometimes victims of cash loan sharks: **“An educator these days is regarded as a person who is full of debts, who goes to cash loans and is penniless. For example a child who only started working yesterday in another department has accumulated a lot of things which I do not have as an educator who worked for many years.”**

P 1. E justified their reason for over-indebtedness by saying this: **“Circumstances have forced us to be over-indebted because we don’t get what we deserve from the department because we work hard as educators.”**

P 3.N had another view as to their reason for being short of money when she said **“As educators our trend is lack of money since we get into so many things including taking too many insurance policies and this frustrates me personally.”**

Participants **2.D**, **2.C**, **2.F**, **3.M** and **4.F** felt that there are generally many family responsibilities that put them under financial pressure, such as family ceremonies,

commuting to school, irresponsible siblings and children's education. This is what **P 2.D** said: **"In my family when there is going to be a ceremony and there are discussions re contributions, other family members will say, those with 'persal' must talk first. By saying that, they mean that those who work in government, especially educators, must make the biggest contributions. This puts a lot of financial strain on our budgets."**

P 3.M said, with regard to family responsibilities and finances: **"We don't stay close to schools because of other responsibilities which need us back in our homes such as our families and everything else, and to work far means spending a lot of money on transport and this also adds to this point already mentioned of financial problems."**

P 4.B said: **"My first challenge as the employee of the government, let's say I have children at home who need to go and study at tertiary institutions, we don't have money."**

SUB-THEME 1.2 CARE GIVING

Focus group 2 dwelt more on this challenge than any of the other 3 groups.

For example, **P 2.C, 2.G** and **2.H** shared their first-hand experience of taking care of the sick and the orphaned in their families, mostly because of the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

P 2. G said: **"I have my cousin who is HIV+. After testing she came to me straight and told me and I was so shocked and I tried to counsel her with the little knowledge I have from watching TV. You always guard yourself that you don't speak something to offend her at the same time watch her progress and symptoms so as to advise her and not allow her to feel lonely."**

P 2.H had this to say: **"I stay with a lot of children who have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS and now I am expected to take time off to go and apply for the foster grant since the grandparents keep on losing or misplacing the documents required at Welfare. My other niece also came back from the city very sick and now I have to look after her. Sometimes the neighbours phone me at school saying she**

is very ill and I have to ask permission to leave school early because I cannot afford to hire a care giver.”

However, HIV and AIDS sufferers were apparently not the only care-giving responsibility affecting the educator’s job performance, as **P 2.D** said: **“I am taking care of my sister who used to be a nurse but now suffers from mental illness”**, while **P 4.F** said **“For instance I have an epileptic child and sometimes I cannot come to school.”**

SUB-THEME 1.3 MARITAL/FAMILY CONFLICTS

This sub-theme includes conflict between husbands and wives or just intimate partners, as well as conflicts at home between parents and children or between siblings. **P 4.G** said: **“I have a brother who gives me sleepless nights by coming back drunk in the middle of the night.”**

Participants generally did not mention much relating to this challenge, but some of them mentioned it as a consequence of other challenges. For example, **P 2.E** said: **“My brother died of HIV and my mother was very bitter about it and was accusing my sister-in-law of killing her son. Even after my sister-in-law died, she kept on making those cruel accusations to the grandchildren.”**

In the case of **P 2.C** the conflict came as a result of a loafing brother. This is what she said: **“I have a brother who is a qualified educator from Fort Hare but has never worked in his life. Every morning he comes from his house to our home to collect food and when I complain about this, my parents justify his actions by saying that he is not mentally sound.”**

P 2. D: **“I have ill-disciplined nephews who are stressing me out yet their mother is not doing anything to stop them and this puts a strain on our relationship at home.”**

DISCUSSION OF THEME 1 AND SUB-THEMES

Various authors concur that employees’ job performance is not affected only by what happens in the workplace, but by everything else that happens in the employee’s personal life (Mzamo, 2004:20). Anything that causes sleepless nights will result in a

tired employee who cannot perform at his/her optimum level at work, as we have seen in the confession by one of the participants.

Participants from both groups were unwilling to talk about challenges to their marital/inter-personal relationship. When probed about Intimate Partner Violence,

P 2. D said: **“It is something that used to happen in the olden days and we hardly hear about it these days.”** This is contradictory to what Ghanotakis, Mayhew and Watts (2009:359) maintain in their article when they say South Africa has nearly the highest number of IPV incidences among other countries.

One of the reasons these participants believe it is no longer happening could be either that people are still not willing to speak out about IPV or they still think violence takes only a physical form, thereby overlooking emotional and psychological abuse.

THEME 2- LACK OF RECOGNITION /LOSS OF DIGNITY FOR EDUCATORS

Group 1 participants **P 1. B, 1.E,** and **1.F** were quite vocal about the lack of recognition and loss of dignity to the profession, blaming this on the new democratic government as well as on their own use of cash loans.

P 1.B: **“I can say an educator these days is regarded as a person who is full of debts who goes to cash loans. I think that has also contributed to people developing an attitude towards educators even your pay slips are known all over the place where we seek loans and this has demoted the status of an educator.”**

P 1.F: **“No recognition, when you say you are an educator nobody sees value in you. These are the things that kill us, instead of recognition everyone brings us down. This is a new thing, this lack of recognition, in this democracy. In the olden days educators were recognized and esteemed highly.”**

DISCUSSION OF THEME 2

Although participants mentioned only the use of cash loans as the reason for the loss of dignity and recognition, other, earlier, studies showed that the loss of teacher professionalism has put the career into disrepute. This was shown in a study conducted by Mphahla (2009:89) in which educators who were respondents in this study voiced their

concern that the teaching profession had been put into disrepute by colleagues who drink excessively, frequently absent themselves from school, and male educators who have sexual relations with schoolgirls.

THEME 3- HIV & AIDS

Participants said very little or almost nothing about how HIV & AIDS were affecting them as educators.

P 1.D made only this statement: “**Just like all other people, educators do suffer from various forms of illnesses including HIV/AIDS**”, while **P 3.A** said: “**Suffering from diseases affects the job performance because it erodes self-concept, even when one is teaching s/he lacks confidence especially HIV&AIDS. Other diseases also affect educators such as hypertension and stress and they cause a lot of absenteeism.**”

DISCUSSION OF THEME 3

No participants mentioned educators suffering from HIV and AIDS, possibly because of the stigma still associated with this disease. They avoided the topic in case there was someone amongst the group who was suspected of living with HIV & AIDS.

There was therefore no data to fully support Theron (2005:59) when he said in his article:

The face of education has changed. The previous paradigm of generally healthy educators with low absenteeism and high commitment has expired. The *status quo* of educators grappling with AIDS-related illnesses, related trauma and concomitant flagging teaching standards is the current reality.

The fact that the participants did not mention HIV and AIDS as one of their personal challenges did not mean that it does not exist in their midst, but merely showed that the issue of stigma is still there. It also indicated the limitations of qualitative research using self-confessional statements in comparison with quantitative research which uses statistics from verified data sources.

3.4.2 WORK-RELATED CHALLENGES:

THEME 4- POOR MANAGEMENT AND DECISION-MAKING

The participants' criticism of the following issues pointed to the fact that there was poor management and decision-making in the department, not only at the school level, but also at the district and Head Office level.

SUB-THEME 4.1 REDEPLOYMENT

Educators believed that the redeployment process had not been carried out properly and fairly. As a result it caused misery in both their personal lives and their schools, since it separated spouses and left a work overload for those who remained in a particular institution after others had been redeployed.

P 1. A: "I can say the case of redeployment of educators whereby I am married my husband is redeployed to work in Transkei and I am living in former Ciskei, so that cause a breakdown of relationship because the government says my husband must work there."

P 3.D did not seem to be against redeployment per se but against the way it had been implemented, saying: **"The problem lies with redeployment being based on previous year's learner roll and not on the current one. Their stats are not updated. You have to share the work of those redeployed and the rest of the learners suffer. This causes a work overload."**

Tempers flared In focus group 4 when the issue of redeployment was brought up as an example of the principal's dictatorship style of leadership. **P 4.C, 4.D,** and **4.E** accused the principal of going behind their backs to identify them as being in excess and held her responsible for having them redeployed.

P. 4.E said: **"Our principal called the three of us to her office and asked us when did we join the school because she had no records of us and we told her. Only to realize later that she used the principle of last-in-first-out to identify us as the ones in excess. We then got letters during the December holidays telling us we are in excess and will therefore be redeployed to other schools, but when we asked her she denied submitting our names to the district office."**

SUB-THEME 4.2 CURRICULUM CHANGES

In discussing this sub-theme, educators expressed all their frustrations about the changes that have been made to the school curriculum since 1994 (from Outcomes Based Education, through Curriculum 2005, Revised National Curriculum Statement, National Curriculum Statement, up to the current Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement-CAPS, which have left them feeling incompetent and confused.

P 1. G, 1.K, 2.E, 3.A, 3.D, 3.I and 3.J expressed their dissatisfaction with the latest curriculum changes, citing the few days of training, the unrealistic pace setters, the non-involvement of educators during curriculum design, the inexperienced curriculum specialists and subject advisors, and the system of learner promotion that compels learners to proceed to another phase after a certain number of years, even if they have not achieved the required levels.

P 1.G said this: **“When it comes to curriculum changes, I don’t think educators are involved because when these changes come to us at the end, we find them practically impossible to implement. For example in Maths the lesson plans are too fast for the mind of these learners. They speak of a new lesson every day and if you do that you will leave all the learners behind.”**

P 3.I had this to say: **“The new approach where they demand files, we do not get enough training for instance in CAPS we are trained only few days and yet that needs a lot of time. It affects us because we are expected to finish the syllabus which demands a lot of time and most of the time we are on training, when we are still facing this it changes again, you are still following, it changes and this frustrates us, we are left raw.”**

SUB-THEME 4.3 LACK OF GOOD MANAGEMENT AND SOUND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

All the groups pointed out that their schools had once been conflict-ridden, and that there was no team work, resulting in a high failure rate in some schools. Some accused their Senior Management Team of not running the schools according to the legislation but rather according to their own methods, consequently alienating some of the staff members.

P 2. C said this: **“Our principal here does not apply that rule of counselling before disciplinary action. We had a high failure rate and a communication breakdown amongst ourselves until we were taken to the team building where we came back fine but now we have gone back to square one.”**

P 4.B: **“Our principal came and we worked well as a team while she was still acting but as soon as she became permanent she changed completely. She is a dictator now absolutely, so I told the other staff members to ignore her and mind our teaching business and our salaries because we are tired of fighting. She side-lines educators and work alone with the clerk and in the school governing body she works with the chairman and treasurer only.”**

P 3.A raised another view of the inefficiency of some principals when he said: **“Sometimes there is an element of politics playing a role in appointments at schools as well as bribery and it affects the attitude around the school, whereby the principal will make you feel that s/he is the boss.”**

DISCUSSION OF THEME 4 AND SUB-THEMES

Although it was not mentioned by these participants, one other risk associated with this separation was that of HIV and AIDS, which was discussed in the studies conducted by Centre for the Study of AIDS at the University of Pretoria (2006:6). It was stated that one of the factors contributing to the South African epidemic is “the disruption of family and communal life resulting from apartheid and migrant labour”, yet, in the case of educators, the disruption of family life was not caused by apartheid but by the process of re-deployment which took educators away from their families to rural schools in the former Transkei. This was supported by a study conducted by Zungu-Dirwayi, Shisana, Louw and Dana in 2004 in the Department of Education (2007:1299), which found that the HIV and AIDS prevalence rate was high among those educators who had left the family to teach in other villages.

The fact that all these groups were complaining about the latest curriculum changes, confessing that they had been conflict-ridden, seems to show a correlation between frustrations in the work environment and bad interpersonal relations. This is supported by the findings in a study conducted by Rangraje, van der Merwe, Urbani, and van der Walt (2005:41), in which more than half the number of educators (out of 150) expressed the concern that they were not coping well with the changes in education, that there was a

great deal of uncertainty in the teaching profession, and that personal conflict was a common occurrence among the staff members.

The fact that the educators felt that they were never consulted on the curriculum changes made it difficult for them to adjust to these changes. Cox was quoted by Cosgrove (2000:68) as saying that changes brought stress to educators when they felt that it was beyond their control and were not involved in the change process and had no sense of ownership. Change was just imposed on them.

Strife was evident in focus group 4 during the interview, owing to allegations that educators were not involved in the school's financial affairs, which were run by the principal. This seemed to support what Bondesio and de Witt maintained (in Mzamo, 2004:17) when they traced the cause of workplace violence back to the principal's management style. They said that "some educational leaders, through their inability to provide effective management and leadership, unconsciously behave in a manner that activates stress among their subordinates".

THEME 5- LACK OF/ INADEQUATE SUPPORT

This theme covers everything that the participants feel is not done by either the parents or the government to allow them to perform their jobs with joy and success.

SUB-THEME 5.1 LACK OF SUPPORT FROM PARENTS

Participants **1.K**, **2.B**, **3.A** and **4.C** all made similar statements that parents these days are neither involved nor interested in the education of their children. **P 3.A** even used the analogy of livestock to describe parent involvement, saying "**In our school we say these children 'bayakhatshelwa.'**" This is a Xhosa phrase which is used when livestock owners from the rural villages just open up a kraal in the morning and let a young boy accompany the cattle halfway to the veld and leave them there to find grass on their own all day, without even checking on them, until they come back in the evening.

P 1. D saw it from another angle when he raised this point: "**Another thing these learners are grandchildren, i.e. they stay with grandparents instead of their parents**

and these grandparents are too old to come here and some don't understand the schooling system."

P 2. C and P 2. I agreed that parents these days always want to defend their children and take sides with them against the educators and do not understand that children's rights go with responsibility. **P 2. C** said: **"They see us as too harsh to their children and in one incident the parent demanded that we release the child so that she can take her home with her."**

Another challenge mentioned by **P 2. D** and **4.B** is that of parents who do not inform the educators that a child is sick or pregnant, so that they can always be alert to this. **P 4.B** said this: **"With HIV, I don't know whether parents fear the stigma, they don't disclose but they hide the child's sickness yet the symptoms show and the child is sick. They keep them in TB hospitals without informing the school."**

SUB-THEME 5.2 LACK OF SUPPORT FROM THE GOVERNMENT

Participants felt that the government was not giving them the support they needed to perform their duties optimally and to keep them motivated. This support was mentioned in various forms:

- **Sub-sub theme: Lack of Incentives**

Participants **1.E, 1,D, 1.K, 1.G, 2.D, 3.E, 3.M** and **4.B** all complained that the government was not giving them enough incentives considering the amount and diversity of work they carried as educators.

P 2. D said: **"Salaries in the Eastern Cape are lower than those of other provinces and that makes me feel like transferring to other provinces. In fact I would resign to be an educator if I had other options."**

P 3.M: **"Promotions are very scarce in our profession. You stay for twenty years in post level 1 as if you are not performing well, yet admin officers in offices progress very quickly. They get car subsidies, subsistence allowance and overtime yet when we sacrifice for extra classes we get nothing."**

P 4.B complained about inconsistency in the promotion of Senior Educators and said: **“I don’t want to tell how it has abused emotionally, the lack of promotion. I had to go to the office to enquire what criteria they used to promote people to be senior educators and get higher salaries but I got no explanation. They consoled me that they identify their senior educators every year yet it ended somewhere without reaching us.”**

- **Sub-sub theme: Lack of capacitation for the ‘social work’ role.**

Participants felt that they were playing the role of full-time ‘social workers’ for their learners, especially those orphaned by HIV/AIDS and sometimes abused by uncles, yet they were not equipped to deal with that contingency.

P 1. E: “We are ‘social workers’, we do everything for our learners, we bring them clothes since they have problems and come from different families, if s/he has a birthday and have no parents you decide to buy him/her something. We play the role of social workers yet we are not equipped to do that.”

P 1. B raised concern about **P 1.E’s** cry to be equipped by saying: **“If the department wants to equip us will she not add more courses and that becomes more load on what we already have?”**

P 3.I said this: **“These learners have serious issues like they are orphans and the guardians want to abuse them sexually or their grandparents are sickly so they come to school late because of first taking care of them. They pour out these challenges on us expecting support yet we are not equipped.”**

- **Sub-sub theme: Lack of coaching and mentoring by subject advisors and EDOs**

Some participants in group 3 were of the opinion that subject advisors and EDOs were not sufficiently competent to be in these positions, and as a result they were

not giving them proper coaching and mentoring, especially when it came to the latest curriculum changes.

P 3.A said this: “In this workshop thing, people were given posts of subject advisors through redeployment, they don’t deserve to be there so you find that they are rubber-stamping and doing workshop for the sake of doing it. When you challenge them they become emotional and feel that you are exposing them.”

P 3.A also said this: “When there is a subject meeting and you confess that you have fallen behind your pace setter, you become a victim and you have to account and made to write in a log book as if it is a misconduct or you are not performing.”

P 3.D made this comment: “You see us quiet as you assure us of confidentiality in the EAP office, but I am telling you, the district office is the last place to take your problems to. We are supposed to see help when we see EDOs but because of this lack of trust, we see them as people we will never approach for assistance.”

- **Sub-sub theme: Lack of psychological counselling**

Participants **1.A, 1.C, 1.E 1.H, 3.E and 3.F** felt that, because of all they were going through in their daily lives and at work, they ought to be offered counselling by the department, but it is not forthcoming.

P 1.E said this: “We have no place to go and be assisted with these challenges as you can see that we are using this opportunity now to vent out our frustration.”

P 3.E said: “When it comes to counselling, we only see it on television when students in a certain school had a crisis so they say students and educators will receive counselling.”

P 1.H: “In all these workshops we attend they talk of psychological services at schools but they are never in existent and we need them to be here full time.”

After hearing that the school psychological services were for learners rather than employees, **P 1. A** showed her desperation for any kind of help by saying this: **“We believe that if the learners can be assisted, we will also benefit because of less stress in our day to day activities at school.”**

P 1.J, however, had a different idea of counselling when he said: **“I don’t know how people understand counselling because as we talk, we are counselling one another, even when I shout at another educator; I take it as I am counselling myself.”**

- **Sub-sub theme: Lack of Resources.**

Here participants complained about not having resources such as enough personnel, classrooms, school furniture, libraries, and cleaning materials.

P 1. K said this: **“The department treats educators as general assistants because there is no way they can spend months without filling in vacant posts of educators who have left and still expect those subjects to be taught. For example in this school, one educator left in February 2011 while the deputy principal left in July same year but up to now in May 2012 those posts have not been filled.”**

P 3.F made this comment: **“Another challenge in our school is high number of learners per class, classes are congested. This is frustrating because you cannot give proper feedback to learners, it is an impossible task. The ratio has shifted from 1: 35.”**

P 4.B complained about the dearth of cleaning personnel and materials: **“We do experience work overload in the sense that we also look at cleanliness in the classroom and in the grounds because we don’t have general assistants employed to do this. Sometimes you use your own money to buy necessities to keep your classroom clean.”**

DISCUSSION OF THEME 5 AND ITS SUB-THEMES and SUB-SUB THEMES

The South African Council for Educators (2001:55) documents that one of the roles and responsibilities of educators is to meet parents and discuss the conduct and progress of their children. The question is, then, if the parents are as far from the school as indicated in these interviews, how can the educators play this role? Surely nobody expects them to move from house to house consulting with each learner's parents? Educators in a study conducted by Singh, Mbokodi and Msila on 'Black parental involvement in schools' (2004:301-307) had a similar view, that learners seem to have too many rights in this new democracy.

The cry about low salaries is in line with the findings of the study conducted by Olivier and Venter (2003:190), in which educators indicated that inadequate salaries caused a great deal of stress, especially when taking into account the overtime their jobs demand of them and how negatively their salaries compare with those of people in the private sector and other government departments.

The participants' views on the latest curriculum changes were in line with the study conducted by Mpahla (2009:96), in which 75% of the educators who were respondents complained about the lack of support and monitoring in the implementation of the new curriculum. They claimed that there was no support from their internal management or the district office when it came to the implementation of continuous assessment and the provision of teaching resources for the successful implementation of OBE.

THEME 6- CHALLENGES WITH LEARNERS

Comments about the learners by participants **1.E, 1.G, 1.H, 1.K, 2.A, 2.D, 2.H, 3.E, 3.G, 3.I** and **4.G** ranged from pity, because of the harsh life circumstances under which they live to disgust, because of their lack of discipline.

SUB-THEME 6.1: HIV INFECTED AND AFFECTED LEARNERS

P 1. E said this: "**Sometimes you see a sick child who is orphaned by HIV, those things affect us, you have your own workload and this saddens you since you**

have feelings and emotions. Some come hungry and some are ill-treated by relatives, all that affects us.”

SUB-THEME 6.2: LONG DISTANCES TRAVELLED TO SCHOOL

P 3.E said: “The long distances they travel to school also affects them and our performance since we cannot organize extra classes in fear of their safety.”

SUB-THEME 6.3: LACK OF DISCIPLINE AND HIGH RATE OF PREGNANCY

P 2. A said this: “First of all, children are misbehaving; I don’t know whether it is because the government has given them too many rights. When you guide them they ignore you. When you call them to morning classes they don’t come.”

P 3.E said: “There is high rate of pregnancy which makes them uncomfortable among others, cheeky and stressed.”

DISCUSSION OF THEME 6 AND SUB-THEMES

The concerns raised by these participants supported the statement by Schulze and Steyn (2007:693) when they said that educators feel a lot of stress when dealing with these HIV-orphaned learners as they look to their educators as their only source of hope. Educators find themselves having to play the additional roles of parents and social workers to the learners.

Even though participants were not asked to rate the challenges, their statements concerning the learners’ lack of discipline and commitment supported Cosgrove’s (2000:50) finding that learners’ poor attitudes towards school and their lack of motivation have consistently been identified in various studies as the greatest challenge facing educators.

THEME 7- TEMPORARY AND CONTRACT EDUCATORS

SUB-THEME 7.1: LACK OF BENEFITS

The temporary educators' main concern was their lack of benefits, such as a normal salary (since they are getting only a stipend), membership of a pension fund, medical aid and a housing subsidy.

P 3.K, 4.F and 4.G raised their frustrations about this issue.

P 4.F said this: **“My challenge is that I am a single parent who has worked for the government for 10 years under contract with no benefits and with nothing, if anything happens to me my children will end up in the streets. I have no increment, no medical aid and no pension.”**

SUB-THEME 7.2: LACK OF A VOICE

P 4.G said: **“As for us Grade R practitioners we are not entitled to leave. Our contract states that if you fall sick you must produce a sick certificate for even 1 day but we obey since we don't have a voice. We are robbed of our rights and we have to swallow everything.”**

This lack of a voice was also implicit in this statement by **P 3.K**: **“As for me I will talk on the basis of being a temporary educator, I came here in 2010 in an SGB post getting R 1500 per month, travelling and renting in that amount and yet you are given a huge work load even subjects you do not know. This frustrates to an extent that sometimes you just decide to stay at home, after all you don't appear in the time book and persal to sign leave forms.”**

DISCUSSION OF THEME 7 AND SUB-THEMES

One group of participants, on top of all other challenges suffered by permanent educators, have their own miseries which come with the fact that their employment is on a temporary or contract basis.

Although temporary educators can be found in either the Junior or Secondary phase and can be in the employ of either the department or the SGB, all Grade R practitioners are

employed on contract by the department. The stipend therefore differs between those employed by the SGB and those employed by the government, but the lack of benefits is applicable to all of them.

When one looks at the Grade R practitioners, one can see that some have only Grade 12, which could be the reason why they are not fully employed as educators. The question can be asked: If there is a need for them in the schools, why is the department not putting them through special training for grade R and then employing them full-time? As for temporary educators in the secondary schools who are fully-qualified graduates, it is not easy to understand why they are not made permanent if their services are needed. The crucial point is that their grievances and frustration could be affecting the culture of learning and teaching as well as causing insubordination to the school management and setting a bad example to other staff members. This could be supported by the fact that group 1, who had no temporary educators, claimed that they had no problems of absenteeism and were all committed and diligent.

3.5 Effects of the above challenges on their job performance, overall well-being as well as coping mechanisms

THEME 1: DEMOTIVATION, FRUSTRATION & LACK OF JOB SATISFACTION

P 1.F, 1.G, 2.D, 2.E expressed their feelings of demotivation, frustration and loss of passion for the profession.

This is what **P 1.G** said: **“You know what I always tell my colleagues, that I am going to stop working soon. I tell them to change careers because this is nonsense you are going to die.”**

P 4.E had this to say about the situation in her school: **“Yes we really went to a team building which found us emotionally abused and our characters were different and we found ourselves rowdy, but it managed to change us.”**

P 2.D said: **“Sometimes you get into a career accidentally and you develop passion along the way but here in this career all the passion is gone even to those who had it from the beginning.”**

DISCUSSION OF THEME

The demotivation and complaints about lack of promotions by participants concurred with what Kyriacou said (in Mzamo, 2004:20), when he pointed out that employees develop stress when they feel that promotional progress is inadequate, or if one is generally dissatisfied with the match between career aspirations and one's position. He then concluded by saying that lack of promotion opportunities has been cited in many studies as the demotivating factor for most educators.

One could not rule out the possibility that the frustrations experienced by the educators could be the cause of the conflicts that erupted in these schools, as they took out their negative emotions on colleagues.

THEME 2: DROP IN JOB PERFORMANCE

P 1.E, 2.H, and 3.A agreed that job performance suffered because of these challenges.

P 1. E said: **“This drops our work performance because nothing motivates us.”**

P 3.A: **“Diseases affect your attendance and leads to a lot of absenteeism.”**

P 2.H said: **“Having an HIV sick person at home affects your performance because you think of him/her and worry that you left him/her alone. Sometimes you could not sleep at night and do not get a chance to prepare your school work and during the day you are tired and not fresh.”**

However, **P 1. G** said this about his school: **“Here we have no problem of absenteeism, we don't abuse sick leave because of low morale.”**

DISCUSSION OF THEME

Although participants of focus group 1 did not admit to resorting to absenteeism or sick leave abuse because of the challenges and the low morale, for some educators missing school is unavoidable. For example, school attendance and performance at school is likely to be affected for those who stay with sick relatives and are sometimes called by neighbours while at school when someone becomes seriously ill. Some come to school out of sorts after having had sleepless nights either because of caring for the sick or thinking about their financial over-indebtedness or because of rowdy alcoholic brothers/sons.

It is a known fact, however, that sickness and diseases are not the only things that affect job performance, as even the alcohol used as a coping mechanism has an impact. According to Ngidi and Qwabe (2006:529), various studies have indicated that educators are showing a lot of behaviour problems that hamper their job performance and deplete the culture of teaching and learning at schools. Some of the problems mentioned are non-commitment, no lesson preparations, lack of subject knowledge, abuse of alcohol, poor role models, conducting themselves unprofessionally, absenting themselves from classes, lacking discipline and unprofessional work ethics.

It takes a certain kind of manager to keep his/her staff focused on the task at hand regardless of the challenges, as indicated by the participants of focus group 1, who said that, in the midst of it all, they still come to school and do their job.

THEME 3: PSYCHO-SOMATIC ILLNESSES

P 1.E, 1.K, 1.H, 3.A and 4.G agreed that they suffer physically and emotionally because of the challenges.

P 1.K said: **“The environment is not healthy, it affects our wellbeing, and we run out of sleep at night.”**

P 3.A said this: **“Other diseases also affect educators, such as hypertension and stress.”**

P 4.G: **“We live with the stress of always feeling pity for these children.”**

DISCUSSION OF THEME

The participants' statements indicated a sense of demotivation and suggested that they were affected emotionally, psychologically and physically by these challenges. The risk lies in the fact that, although most of the educators admitted that the situation was stressful for them, very few of them were seeking professional help. This accumulated stress has a way of finding expression in the physical body, and participants admitted that they did suffer from hypertension. This concurred with a study of 21,307 educators from public schools in South Africa conducted by Peltzer, Shisana, Zuma, Van Wyk and Zungu-Dirwayi (2009: 247), the results for which indicated that the prevalence of stress-related illnesses was 15.6 per cent for hypertension, 9.1 per cent for stomach ulcers, 4.5

per cent for diabetes, 3.3 per cent for minor mental distress, 3.1 per cent for major mental distress and 3.5 per cent for asthma.

THEME 4: VARIOUS MEANS OF COPING

P 1.C said: **“We don’t have coping mechanisms for these stressful working environment, we don’t have anywhere to vent out our frustrations and pour out our troubled hearts.”**

P 3.D said this on this matter: **“Sometimes people drink because they are trying to deal with stress and are frustrated both at home and at work. We spend most of the time here at work and behaviour can be changed by conditions. We work hard, finding raw students from GET, you are rushing with the pace setters and the department is on your case so you end up resorting to liquor to cope.”**

P 3.A interjected and said: **“Sometimes people drink not because of stress but peer pressure.”**

P 1.E, 3.N, 4.B, 4.E 4.F and **4.G** shared their various means of coping, such as talking to psychologists or families, checking in at St Mark’s psychiatric clinic, seeking counselling at their church, or airing their problems in the public transport and in the staffroom.

P 3.N said: **“We just talk things in passing here in the staffroom and relieve stress for a short while. Like, there is no support system where you can go. Even when you talk it out you just shout and shout but you don’t come up with solutions.”**

This is what **P 4.G** said: **“Sometimes we share as colleagues and you feel better or go and gossip with another educator about bad things done by the principal.”**

DISCUSSION OF THEME

There was a note of helplessness and frustration in their tone which showed that they were not coping well with the challenges.

From the discussions, it was clear that educators are really facing various challenges and have no functional coping mechanisms. They have no place to go to pour out their

frustrations, making them vulnerable to high stress levels. This could lead to a number of deviant behaviours, one of which stood out above the rest. This was conflict in their schools which affected even their job performance and Grade 12 results (those who are in secondary schools).

This supports the opinion of Ivancevich and Matteson as quoted by Mzamo (2004:14) when they maintain that many schools are riddled with conflict caused by allegations of, inter alia, witchcraft, defiance and insubordination and fights over senior posts. Conflict and violence of this nature are usually symptoms of a deeper underlying cause, which is usually 'stress' emanating from such things as low trust, lack of cohesion, low supportiveness, communication breakdown and lack of job satisfaction.

Even though they were not mentioned because participants were not comfortable discussing certain personal challenges, alcohol and marital problems could not be ruled out, as the stress resulting from conflict in the workplace is likely to spill over to their homes and in some cases it is the conflict at home that causes others to bring violence into the workplace.

3.6 Knowledge of the presence of the EAP in the department and its purpose.

THEME: FROM SOME KNOWLEDGE TO NO KNOWLEDGE AT ALL ABOUT EAP

SUB-THEME 1: KNOWLEDGE OF EAP IN THE DEPARTMENT

Only **P 1. I** and **4.A** knew there was an EAP, even though they did not know of other services available related to the programme.

P 1.I said: **“We know so and so [mentioned the name of an official], she is EAP, she once came to our school to promote peace and team building and when we lost a learner in an accident she came with other people.”**

P 4.A said this: **“EAP is something in the department provided you go and seek assistance. I made use of it when I arrived in this school in 2008 due to challenges I encountered.”**

SUB-THEME 2: SOME KNOWLEDGE OF EAP BUT NOT IN THE DEPARTMENT

P 2.J and **3.E** had a vague idea regarding EAP.

P 2.J said: **“What I think, there are people who usually have problems like alcohol abuse and they are taken to a certain programme for assistance. So I do not know whether this EAP is similar to that programme, and we have never used that programme in this school, I only hear about it.”** While **P 3.E** said: **“I think EAP is a programme to assist in these problems such as alcohol abuse and stress but unfortunately it is not there in our department. They are there in theory only. We don’t know anything of that sort; it’s our first time to hear about it.”**

SUB-THEME 3: LACK OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT EAP

The rest of the participants claimed that they knew nothing about EAP.

P 1.A said this: **“What does EAP stand for? We did not even know there is such a programme.”**

P 2.C said: **“Can you please tell me what this EAP is? What is it for? While P 3.H** said: **“In fact I thought I was going to ask what is this EAP all about?”**

When the names of the EAP coordinators in the respective districts were mentioned, participants in all groups echoed that they knew the programme but not its name.

This is what **P 2.C** said: **“If you talk of this official as an EAP in the district, now we know this programme. We were taken to Zoo Lake as the staff for team building. We had a high failure rate and a communication breakdown amongst ourselves. But it came through the EDO. We questioned this outing not knowing why we are here at Zoo Lake.”**

DISCUSSION OF THE THEME AND SUB-THEMES

Knowing little or nothing about the EAP in the department is crucial because this determines its use, as Sangwini points out in his foreword to a report on *‘Evaluation of Employee Assistance Programme in the Public Service’* published by the Public Service Commission in 2006, saying : “Optimal functioning of EAPs in the public service is largely determined by the employees’ awareness of and perceptions regarding the services rendered by the EAP, and can only be measured by means of utilization statistics as well as impact assessments”.

As is evident from the participants’ comments, the use of EAPs was hindered by ignorance of the programme.

3.7 Knowledge of legislation that mentions assistance being given to employees on the basis of poor work performance and misconduct.

THEME: SOME KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXISTENCE OF LEGISLATION

P 1.D, 1.F and 2.C were aware that there was legislation stating that an educator must be assisted and counselled or first sent to a rehabilitation centre before a disciplinary action can be executed against him/her, yet principals were not following this. Most participants said they did not know of any legislation to that effect. All they knew was that an educator was charged with misconduct.

This is what **P 1.D** said: **“We know that according to the legislation a poor performing educator must be assisted but that is not happening. The educator must even be developed.”**

P 3.D said: **“We don’t know what the legislation says but what we know is that an educator gets charged for misconduct. Most educators do not know their rights, they just find themselves facing disciplinary action, for instance one who abuses alcohol also has high rate of absenteeism. Instead of the department helping him to go to a rehab, they quickly charge you without giving you assistance and you accept because you do not know the procedures that should have been followed before charging you.”**

DISCUSSION OF THE THEME

According to Resolution 13 of the Education Labour Relations Council of 1999, an educator who does not meet the required performance standards should follow a programme of counselling or be taken to rehabilitation depending on his challenge and dismissal should be the last resort (Rossouw & De Waal, 2004:286). Unfortunately the Resolution does not spell out clearly the role of the EAP in this counselling, so most principals think that talking ‘man-to-man’ with an educator is counselling. This was indicated by one participant who happened to be in a management position, when he said that, in his opinion, counselling was nothing more than colleagues talking out their frustrations among one another. Further, when he shouted at another educator, he felt better.

Although educators were blaming the school management system, which is led by the principal, for not following legislation to address misconduct, Maile (2002:327) maintains that the problem lies in contradictions in interpretation of policies and the ambiguity of roles. Sometimes principals are compelled by governing bodies to take harsh disciplinary action against an educator's misconduct without following the correct procedures. Educators, on the other hand, blame principals for siding with the SGBs against them.

3.8 Knowledge of procedures to access the EAP services in the department.

THEME: LACK OF KNOWLEDGE ON HOW TO ACCESS THE EAP

It seemed futile to ask this question, since most of the participants had said clearly that they did not know of such a programme, while those who were aware of it only got to the EAP service through an EDO.

P 1.C said: **“We don't know how to access EAP in this department.”**

P 1.I said: **“In most cases we go there to seek assistance for the school and even for personal challenge”**, but did not mention the exact procedures, such as referral types or completing referral forms.

DISCUSSION OF THE THEME

According to the *Standards for the Employee Assistance Programme in South Africa* (2010:1), one of the core functions of an EAP is to train managers and supervisors on how to identify and refer troubled employees. This should be followed by advocacy campaigns aimed at all the employees and their immediate families. Without this training and advocacy these educators would not know how to access the EAP services.

Ignorance of EAP services and procedures almost made it a “black box”, according to Lindquist, Clinton-Sherrod, Keshia, Lasater & Walters (2010:47), who said EAPs needed to come up with policies and guidelines that spelled out clearly their procedures for dealing with various problems facing their employees, failing which they are eventually called “black boxes” by their companies.

3.9 Activities that have been organized to market EAP to educators in the department.

THEME: NO KNOWLEDGE OF ACTIVITIES THAT MARKET EAP

P 2.E said: “Nothing was ever done in the district to market this EAP.”

The following point of view that came from **P 1. J** indicated the lack of marketing:

“Where is EAP in Zone 6, who is doing it there? We don’t even know there is a psychologist heading the Wellness Programme in the department. What does EAP stand for? We did not know there is such a programme. There is nothing the EAP is doing to market itself even as we speak we are not clear enough. Even if you say I should go to the EAP in Zone 6 now, I would not know where to go. I am sure few schools go to the EAP to seek assistance because EAP does not have a clear programme to visit schools and market its services. It was only by luck and curiosity that we accessed their services and they took us for team building.”

DISCUSSION OF THEME

It also seemed contradicting to put this question to the participants because, if marketing had been carried out, they would not be hearing about EAP for the first time. If there was any marketing done, it must have been done to the EDOs in the district office, which could explain why they were the ones approaching EAP to organize team-building for the conflict-ridden schools in their circuits. There was no evidence of marketing of the EAP either to the employees, the principals of schools or the unions, let alone the family members, yet this is very crucial considering the fact that it is through these stakeholders that troubled employees can be referred to EAP timeously.

The fact that participants in all groups (which also included shop stewards) were enthusiastic about this programme after it had been explained to them during the interviews showed that they were supportive of it. One participant even suggested that there should be collaboration between the EAP and the shop stewards. If the latter were properly trained, the EAP could visit schools and discuss the challenges forwarded to them by these shop stewards. This concurs with Terblanche (2009: 205-206) when he said unions had currently shown an interest in being trained on the EAP, which suggests

that if they were exposed to EAP training they could play a greater role in promoting the concept of employee assistance on behalf of members in need of assistance.

3.10 Understanding of the role of HODs/Deputy principals/ Principals regarding the EAP.

THEME: THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT HAD A MAJOR ROLE TO PLAY

This question was asked after the participants had been given a brief explanation of the EAP in the department. **P 1.J, 2.D and 3.D** were therefore able to offer the answer that the school management was responsible for the wellbeing of their staff and should be the ones referring educators with challenges before charging them as they usually do.

P 3.D said: **“If somebody come smelling alcohol almost every day or Monday, that should alert the principal that this person has a problem so what should I do; instead of running to the district office or log book”**, while **P 1. J** admitted the role of school management when he said: **“Even now I would just write a charge against an educator, yet if EAP was visible I would first seek her involvement or assistance before taking the drastic step of charging.**

DISCUSSION OF THE THEME

Some principals confessed that they were not aware of a programme that could help them first assist their troubled employees before taking the drastic step of charging them. The question is, then: How many educators have lost their jobs because nobody knew how to help them be productive again after they had fallen by the wayside?

Another challenge was that even the educators themselves did not know their rights as stipulated in the legislation.

The importance of training the managers and supervisors on their role in the EAP cannot be emphasized enough, considering that, even though some principals knew about the EAP when they attended team-building, they never used it again when interpersonal relations deteriorated in their schools.

It is also possible that they did not know other services available from the EAP except team-building, as Musoke (2007:30-32) found in his study of the EAP in the Eastern

Cape Department of Agriculture, where only 37, 5% of the employees used the EAP. One reason cited was lack of proper clarity on the scope of services offered by the programme.

3.11 Participants were asked if they thought educators were making enough use of the EAP in the department. If yes how, if not why?

THEME: NOT UNDER-UTILIZATION

P 1. J said: “It’s only few schools that go and seek assistance because EAP does not have a clear programme to visit schools and market its services. It’s possible that people do not know this programme to increase use.”

P 1.I mentioned another challenge to the use of the EAP in the department, saying: “I don’t think it is fully used because after I accessed it for my personal challenges I started referring other educators but now the challenge is that they say we must pay for our counselling yet they used to pay as the department.”

DISCUSSION OF THE THEME

Although the question was posed to the participants, it was already obvious that they would respond negatively, as the majority had already indicated that they had never heard of such a programme.

As indicated by Musoke (2007:30-32), use has everything to do with awareness of the programme and all its services as well as accessibility and a guarantee of confidentiality. This is shown by the comments by participants from group 3 when they said that as long as the EAP was in the district office they could not use it because of mistrust between them and the district office.

3. 12 Participants were asked if they thought that the EAP was playing its role in addressing challenges that affected their job performance.

THEME: EAP NOT PLAYING ITS ROLE

No participant agreed that the EAP was playing its role at the present moment, even though **P 2.G**, **3.I** and **4.E** agreed that working relations improved after the team-building sessions. However, some of them deteriorated again owing to the lack of follow-up. For

example, P 2.G said: **“Truly we came back well even if we did not know the purpose of being there. So that is how they fail us, they do not market the programme. Even when they bring services they do not tell us that this is EAP and we should always come back if more challenges crop up in our midst.”** While P 4.E said: **“We were then taken to a team building and working relationships improved but these is a need for in-service yet it was only then and no follow up was done.”**

P 2.E felt that the EAP was not playing its role, and this is what she said: **“EAP therefore is not addressing the job performance because it is not known and not used.”**

DISCUSSION OF THE THEME

Although this question was posed to participants at this stage, most of the comments made throughout the interview already amounted to an answer. The *Standards for the Employee Assistance Programme in South Africa* (2010:1) mentions six core technologies as the basic foundation for the successful implementation of an EAP. These include: training and development of stakeholders such as supervisors and unions; marketing of EAP services to employees and families; case management (which includes, inter alia, assessments, referral, monitoring and aftercare); consultation with management on trends; networking with internal and external role players; and monitoring and evaluation of the value, success or impact of EAP services.

According to participants, the school managers and unions were never trained for the EAP, no marketing was done, and there were no assessments before sending the schools to team-building. There were no consultations with school principals regarding trends, no networking with the unions so that they could assist with referrals, and no monitoring and evaluation of the success or impact of the team-building sessions. As a result, some claimed to have gone back to square one.

Looking at this empirical data versus the theory gives us a clear picture of why participants felt that the EAP had not played its role in addressing their job performance.

Even though the programme seemed not to have been marketed at schools, one could still believe that some marketing was done in the district offices, as the team-building service from the EAP was brought to some schools by the EDOs for those circuits.

3.13 Participants were asked, now that they know about the EAP, if they would recommend it to educators and principals of other schools?

THEME: HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

P 1.E, 3.D and 4.I agreed that the EAP was a good programme that could be used by all educators.

P 1.E said: **“We would recommend EAP to every employee in the department because it is valuable.”** While **3.D** said: **“Yes we believe that this EAP could assist us in our job performance, even now if we had known about it before many of us would have been assisted. Its existence will assist us in our stress as educators so that we know where to open up and talk about our challenges.”**

P 3.A, however, raised a concern about the fact that the EAP was found in the district office, and he said: **“You see, there is a problem of mistrust between our schools and the district office, the relationship is not sound so you are fearful to take your problems there in case they make fun of me or use them against me. The district office is the last place to go to with your challenges.”**

DISCUSSION OF THE THEME

The enthusiasm shown by participants after being told what the EAP was all about showed a great need for marketing and advocacy, while the reluctance on the part of group 3 participants to approach EAP because it was in the district office showed a need for awareness campaigns about the programme and its underlying principles, especially confidentiality. The department should also ensure that the EAP is located in a place that fosters confidentiality and is staffed by properly qualified personnel. It also supports Musoke (2007:30-32) in the study he conducted on use of the EAP in the Eastern Cape Department of Agriculture, where he concluded that some of the reasons for its infrequent use were the lack of advocacy and training of managers and unions as well as the location of the EAP, which offered no confidentiality.

3. 14 Lastly, participants were asked to make recommendations regarding the EAP in the department.

The following recommendations were made by participants:

- The EAP must be introduced and made visible in all schools and must be resourced with funds and staff, because sometimes the challenge is that there is one coordinator looking after all the schools in a district.
- The department must pay for employees' counselling otherwise there will be no need to go via EAP to a psychologist.
- The head of the EAP must come to the principal's meetings. Unions should introduce this programme and spell out the steps to follow when assistance is needed.
- When they take schools to team-building sessions, they should explain the programme and the purpose and tell them to come back if more challenges emerge amongst the staff again.
- There should be collaboration between the EAP and the shop stewards at schools. The EAP personnel should train the stewards, as some referrals could come from the shop stewards.

3.15 COMPARISON OF THE GROUPS IN TERMS OF THEIR RESPONSES TO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND THEIR DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES

Even though all the groups and all participants within groups were encouraged to speak, participation varied. Some groups were easier and more participatory (for example groups 1 and 3) than others, while some participants within a group seemed uneasy about talking in the group setting. Some spoke more on certain topics, while others talked non-stop regardless of what was being discussed. This resulted in some participants dominating the whole interview (for example **P1.E** and **4.B**).

Participants were also told that personal challenges do not necessarily imply that whatever is being discussed applies to him/her, but could simply mean that it is observed in other educators' lives generally. Most of the participants avoided this category and spoke more about work-related challenges. Only focus group 2 dwelt more on personal challenges, giving real examples from their lives. It became evident that it was not easy to talk about personal issues generally, without hinting that this could be happening in one's own life.

Even though it was obvious that the school lacked certain resources, participants in focus group 2 did not mention the lack of resources as one of their challenges. One reason for this could be that they had spent a lot of time talking about personal challenges and there was very little time left to discuss all their work-related challenges as well as answering other questions in the schedule.

An analysis of the average age of the groups gives 48 for group 1 and 42 for group 2. This could explain why focus group 1 seemed to be more emotional about the sub-theme of incentives than focus group 2. Most participants in group 1 were older, with many years spent in this career, so there were fewer years ahead. They were therefore lamenting that they deserved to be in senior positions by now, with higher salaries, yet they were still on level 1 with no hope in sight. In group 2, most participants were still middle-aged and had hopes that promotions with higher salaries would come before retirement. The same less negative emotions were noticed in group 3, whose average age was 33, the only difference being that the cry of the temporary educators was louder. As for focus group 4, where most of the permanent educators were between 54 and 64, the interview opened wounds from existing strife, so emotions were more negative than in all other groups. These negative emotions were directed less at the small incentives given by the department and more at the mismanagement of school finances by the school management. One could not but pause to wonder whether the strife was worsened by the fact that they were an all-female group. The complaints by the contract practitioners of Grade R were also very loud in this group.

Another interesting observation was that focus group 2, who dwelt more on personal challenges, experienced fewer negative emotions than all other focus groups, which dwelt on work-related challenges. One wondered whether it was because of more empathy with the sources of the challenges, as it was their relatives, whereas in work-related challenges the 'accused' was the government or the parents and their children. However, when it came to 'lack of money' as a personal challenge, group 2 also expressed some negative emotions, perhaps because it was attributed more to the government giving them low salaries than to their lack of financial management or too many family demands.

Overall, all four groups faced similar challenges, regardless of where they were located in the province in terms of cluster and whether they were in a rural village or a township. The only difference was that group 4, because of the age of their learners, did not have the challenge of teenage pregnancy and learner ill-discipline. All the groups had little or no knowledge of the EAP even though all had used it for their school's team-building sessions.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSION

- The discussion shows that educators are struggling with a myriad of personal and work-related challenges which impact negatively on their health and wellness as well as on their job performance.
- Even though previous studies and the public at large cite alcohol abuse amongst educators as one of the biggest challenges facing the education department, participants did not mention it in relation to the challenges but instead cited it as a coping mechanism to deal with the numerous challenges they are faced with, both personally and at work.
- Yes, EAP coordinators are there in all districts but they are not visible and their programmes are not marketed and are therefore not fully used by the intended beneficiaries.
- The EAP interventions have proved effective for those who had accessed them, because all the schools admitted that there was harmony in their schools after the team-building and some results even improved. The only problem was the lack of follow-up. The fact that results improved after the EAP intervention of team-building, without the adjustment of other structural and systemic challenges of curriculum changes, lack of resources and work overload shows the importance of sound human relations in the workplace. This could somehow answer the question of why some schools with similar work challenges but without conflict have managed to achieve excellent results.
- Different people can be exposed to similar negative situations but what matters is an individual's reaction to it and his/her coping mechanisms. Participants in group 2 indicated that they did not resort to abusing sick leave or absenteeism because of low morale and this is where EAP becomes relevant in equipping educators with stress and anger management skills.
- Having an EAP that is firmly grounded on the foundation of the core technologies is pretty much an indication of how much success can it achieve in executing its

mandate in the organization. With this in mind one needs to look at how far did the EAP in this department succeed in implementing the programme according to the set standards of the core technologies:

- **Training and Development:** Here, the EAP is supposed to train all managers and supervisor (including principals, deputy principals, HODs and Senior Educators) and union representatives on how to identify troubled employees so as to refer them to EAP. They also need to workshop employees on various life issues so as to equip them with life skills to cope with challenges. If one looks at what has been shared by these participants, the EAP has not fulfilled this role.
- **Marketing:** This involves outreach, promotion and awareness activities to all employees of the organisation. This was not done at all according to participants. Even though the schools used funds from this programme to go for team building, the coordinators failed to seize the opportunity to introduce themselves and the full length of the programme to the educators and explain that they should continue using the programme afterwards. All groups who had claimed that they did not know the programme and had never accessed its services were amazed when they were told the names of their EAP coordinators in their respective districts. It is only then that they made a connection between the EAP and their team buildings which some thought they were just outings. One school indicated that they were not even aware that this programme was being headed by a qualified psychologist at Head Office and they could utilise her services.
- **Case Management:** This involves confidential and timely risk identification, assessment, motivation, short-term intervention, referral, monitoring, follow-up, reintegration and aftercare services for employees with personal and work-related concerns that may affect job performance. The EAP took the schools to team building but failed to make a follow up and give aftercare hence two of the schools have relapsed. There is also a challenge of not doing assessment after receiving the referrals from the EDOs before sending the whole group to a team building. This would assist to determine if there were no individuals who were struggling with personal issues and taking out the frustrations onto colleagues and would therefore need one-on-one sessions before or after the group sessions.

- **Consultation with Work Organisation:** This involves analysing trends as identified in the referrals received so that the departmental top management is informed and interventions are devised to deal with those trends proactively. This would even mean going out to consult with supervisors and managers in all the schools. This has not happened to its full extent since the EAP coordinator was never seen in two of the schools and no proactive interventions have been organised in all these schools except the reactive fire fighting team buildings and debriefing in one school.
- **Networking:** The EAP network to establish and maintain effective relations with internal and external role-players and service providers. Networking was happening to some extent with EDOs but not well enough with principals and unions. It was also happening with independent health professionals.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** This involves monitoring and evaluation of the value, success, and impact of EAP services on the employee job performance as well as the functioning of the organisation as a whole. This is done to build a business case for further funding by the management. From the fact that most coordinators did not go back to assess the impact of the team building sessions to the schools shows that there is no Monitoring and Evaluation taking place. Secondly, the inability to pay for outside counselling shows that there has been a reduction in funding because EAP has not presented her value-add to the top management.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- As well as the recommendations already made by participants, it is recommended that at least three properly-qualified EAP practitioners be employed in each district office. They should be given car subsidies so that they could be visible at the schools.
- One practitioner at the level of a manager or assistant manager should head the programme and be responsible for all the referral cases from the district office.
- Alternatively, a well-established wellness company should be sourced to handle all counselling in a 24-hour toll-free Life Management Programme to increase

programme accessibility for those educators whose schools are in deep rural areas. In such a case only one practitioner would be needed for an EAP, leaving others to concentrate on other pillars of the comprehensive Employee Health and Wellness Programme.

- EAP is a specialized programme that uses various specialists for both preventive and curative interventions. These include, inter alia, dentists, dieticians, neurologists, optometrists, gynaecologists, psychologists, financial advisors and biokineticists. It is virtually impossible to access the services of these specialists free, either to educate or to do tests. No EAP could therefore run effectively and efficiently without enough funding.
- It is also crucial that there should be proper Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms to assess impact and assist in building a business case that would demonstrate the value-add of this programme to the department as a whole.

REFERENCES

- Azzone, V., McCann, B., Merrick, E.L., Hiatt, D., Hodgkin, D. & Horgan, C. 2009. Workplace Stress, organizational factors and EAP use. *Journal of Workplace Behavioural Health*, 24: 344-356.
- Babbie, E. 2001. *The practice of social research*. 9th ed. Belmont: Wadsworth.
- Babbie, E. 2007. *The Practice of Social Research*. Australia: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Barbour, R.S. 2008. *Introducing qualitative research: A student's Guide to the Craft of Doing Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Bless, C., Higson-Smith, C. & Kagee, A. 2006. *Fundamentals of Social Research Methods: An African Perspective*. 4th ed. Cape Town: Juta & Co.
- Centre for the Study of AIDS. 2006. *HIV and AIDS in South Africa: course companion to the CSA Entry level course and general information resource*. Hatfield: University of Pretoria.
- *Collins English Dictionary*. 2003. 6th ed. [SI]: Harper Collins Publishers.
- *Concise Oxford Dictionary*. 2004. 11th ed. [SI:sn].
- Cosgrove, J. 2000. *Breakdown: The facts about stress in teaching*. London: Routledge.
- Creswell, J.W. 2003. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE Publications.
- De Vos, A.S. 2005. Qualitative data analysis and interpretation. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L. 2005. *Research at Grass Roots: For the Social Sciences and Human Service Professions*. 3rd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Department of Public Service and Administration. 2010. *Employee Health and Wellness Readiness Assessment Tool*. Available: <http://www.dpsa.gov.za/dpsa2g/documents/ehw/2010/rat.pdf>
Accessed on 2012.07.20
- Eastern Cape Department of Education. 2005. *Vision and mission statement*. Bisho.
- Eastern Cape Department of Education. 2009. *EAP case management Database*. Bisho.

- Emener, G.W. 2003. Employee Assistance Programme use evaluation: An excellent management tool. In Emener, W.G., Hutchison, Jr. W.S. & Richard, M.A. (Eds.) *Employee Assistance Programmes: Wellness/Enhancement Programming*. 3rd ed. [SI]: Thomas Books.
- Fataar, A. & Patterson, A. 2001. Teachers, moral agency, and the reconstruction of schooling in South Africa. In Adendorff, M. & Mason, M. (Eds.) *Being a Teacher: Professional challenges and choices*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Fouché, C.B. 2005. Qualitative research designs. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L. 2005. *Research at Grass Roots: For the Social Sciences and Human Service Professions*. 3rd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L. 2005. Introduction to the research process. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L. 2005. *Research at Grass Roots: For the Social Sciences and Human Service Professions*. 3rd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Fouché, C.B. & De Vos, A.S. 2005. Problem formulation. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L. 2005. *Research at Grass Roots: For the Social Sciences and Human Service Professions*. 3rd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Ghanotakis, E., Mayhew, S. & Watts, C. 2009. Tackling HIV and gender-based violence in South Africa: How has PEPFAR responded and what are the implications for implementing organizations? *Health Policy and Planning*, 24: 357-366.
- Gravetter, F.J. & Forzano, L.B. 2003. *Research methods for the behavioural sciences*. Belmont: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.
- Greeff, M. 2005. Information collection: Interviewing. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L. 2005. *Research at Grass Roots: For the Social Sciences and Human Service Professions*. 3rd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Grosser, M. & de Waal, E. 2008. Recentering the teacher: From transmitter of knowledge to mediator of learning. *Education as Change*, 12 (2): 41-57.
- Hammond, L. D. 2001. Accountability for professional practice. In Adendorff, M. & Mason, M. (Eds.) *Being a teacher: Professional challenges and choices*. London: Oxford University Press.

- Harper, T. 1999. Employee Assistance Programming and professional development in South Africa. In Maiden, R. P. (Ed.) *Employee Assistance Services in the New South Africa*. New York: The Haworth Press, Inc.
- Hartwell, T. D., Steele, P., French, M. T., Potter, F. J., Rodman, N. F. & Zarkin, G.A. 1996. Aiding troubled employees: The prevalence, cost, and characteristics of Employee Assistance Programmes in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health*, 86 (6): 804-808.
- Heystek, J. & Lethoko, M. 2001. The contribution of teacher unions in the restoration of teacher-professionalism and the culture of learning and teaching. *South African Journal of Education*, 21(4): 222-227.
- Holmes, E. 2005. *Teacher well-being: Looking after yourself and your career in the classroom*. London: Routledge.
- Hosking, S. G. 1998. Government induced teacher failure in South Africa: some causes and analysis. *South African Network for Economic Research Working Paper 11*. Cape Town: [sn].
- Jackson, L. & Rothmann, S. 2006. Occupational stress, organizational commitment, and ill-health of educators in the North West Province. *South African Journal of Education*, 26 (1): 75-95.
- Kumar, R. 2005. *Research Methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE Publications.
- Kyriacou, C. 2000. *Stress-busting for teachers*. [SI]: Nelson Thornes.
- Legotlo, M. W., Maaga, M. P., Sebego, M. G., van der Westhuizen, P. C., Mosoge, M.J., Nieuwoudt, H.D. & Steyn, H. J. 2002. Perceptions of stakeholders on causes of poor performance in Grade 12 in a province in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 22 (2): 113-118.
- Lindquist, C.H., Clinton-Sherrod, A.M., Pollack, K.M., Lasater, B.M. & Hardison Walters, J.L. 2010. The role of Employee Assistance Programmes in workplace-based intimate partner violence intervention and prevention activities. *Journal of Workplace Behavioural Health*, 25: 46-64.
- Mabe, C. M. 1999. *The importance of a job satisfaction investigation for the development of an Employee Assistance Programme*. Johannesburg: Rand Afrikaans University. (MA Dissertation).

- Maja, B. 2001. The future trapped in the past. In Adendorff, M. & Mason, M. (Eds.) *Being a Teacher: Professional challenges and choices*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Maile, S. 2002. Accountability: An essential aspect of school governance. *South African Journal of Education*, 22 (4): 326-331.
- Mouton, J. 2001. *How to succeed in your Master's and Doctoral Studies: a South African guide and resource book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Mpahla, N.E. 2009. *An investigation of teachers' perceptions of their professionalism: A case study of three schools in the Butterworth District, Eastern Cape*. Alice: University of Fort Hare. (MA Dissertation).
- Mphahlele, R.E. 2009. *A decade of educational change: Grounded narratives of school principals*. Hatfield: University of Pretoria. (DPhil Thesis).
- Musoke, A.K. 2007. *A review of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) in the Eastern Cape region of the Republic of South Africa between the years 2000-2005. (A case study of the Department of Agriculture)*. Alice: University of Fort Hare. (MA Dissertation).
- Mzamo, T.S. 2004. *A study of the causes and effects of stress among teachers in Libode Education District of the Eastern Cape, RSA*. South Africa: Business School Netherlands. (MA Dissertation).
- Neuman, W.L. 2000. *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 4th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Neuman, W.L. 2006. *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 6th ed. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Ngidi, D. & Qwabe, J. 2006. The partnership of parents, educators and principals in creating a culture of teaching and learning in schools. *South African Journal of Education*, 26 (4): 529-539.
- Olivier, M.A.J. & Venter, D.J.L. 2003. The extent and causes of stress in teachers in the George region. *South African Journal of Education*, 23 (3): 186-192.
- Peltzer, K., Shisana, O., Zuma, K., Van Wyk, B. & Zungu-Dirwayi, N. 2009. Job stress, job satisfaction and stress related illnesses among South African educators. *Stress and Health*, 25: 427-257.
- Perry, R.W. & Cayer, N.J. 1992. Evaluating Employee Assistance Programs: Concerns and Strategies for Public Employers. *Public Personnel Management*, 21(3):323-333.

- Proactive Health Solutions. 2007. *A report on the health risk profile of the Eastern Cape Provincial Administration*. East London.
- Punch, K.F. 2006. *Developing effective Research Proposals*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE Publications.
- Rangraje, I., van der Merwe, A., Urbani, G. & van der Walt, J. L. 2005. Efficiency of teachers in a number of selected schools in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 25 (1): 38-43.
- Rossouw, J.P. & de Waal, E. 2004. Employer tolerance with educator misconduct versus learners' rights. *South African Journal of Education*, 24 (4): 284-288.
- Schulze, S. & Steyn, T. 2007. Stressors in the professional lives of South African Secondary School educators. *South African Journal of Education*, 27: 691-707.
- Sehole, C.T. 2003. Changing the wheel while the car was moving: Restructuring the apartheid education departments. *South African Journal of Education*, 23 (2): 139-144.
- Shakespeare-Finch, J. & Scully, P. 2004. A multi-method evaluation of an Australian Emergency Service Employee Assistance Programme. *Employee Assistance Quarterly*, 19 (4): 74.
- Singh, P., Mbokodi, S.M. & Msila, V.T. 2004. Black parental involvement in education. *South African Journal of Education*, 24 (4): 301-307.
- South African Council for Educators. 2001. Teachers, moral agency, and responsibilities of South African educators. In Adendorff, M. & Mason, M. (Eds.) *Being a Teacher: Professional challenges and choices*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Standards Committee of EAPA. 2010. *EAPA Standards and Professional Guidelines for Employee Assistance Programme*. Arlington: Employee Assistance Professionals Association.
- Standards Committee of EAPA-SA. 2005. *Standards for Employee Assistance Programmes in South Africa*. Hatfield: Employee Assistance Professionals Association Inc.
- Standards Committee of EAPA-SA. 2010. *Standards for Employee Assistance Programmes in South Africa*. Hatfield: Employee Assistance Professionals Association Inc.

- Strydom, H. 2005a. The pilot study. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L. 2005. *Research at Grass Roots: For the Social Sciences and Human Service Professions*. 3rd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Strydom, H. 2005b. Ethical aspects of research in the social sciences and human service professions. In De Vos, A.S. (Ed.), Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L. 2005. *Research at Grass Roots: For the Social Sciences and Human Service Professions*. 3rd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Terblanche, L.S. 2009a. Labour Welfare in South Africa. *Journal of Workplace Behavioural Health*, 24: 205-220.
- Terblanche, L.S. 2009b. *SA Legislation and the EAP*. Presentation by Professor Lourie Terblanche of the Department of Social Work and Criminology, University of Pretoria.
- *The Chambers Dictionary*. 2006. 10th ed. Germany: Chambers Harrap Publishers.
- The Public Service Commission. 2006. *A report on evaluation of Employee Assistance Programme in the Public Service*. Pretoria: [sn].
- Theron, L.C. 2005. Educator perception of educators' and learners' HIV status with a view to wellness promotion. *South African Journal of Education*, 25 (1): 56-60.
- Tiner, P. 2006. Normalizing supervisory EAP training: developing a certification program to educate supervisors about the EAP helped boost referrals at a Texas medical center and increased demand for consultations as well. *Journal of Employee Assistance*, July [O]. Available: http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0PLP/is_3_36.ai_n17214455/?tag=content;coll
Accessed on 2010.02/15
- Travers, C.J. & Cooper, C.L. 1996. *Teachers under pressure: Stress in the teaching profession*. London: Routledge.
- Welman, C., Kruger, R.A. & Mitchele, M. 2005. *Research Methodology*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Wilson, D.F. 2004. *Supporting teachers supporting pupils: The emotions of teaching and learning*. London: Routledge.

- *Workplace action on HIV and AIDS: Identifying and sharing best practice*. 2003. Tripartite International Meeting on best practices in HIV and AIDS Workplace Policies and Programmes: International Labour Organization. 15-17 December, Geneva.
- Xaba, M.I. 2003. Managing teacher turnover. *South African Journal of Education*, 23 (4): 287-291.
- Yates, S.J. 2004. *Doing Social Science Research*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Zungu-Dirwayi, N., Shisana, O., Louw, J. & Dana, P. 2007. Social determinants for HIV prevalence among South African educators. *AIDS Care*, 19 (10): 1296-1303.

APPENDICES

- A.** Permission letter from the Ethics Committee
- B.** Informed consent letter and blank consent form
- C.** Interview schedule for the focus groups

APPENDIX A



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Research Ethics Committee

1 April 2011

Dear Prof Lombard

Project: The role of the Employee Assistance Programme in addressing job performance of educators
Researcher: TB Guqaza
Supervisor: Prof LS Terblanche
Department: Social Work and Criminology
Reference number: 29478376

Thank you for your response to the Committee's letter of 12 October 2010.

I have pleasure in informing you that the Research Ethics Committee formally **approved** the above study at an *ad hoc* meeting held on 31 March 2011. Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should your actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

The Committee requests you to convey this approval to the researcher.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

Prof. John Sharp
Chair: Research Ethics Committee
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail: john.sharp@up.ac.za

Research Ethics Committee Members: Dr L Blokland; Prof M-H Coetzee; Dr JEH Grobler; Prof KL Harris; Ms H Klopper; Prof A Mlambo, Dr C Panebianco-Warrens; Prof J Sharp (Chair); Prof GM Spies; Prof E Taljard ; Dr J van Dyk; Dr FG Wolmarans, Dr P Wood

APPENDIX B



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Social Work & Criminology

17/08/2012

Our Ref: Prof Terblanche
Tel. 012 4203292
Fax. 0866287488
Email: jourie.terblanche@up.ac.za

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH: The role of Employee Assistance Programme in addressing job performance of educators.

NAME OF THE RESEARCHER: Tobana Benedicta Guqaza

GOAL OF THE STUDY:

- The goal of the study is to identify the role of the EAP in addressing the job performance of educators.

PROCEDURE:

Ten educators will take part in what is called a focus group interview, whereby the researcher will pose some questions and the participants will respond in a discussion. As a participant, you are encouraged to voice your opinions pertaining to all issues under discussion since there are no right or wrong answers. The interview will be conducted once off and will take approximately 45 minutes.

RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS:

No risks are anticipated in this study. To prevent boredom and fatigue the interview will be done in a relaxed atmosphere, with snacks and coffee/tea. Should there be any negative emotions aroused by the discussions, a debriefing will be provided at the end of the interview.

BENEFITS:

There will be no direct benefit to any participant. However, there may be a general benefit to all educators and the Department of Education when Employee Assistance Programme brings interventions that are relevant to the needs of educators and thereby assist in improving job performance and social functioning.

STUDY PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL:

Department of Social Work & Criminology Tel: Number 00 27 12 420 2325/2030 www.up.ac.za
University of Pretoria Fax: Number 00 27 12 420 2093
PRETORIA 0002
Republic of South Africa

Participation in this study is voluntary. Any participant has a right to refuse to take part in this study and will have the right to withdraw at any time. Refusal to participate in the study will involve no penalty and will not affect any future requests for assistance from the Employee Assistance Programme both in the district and the Provincial office.

COST/PAYMENT:

There will be no cost to you to take part in this study, other than your time. No payment will be granted for participation in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Any information shared by participants in this study will be used for the research purposes and may be published; however, no participant will be identified by name in the publications. All participants will be sworn to confidentiality stating that information shared amongst the group during the interview should remain within the group and may never be shared with anyone who was not part of the group. In order to capture all the discussions without distraction and for analysis of data, a tape recorder/digital recorder will be used in this interview. The tape/cd will be kept safely at the archives of the University of Pretoria later for a period of fifteen (15) years according to the policy of the said institution.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

The results of the research will be made available to participants on request after the completion of the study. Any questions regarding the study may be directed at the researcher at the following number: 082083552

I have read the previous page(s) of the consent form and the researcher has explained the details of the study. I understand that I am free to ask additional questions.

I am aware that this is a research project and that there is no harm that will occur to me as a participant.

I understand that participation in this study is voluntary and I may refuse to participate or may discontinue participation at any time without penalty, loss of benefits, or prejudice to accessing the services of the Employee Assistance Programme both in the district office and at Head Office.

I acknowledge that no financial remuneration will be given to me for participation in this study, and I consent to participate in the study and have been given a copy of this form.

.....

Participant Signature

Date

.....

Researcher's Signature

Date



PROF LS TERBLANCHE
SUPERVISOR

APPENDIX C

University of Pretoria

Faculty of Social Work and Criminology

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE FOCUS GROUPS

TOPIC: THE ROLE OF THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME IN ADDRESSING THE JOB PERFORMANCE OF EDUCATORS.

Instructions to the participants:

- The purpose of this interview is to get the views of **all** participants on the above topic, so **everybody** is requested to express his/her opinion;
- There are no right or wrong answers, everybody's view is important;
- All the information shared by participants will be treated with confidentiality;
- We will be using a digital recorder to capture our interview, but confidentiality is guaranteed since no one will be able to link a voice to a particular participant and no names will be mentioned in the report;
- Sit back, relax, and let's discuss....

1. Challenges facing educators:

A. What are the most significant challenges facing educators-

- In their personal lives, and
- In their teaching profession?

B. How are these challenges affecting the educator's wellbeing and job performance?

2. Coping strategies:

How are the educators coping with these challenges?

3. Knowledge about EAP:

A. According to your opinion what is the Employee Assistance Programme and what is its purpose in the department?

- B. Is there any legislation that talks to assistance being given to employees on the basis of poor work performance and misconduct?
- C. How does one access the EAP services in this department?
- D. Are there any activities that have been organized to market the EAP to educators in the department?
- E. How do you see the role of HOD's/Deputy principals/Principals regarding the EAP?

4. EAP utilization:

Do you think educators are making enough use of the EAP in the department? If yes how, if not why?

5. The role of EAP

- A. Is the EAP playing its role in assisting to address the challenges affecting the job performance of educators?
- B. Would you recommend the EAP to educators and principals of other schools?

6. Recommendations:

What are your recommendations regarding the EAP in this department?

Thank you for your valuable contribution.