Chapter 7

Presentation, analysis and interpretation of empirical findings

7.1   Introduction

This chapter reports findings from the empirical findings, which emanate from a needs assessment for an Employee Assistance Programme for the University of the North. The study was conducted at the university of the North from December 1999 to May 2001. The population of the study was all the employees of the university. The researcher divided the University of the North employee population into five samples. The samples were; academic staff, heads of departments, deans and deputy deans, executive management and the support services staff.

Within the academic stratum, the academic staff constituted the biggest size of employees. As a result, a random sample of 100 was constituted. Questionnaires were hand delivered to those staff members who were selected on the basis of the sampling frame. Of the 100 questionnaires that were distributed, a 48% response rate was obtained.

As there was a total of 72 heads of academic departments at the University of the North, no sampling method was used in this case. All heads of departments were given questionnaires to complete, and a 49% response rate was obtained.

The total number of persons in the position of deanship (deans and their deputies) was 16. No sampling procedure was executed since the group was too small to be divided. Instead, all were given questionnaires and a 63% response rate was obtained.

Executive management consisted of 10 members. However, one needs to point out that this constituted the most unstable structure on campus. This instability caused the researcher to be unsure who were members of the executive management. Some individuals whom the researcher knew to be members of executive management simply refused to accept the questionnaires citing as a reason them not being members of management. A 60% response rate came from this group although many of the questionnaires were not fully completed. This does not pose a problem for the researcher because there has been a lot of instability at University of the North at this time. In the year 2000 alone, the university was led by three vice-chancellors and each appointed his/her management team.

As the administrative staff was composed of a sample of 100, questionnaires were distributed amongst them and the response rate was 30%. The possible reason for this poor response rate could be that participants were busy at a time when rumours about downsizing were widespread on campus.

The largest portion of the university was the unskilled workers. Because the majority of this group can hardly read or write, focus groups were constituted. As a result two focus groups' sessions with seven members each were convened.

7.2   Background of the psycho-social environment

The researcher found it appropriate to report on the psycho-social environment in which the study took place, particularly the instability and the uncertainty about the future of the university.

7.2.1 Psychological environment on campus

Since this study took place in a less conducive psychological environment for the entire university population, academic staff in particular, a few problems as far as this environment was concerned will now be highlighted:

7.2.2 Management Instability

The milieu in which the study occurred was characterized by suspension of the chairman of the Council of the University, Mr (Benny Boshielo) and that of the vice-chancellor of the University, Dr BSV Minyuku. These suspensions aggravated polarisation on campus from students to university workers. As such the whole scenario, including the threat of closure of the university as a result of corruption and mismanagement created a tense atmosphere which made it difficult for the study to take place (Compare Shape and Size Task Team Report, 2000:21).

It became very difficult during this period, for example, to identify who the chief executive officer of the university and his assistants were. As a result some questionnaires were given to persons who were not sure in which capacity they were completing the questionnaire. (cf addendum J)

7.2.3 Unclear management positions

Dr Minyuku appointed a team of managers. The appointments of the new management team sparked off controversy on campus as they were apparently appointed into positions that had already been filled and created resentment on campus as some people felt that they had been deemed redundant.

166

Complaints from other quarters were that the whole process of appointment was duplicating what already existed and was therefore a waste of resources while some staff members even accused Dr Minyuku of having appointed his cronies without consultation.

7.2.4 Anonymity

Some university personnel felt that the instrument used for this study, namely, the questionnaire, was not sufficiently anonymous and that it could fall in wrong hands. They therefore did not feel comfortable with the study to be undertaken given the possible merger, closure and retrenchment of some staff members.

7.2.5 Report of the Commission on Higher Education

This report recommended amongst other things that some institutions should be bedrock (offer bachelors' degrees) while only some should offer-post graduate degrees. Some of the recommendations were that some institutions would have to merge whereas others would have to close. This report was heatedly debated on campus and a submission was made to the Council on Higher Education.

7.2.6 Assessors report

An assessor, Prof. Nhlapo was appointed by the Minister of Education, Prof. Kader Asmal, to investigate the practices within the university. Some of the findings of the assessor were "that the institution was led by an acting vice chancellor (formerly an acting deputy vice-chancellor) who replaced a dismissed acting vice-chancellor, who herself took over from a suspended vice-chancellor who had been in the post only for a few months".

Based on the findings of the investigation, the following recommendations were made:

- the university should be temporarily shut down and the Minister should immediately set in motion one or more of the processes to allow uninterrupted and intensive work to proceed on restructuring all sectors of the university; and

- that the Minister should immediately appoint an Administrator for the University of the North in terms of section 41A of the Higher Education Act (as inserted by clause 6 of the Higher Amendment Act, No 55 of 1999). The Administrator should be appointed to perform both the functions relating to governance and those relating to management.

7.2.7 Appointment of the administrator

The administrator, Prof Patrick Fitzgerald, assumed office on the 8 January 2000. According to the press release, the terms of reference of the administrator were as suggested by the assessor. The administrator was immediately faced with the daunting challenge of having to deal with a huge student debt since University of the North students had for a long time been wanting to study without paying tuition and hostel fees.

Prof Fitzgerald came to an agreement between himself, the advisory group and the students' representative council that students should do the following:

- acknowledge their debts
- sign an undertaking to pay outstanding fees before registration can take place
- bring their parents to sign the undertaking.

Unfortunately the above agreement had never been foolproof as the students continued to

disrupt classes and other academic activities on campus. The situation became so chaotic that on the 14 February 2001, the administrator issued a communique to the university of the North instructing that the university close and that students vacate campus at 11h00. (cf circular dated 14 February 2001).

The president of the student body, Mr Bafana Mbetse issued a circular defying Prof. Fitzgerald's communique (cf circular). In his circular that was addressed to the student body, the president urged the student body to disregard Prof Fitzgerald's communique. The students refused to leave campus and insisted that the president of the country president should intervene.

7.2.8   Reconfiguration

Dr Minyuku's appointment coincided with the reconfiguration and rationalisation process that was recommended by the Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997. In his vision of where he was taking the university, Dr Minyuku indicated that he was going to reduce the faculties from eight to two. This decision was met with severe criticism from many individuals and some structures on campus because the latter threatened job losses and loss of turf and benefits particularly to people in positions of deanship. This, in the researcher's opinion was one of the factors that led to Dr Minyuku's later suspension.

7.2.9   Factionalism

Campus was divided into factions in terms of staff associations and trade unions as well as the pro-and anti-Minyuku groupings. Questionnaire distribution and collection could have been affected by these feelings.

Regardless of all the hurdles, however, the study was conducted and the findings from the study will be presented per sample. In other words, the findings and analysis will follow the following format:

- the academic staff (as per questionnaire, Appendix C);
- heads of academic departments (as per questionnaire, Appendix D)
- deans and deputy deans (as per questionnaire, D)
- executive management (as per questionnaire, E);
- administrative staff (as per questionnaire, F) and
- service workers (as per interview schedule, appendix G).

7.3.   **Academic staff (Appendix C)**

7.3.1   **Biographical Information**

7.3.1.1   **Age (question 1.1)**

Histogram 1: Age of academic staff
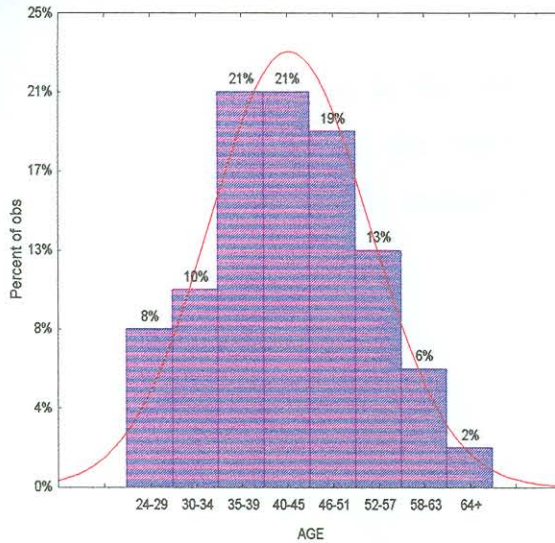
Age distribution of the sample was bi-modal between age groups 35-39 and 40-45. This age distribution confirms the fact that academics are in the mid-life stage to late adulthood which ranges from age 35 to 51 (Du Plessis 1991: 203; Thoreson, 1984: 128).

7.3.1.2   **Gender (question 1.2)**

The academic staff was evenly divided between the sexes. This may indicate that the university does not have gender bias in its recruitment and appointment of academic staff. The fairly even gender distribution may also indicate that women are making serious inroads into academia, a world previously dominated by men (see Shape and Size of Higher Education Task Team Report, 2000:19).

7.3.1.3   **Rank (question 1.3)**

Table 7: Rank of academic staff

Rank	Percentages
Professor	8
Senior Lecturer	23
Lecturer	52
Junior lecturer	6
Tutor	9
Senior laboratory assistant	2
Total	**100**

The bulk of the academic staff were in the lectureship position. This is both a historical and a political phenomenon (see pp 78-79 and the Shape and Size of Higher Education Task Team Report, 2000:19) and can be ascribed to the following reasons: First, prior to 1994, staff members with junior qualifications were recruited and appointed by the university, in other words people who had qualified at the University of the North. The purpose of this was to encourage in-breeding and perpetuate Bantu Education. Second, promotion criteria then favoured whites rather than blacks. Third, it was not until 1994 and beyond that Unin recruited and appointed senior staff from outside the university and beyond the borders of South Africa.

It is not surprising therefore, to see that the majority of academic staff were in lectureship positions. Fourth, the majority of staff members who held senior qualifications are in the middle management of the university, such as heads of departments.

In a study on EAP utilization, Grosch et al (1996:54) reported that academic staff, more than any other group, do not use EAP services as much as their representation in the overall workforce suggests they should.

7.3.1.4 Number of years employed by the university (question 1.4)

Table 8: Number of years employed by the university

Number of years employed by Unin	Count	Percent
1	4	8
2	2	4
3	1	2
4	5	10
5	6	13.
6	6	13
7	5	10
8	1	2
9	4	8
10	2	4
11	2	4
12	1	2
13	1	2
14	3	6
16	1	2
18	1	2
20	1	2
21	1	2
22	1	2
Total	48	100

The majority of the respondents had been employed from 4-7 years which means the participants were reasonably familiar with the University of the North and their views about the institution may thus be regarded as valid.

173

Table 9: Marital status of academic staff

Value	Count	Percent
Married	32	66.6
Single	10	20.9
Divorced	5	10.5
Widowed	1	2
Total	48	100

The majority of respondents in the sample were married, and according to Thoreson, (1984:128) are in the mid life stage. The mid-life stage is a difficult developmental phase for academics as they experience problems such as a lack of promotion. These problems impact on the personal lives of employees and may undermine productivity. This then calls for the establishment of an Employee Assistance Programme to enhance job performance.

Apart from that, married persons often bring their marital problems to work, which also has a tendency of interfering with productivity. An Employee Assistance Programme can assist such people by hosting seminars in marriage and this in turn can go a long way towards the prevention of problems of declining productivity.

7.3.1.6   **Number of dependents (question 1.6)**

Table 10: Number of dependants of academic staff

Value	Count	Percent
0	9	19
1	6	13
2	12	25
3	12	25
4	5	10
6	2	4
8	2	4
Total	**48**	**100**

Half of the respondents had between two and three dependents. The limitation on the number of dependents may be as a result of academic staff not having enough money to raise big families. The other reason could be that academics are an enlightened group who know and understand the disadvantages of having big families

7.3.2 **Qualifications (question 1.7)**

Pie-chart 1: Qualifications of academic staff

B, 4%

HONS, 17%

PHD, 33%
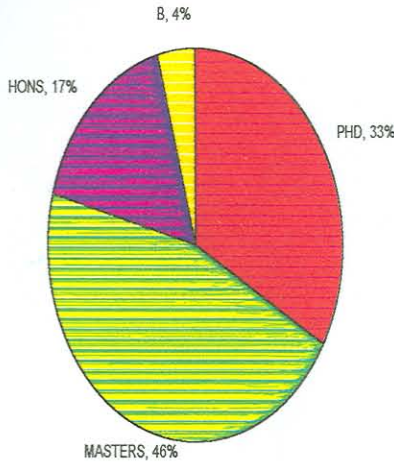
MASTERS, 46%

The majority of academic staff (46%) possessed a masters degree, while 33% had a Phd as the highest qualification. Seventeen percent (17%) had an honours degree whilst 4% had a bachelors degree. Those with bachelors degrees were employed as tutors and laboratory assistants.

A large number of academics within the sample held a masters degree. The latter is the minimum entry requirement for an academic post at most Universities in the world, University of the North included. There were however staff members who had junior/bachelors and honours degrees. These people were employed either as temporary staff and or assistants in laboratories.

Academic qualifications notwithstanding, Grosch et al (1996:35) warns, "Possessing a high level corporate title or a doctorate does not vaccinate a person against life's challenges. There is a prevalent myth that an advanced academic degree automatically confers upon the holder an ability to effectively manage all areas of his life. That myth as it applies to academia, makes it difficult for persons in that field to open up to share their vulnerabilities and problems. The myths bolster the denial system associated with many of society's problems".

7.3.3   **Changes in higher education**

7.3.3.1   **Familiarity with changes in higher education (question 2.1)**

The majority of the respondents (80%) were familiar with the changes in higher education while 20% were not. Higher education is currently a subject of transformation and the debate about the nature and character of education in South Africa. Steyn (2001:23) notes that although the restructuring of higher education presents opportunities for growth and innovation, it has also caused uncertainty and dissatisfaction for many students and staff causing the education landscape to be marked by dissent, corruption and a generally low morale among academic staff. The researcher is of the opinion this kind of scenario, is fertile ground for the creation of EAPs to deal with staff's low morale and is an indication of the urgency with which this should be done.

This question provided for two options only and the response showed that the majority (80%) of staff members were aware of current changes in higher education while only 20% were not. Since changes in higher education may cause severe stress and confusion amongst the employees an EAP would be the best programme to deal with such problems.

7.3.3.2   Modularisation (question 2.2.1)

The feelings of most staff members' (73%) about modularisation were positive while only 27% were not in favour of modularisation. This positive response may be ascribed to the fact government holds the view that a wide range of curriculum, organisational, and recruitment difficulties can be solved through modularisation (Bradley,1997:15). The process of modularisation intends to restructure and transform programme and institutions to respond better to the human resource, economic and development needs of the republic (Higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997), a reason that validates and rationalizes the proposed changes.

7.3.3.3   Higher Education Act No 1 of 1997 (question 2.2.2)

A large number of the of staff members in the sample (57%) were satisfied with the Higher Education Act probably because it heralds a new era of establishing one unified higher education system in the country. Only a minority (12%) were not comfortable with the Act. Thirty one percent (31%) of the respondents had mixed feelings about the Act.

The changes in higher education were as a result of the promulgation of new legislation in the education and labour sector.

7.3.3.4   Council on Higher Education (question 2.2.3)

Only a minority (6%) did not respond to the question on the Council on Higher Education . From those who did respond, however, the majority (56%) were comfortable with the Council on Higher Education. A minority (14%) were not comfortable with the functions of the Council on Higher Education while 24% had mixed feelings about the roles that this body plays in terms of section 5(1) of the

Higher Education Act No1 of 1997.   The main function of the Council is to advise the minister on the following:

- quality promotion and quality assurance;
- research;
- the structure of the higher education system;
- the planning of the higher education system;
- a mechanism for the allocation of public funds;
- student financial aid;
- student support services;
- governance of higher education institutions and the higher education system; and
- language policy.

The provisions of the Higher Education Act seem to resemble the Audit Commission's three e's, namely economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Brewster (1992:81-93) maintains that this language has permeated higher education while Amuwo (2001:11) regards all these changes as the result of globalisation according to which market forces will determine which of the higher institutions will survive.

As far as a unified higher education system is concerned the objectives of the Act are the co-ordination of the governance, planning and financing of the sector as a unified system..

7.3.3.5   Accreditation of programme in higher education (question 2.2.4)

The majority of the respondents (56%) were comfortable with the accreditation of programme at the University. Only a minority (8%) did not respond to the question while   (15%) were not sure about their feelings regarding the accreditation of university programmes. A sightly higher number of respondents (21%) were not

comfortable with the accreditation of programmes.

Accreditation is a process whereby the comparability and recognition of educational standards are promoted (Strydom, 1993:85; Millard, 1993:85; Jacobs 1999;8) and this is the function of Higher Quality Committee(section 5 of the Higher Education Act). Most people would be happy with this process in higher education because it ensures the improvement of standards in universities where they were either low or non-existent. Moreover, it ensures mobility of students amongst and between universities.

7.3.3.6   **Quality Promotion in Higher Education (question 2.2.5)**

A small number of the respondents (36%) were very uncomfortable about the quality promotion function of the Council on Higher Education. A majority (56%) were comfortable with the quality promotion of the Council on Higher Education whilst 8% did not answer the question.

Quality promotion in higher education is desirable, because in recent years, governments and employers in many countries have been concerned with reducing expenditure on higher education while at the same time increasing access to larger numbers and a greater diversity of students.

This has had implications for the perceived quality of higher education (Strydom.1993:83; Webstock, 1999:13; Dowling, 1991:1; Kallie and Strydom, 1999:18; Jacobs, 1999:8; Section 5(1) of the Higher Education Act; Bitzer, 1993:23; Strydom 1993:83; De Weert (1990:68).

7.3.3.7   **Report on shape and size in higher education (question 2.2.6)**

More than half the respondents (63%) was uncomfortable with the task team report on shape and size in higher education. A lesser number (32%) were comfortable with the task team report on shape and size in Higher Education while a minority of 5% did not answer the question.

It is not surprising that most respondents in the sample were unhappy with the task team's report on shape and size of Higher Education in South Africa. One reason for this lack of comfort with the report was the intention to merge institutions, particularly those that were bedeviled by management problems. The fear was that such institutions, the majority of which were the historically black universities, were facing closure. This caused severe discomfort about the report.

Apart from that, the report refers to the rationalisation and reconfiguration of programmes and curricula as well as human resources. This was interpreted by the majority to mean an ushering in of the retrenchment process which threatened a large number of academic staff members.

The Council on Higher Education Task Team Report (2000:17-22) outlines pressing problems in higher education. The report states that the system and individual institutions manifest the following two kinds of problems and weaknesses.

"These can be loosely characterised as 'structural' (fundamental, long-standing, contextual) and 'conjunctural' (immediate, contextual). Structural problems include:
The geographic location of institutions which was based on ideological and political considerations rather than rational and coherent planning. This results in fragmentation and unnecessary duplication.

The continued and even increasing fragmentation of the system. The higher education system still does not function in the co-ordinated way envisaged by the White Paper. Neither the existing planning instruments nor the institutions have produced meaningful co-ordination or collaboration. There are only few and limited examples of successful co-operative initiatives and programmes between institutions. Many of the features of apartheid fragmentation continue within the system and between institutions. Excessively competitive behaviour and practices increasingly abound with potentially damaging effects on other institutions, especially those in more rural areas.

Public universities and technikons appear to regard their immediate neighbours and other public institutions more as market competitors rather than as colleagues striving towards a unified and co-ordinated higher education system. This is inevitable in a context of falling enrolments and the absence of a clear, explicit and comprehensive national planning framework.

7.3.3.8   The National Qualifications Framework (question 2.2.7)

Less than half of the respondents (48%) were comfortable with the National Qualifications Framework while a smaller number of the respondents (46%) were uncomfortable with the NQF and a minority (6%) did not answer the question.

Most of the respondents were comfortable with the National Qualifications Framework while the new approach to education and learning in providing opportunities for one to learn regardless of age, circumstances and the level of education acquired. It allows individuals to learn on an ongoing basis which is called lifelong learning (AUT 1992; NASOP 02-316) SAQA Act 58 of 995; SAQA Bulletin 1997:5).

7.3.3.9 Conditions of Service for employees in Higher Education (question 2.2.9)

Most members (51%) of staff in the sample were uncomfortable with conditions of service of employees of universities and technikons as found in section 34 of the Higher Education Act No.101 of 199. A slightly lesser number (43%) were comfortable with the conditions of service whilst (6%) did not respond to the question.

This finding suggests that the academic staff are generally an unhappy lot with regard to conditions of employment. Conditions of employment include aspects such as salaries, work load, benefits, and issues related to these.

What this finding suggests is that many of the academics may be depressed as a result of their dissatisfaction with their conditions of employment. Depression, anger and resentment are emotions that lead to poor productivity at work and so an EAP should established to provide counseling to individuals who experience such negative emotions.

7.3.3.10 The Employment Equity Act (question 2.2.9)

A large number of the respondents (66%) were comfortable with the Employment Equity Act. A smaller number (28%) were not comfortable with this Act while 6% did not answer the question. Employment equity has been identified as a key challenge in the Task Team Report on Shape and Size of Higher Education Report (2000:23). The report states:

> **"Given the legacy of exclusion in our country, one of the most critical challenges facing the reconfiguration of higher education is responding appropriately to the equity challenges of the country. Increasing the race, gender and social class distribution of students in various fields and**

183

levels of study, improving the racial and gender representivity of staff and ensuring financial access for poor students are all issues that have to be addressed. Equity targets will have to be set and monitored for all programmes and for student and staff equity. Such targets should apply across all other effectiveness and efficiency targets" (Shape and Size Of Higher Education Task Team Report 2000:23).

From the foregoing paragraph, one can safely conclude that academic staff at the University of the North are fairly *au fait* and content with some current changes that affect the higher education landscape. Probably, the satisfaction is a result of people expecting positive changes from the new dispensation ushered in by the Higher Education Act No1 of 1997.

Roberts-DeGennaro (1989:14) notes that higher education in the United States responded to these changes by expansion in size, increased differentiation and the emergence of a productivity frame of reference. In addition higher education has become proactive in seeking EAP services in response to the myriad of organizational personnel problems associated with these changes (Roman 1984:13-43; Franz, 1991:24).

7.3.4	**University of the North as an Employing Organisation**
7.3.4.1	**Clarity about university processes (question 3.1)**
7.3.4.1.1	**Mission of the University (question 3.1.1)**

Less than half the respondents (46%) were clear about the university mission, 50% were not clear about minority (4%) did not answer the question. That less than half of the sample were clear about the mission of the university is a cause for concern. Strategic planning exercises and meetings that were held on campus since 1993 to date had been very inclusive and consultative. Why less than half the respondents were clear merits investigation and intervention by the university authorities.

As the academic staff form the core of the university function one would expect them to be very clear about the mission of the university in terms of their teaching, research and community service. The mission of the university is also an important Employee Assistance Programme implementation consideration. Hosokawa (1990:125), Kells (1998:13) as well as Michells (1989:40) maintain that institutional self evaluation is an aid to management because it evaluates institutional mission accomplishment.

7.3.4.1.2   Vision of the University (question 3.1.2)

The University of the North strives to be a quality institution of higher learning and critical reflection, which is innovative, responsive to change, is rooted in the issues of the society it serves, and is recognised world-wide as the centre for relevant theory and practice of people centred development.

Less than half the respondents (44%) were very clear about the vision of the University and while the majority (52%) were not clear about the vision of the University and 4% did not respond to the question.

7.3.4.1.3   Goals of the University (question 3.1.3)

Less than half the respondents (38%) were clear about the goals of the University while majority (62%) were unclear about the goals of the University.

When people are not clear about the mission and vision of an organisation, it only logically follows that they would also not be clear about the goals of the institution as well. It is thus understandable that a large percentage of the respondents indicated that the University of the North's goals were not clear to them. This is thus one area that the University management needs to work on.

7.3.4.1.4   **Promotion criteria (question 3.1.4)**

A majority (75%) were unclear about the promotion criteria on campus while a minority (10%) were clear about the promotion criteria at the University of the North. Some of the respondents (15%) did not respond to the question.

The lack of clarity about promotion criteria for the core staff of the University can actually cause problems such as a lack of productivity and tardiness. This coupled with the fact that less than half of the sample were clear about the vision, mission and goals the university is cause for great concern.

In a study that traced job stress and stress claims among the top ten universities in the United States it was found that career development and promotion were leading concerns among academics (Semenuk, 1996: 21) and that higher education in the United States has become proactive in developing EAPs in response to organizational personnel problems (Roberts-DeGennaro, 1989:11; Harlacher,1991:34).

7.3.4.1.5   **Conditions of employment (question 3.1.5)**

The majority of the respondents (75%) were unclear about conditions of employment at the university of the North whilst 23% were clear about the conditions of employment at the University and a minority (2%) did not answer the question.

Conditions of employment for academic staff at the University of the North are a source of concern since it is understandable that members of staff are dissatisfied with their conditions particularly when one takes into consideration the time at which this research was conducted. There were threats of closing down the University and people did not know where they would go in case that happened.

Career prestige and professional recognition, institutional allowances for travel or conferences, opportunities to develop new course offerings or skills, salaries with stable purchasing power, and institutional job mobility are all important elements that support the successful negotiation of typical academic career transitions.

Unfortunately, these resources, which facilitate the smooth passage through the developmental stages of a single career cycle, are becoming increasingly limited in academia, accentuating for many academic staff members feelings of boredom, anger, frustration, depression, and a sense of being trapped or stuck (Baldwin and Blackburn, 1981: 598 -614; Xiao-Xing He, Zhu-Yu Li, Jian Shi, Rong-Hua Mu and Yi-An Zhou, 2000:253-278). This mirrors the situation at the University of the North where these negative conditions are clearly apparent.

7.3.5   Staff development processes (question 3.2)

7.3.5.1   Performance appraisal (question 3.2.1)

The majority of academic staff (67%) reported that performance appraisal never takes place within academic departments whilst 17% were uncertain of the occurrence of such a process. A minority, (14%) reported that performance appraisal always takes place at the university while an insignificant number of respondents (2%) did not answer the question.

Performance appraisal is very limited within the academic departments since staff members are only appraised when they are due for promotion and this is done once a while, staff members are left to fumble on their own without evaluation. Evaluation on the other hand presupposes guided growth and development of staff and should be based on teaching, research and public service (Hosokawa, 1984:116).

The lack of such a processes means that the growth and development of academics is done on a hit or miss basis. This does not augur well for academic departments which are supposed to be training highly skilled professionals for the labour market.

The extension of the principle of academic freedom to the area of performance standards and the effect of this is that job performance which bears no discernible relationship to academic freedom is " wrapped within its mantle, sacrosanct and beyond evaluation" (Hosokawa, 1984:115-122; Balgopal and Stollak, 1992:105-108; Roberts-DeGennaro,1989:12 and Minelli et al 1998:27).In a study conducted by Collins and Parry-Jones (2000:784) it was found that 85% of the academic staff would like regular staff appraisals.

7.3.5.2   **Supervision (question 3.2.2)**

Bar Graph 1: Frequency of supervision among academic staff
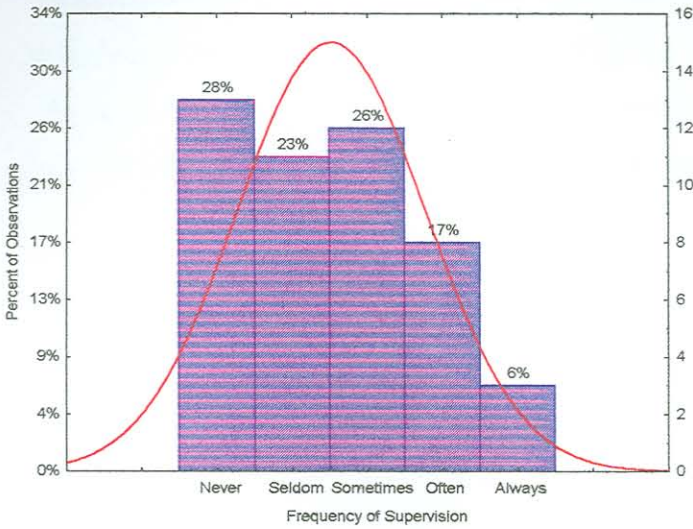
The majority of the respondents indicated that supervision never takes place within academic departments.   Supervision is the process concerned with helping staff members to use their knowledge and skills in doing their job efficiently and effectively (Skidmore,1983:214). It is disturbing to note that just like performance appraisal, supervision never takes place amongst the majority of staff members on campus.

The lack of supervision for academic staff corresponds with Thoreson's (1984:132) notion that "the academic is, perhaps, best described as one who is "barely supervised and unsupervisable". Baldridge (1984:55) maintains that the reason for this state of affairs in higher education is that the system is not tight; but it is inherently sloppy. Once again, since the training of supervisors and managers on the early detection of personal problems of employees to correct job performance falls within the competence of Employee Assistance Programmes, the lack of such a service compounds existing problems.

7.3.5.3   **Mentoring (question 3.2.3)**

The majority of the respondents (54%) reported that mentoring does not take place within academic departments. About a quarter of the respondents (27%), however, reported that mentoring always takes place within academic departments whilst 17% reported that mentoring sometimes takes place and an insignificant minority (2%) did not answer the question.

In a study conducted by Collins and Parry-Jones(2000:787) on the perceptions of stress by social workers it was found that 85% of the respondents indicated that they would like regular staff appraisals and structured team group support.

7.3.5.4   **Coaching (question 3.2.4)**

Another majority (52%) indicated that coaching does not take place within academic departments and 29% reported that the process does not take place and a minority (17%) indicated that coaching sometimes takes place within academic departments while a total of 2% of the respondents did not answer the question.

In an environment where supervision does not take place it is difficult to imagine how coaching can occur. Coaching can be said to be the educational and supportive functions of supervision. Bjorkman (2001:15) regards coaching as a one-to-one interaction with an individual, based on trust and agreed outcomes.

7.3.6   Bringing change on campus (question 3.3)

A large percentage of respondents (83%) indicated that bringing about change on campus ranges from difficult to very difficult. A small number (13%) asserted that they are uncertain about this whilst 4% said it is somewhat easy to bring about change on campus. This finding is consistent with Baldridge's (1984:58-59; Kemp and McBeath, 1994:14) observation that "bringing about change and innovation in a University can be a tall order". This finding may suggest that the implementation of an EAP on campus might not be an easy task given the red tape that such a proposal might have to go through before it is finally approved.

Apart from that, universities are characterised by the existence of an issue carousel which is explained thus: "Issues have a way of always coming around again. Decisions are not made , because pressure from outside groups, from clients, and from professionals pushes the same issues full circle. Decisions are not made as much as they are pinned down temporarily". There is also a garbage can process as issues often get piled up and decisions are scarcely made. This situation is made worse by the fact that conflict is common in Universities.

The fact that decisions take long to be made can actually be a source of stress and frustration amongst academics. This may result in poor productivity levels which may ultimately impact on the personal life of academic staff members.

7.3.7   Dual allegiance (question 3.4)

Higher education shares with other types of organizations such as hospitals and laboratories the tension producing mixture of dual loyalties to professions and organizations (Roman, 1984:37). The majority of academic staff members (70%) belonged to professional associations, whilst 30% did not. Academic staff belong to these outside bodies over and above belonging and adhering to their own disciplines which they offer at the university. This brings about the problem of dual allegiance

(Hosokawa, 1990:126) which together with competing demands from career, family life and long working hours bring about stress among academics (Sorcinelli and Gregory, 1987:23; Hosokawa, 1990:127).

Hosokawa (1990:20) mentions in this regard: "The academic is faced with professional versus institutional identification. This bifurcation in role has led to a major commitment by academics to off-campus activities and constituencies that consume considerable time and energy (for the professor at risk, it provides an unparalleled opportunity to spend "hidden" time off campus away from the scrutiny of colleagues and students in the socially sanctioned high drinking habitat found at conferences and conventions".

For many academic staff, their sense of "membership in the community" is defined by their professional discipline or by affiliations based on shared research interests that extend far beyond the boundaries of an institution, state, or even country. While these affiliations may be stimulating alliances, they do not provide a readily accessible support system to an academic staff member during periods of personal stress (Hosokawa, 1990:126).

The researcher is of the opinion that since dual allegiance results in role confusion while role conflict and role overload appear to be potent sources of stress for lecturers (Collins and Parry-Jones, 2000:787) and EAPs should be introduced to deal with stress in Universities. Dealing with job related stress falls within the domain and expertise of Employee Assistance Programmes.

7.3.7.1   Names of Professional associations (question 3.4.1)

Table 11:Professional associations of academic staff

Value	Count	Percent
1	1	2
N/A	13	28
ABSET/SA	1	2
DENOSA	3	6
CLASG	1	2
SAAAD	1	2
AME.PUB.	1	2
UNASA	1	2
ALASA	1	2
SEMOSA	1	2
AGRECSA	1	2
SSS0SA	1	2
AMESA	1	2
Missing	21	44
Total	48	100

Since the academics at the University of the North belong to a large variety of professional associations, and mentioning the associations individually would be time consuming and is rather irrelevant as well.

7.3.8   Trade Union membership (question 3.5)

A large number of the academic staff (96%) did not belong to trade unions whilst only 4% did as trade unions are bargaining bodies for mostly blue collar workers and academic staff in most institutions belong to staff associations.

Apart from that the academic staff have more platforms for raising concerns about issues at work than the workers. Academics may use forums such as faculty boards and senate to raise issues of common concern.

It has been found that trade unions sometimes share expertise and concern with Employee Assistance Programmemes because both have a common interest in the welfare of the employee.

7.3.8.1   **Name of trade union (question 3.5)**

Members of the academic staff on campus belonged to Ntesu (National union of tertiary institutions), Udusa (Union of democratic) and Denosa. On the whole it does appear that trade unions are not very popular amongst academics at the University of the North.

7.3.9   Communication Patterns

7.3.9.1   **Table 12: Frequency of communication per week amongst academics, administration and support services staff (question 4.4.1)**

	ACADEMIC				ADMINISTRATION				SUPPORT			
	Always	Some times	Never	Total	Always	Some times	Never	Total	Always	Some times	Never	Total
face to face	89%	0%	11%	**100%**	35%	40%	25%	**100%**	38%	24%	38%	**100%**
telephone	78%	17%	5%	**100%**	63%	16%	21%	**100%**	29%	31%	40%	**100%**
memo	27%	29%	44%	**100%**	52%	23%	22%	**100%**	81%	12%	7%	**100%**
circular	28%	17%	54%	**100%**	21%	15%	64%	**100%**	4%	6%	90%	**100%**
fax	6%	15%	79%	**100%**	3%	9%	88%	**100%**	10%	10%	80%	**100%**
e-mail	25%	25%	50%	**100%**	14%	13%	73%	**100%**	4%	6%	90%	**100%**
meetings	59%	25%	16%	**100%**	14.5%	14.5%	71%	100%	6%	8%	86%	100%

Table 12 evinces that the majority of academic staff always communicate amongst themselves face to face, telephonically and in meetings. It is also clear from the table that a memo, circular and fax as well as e-mail are not popular means of communication.

In contrast, administration staff find a fax, circular and e-mail convenient means of communications as these are always used. This finding is consistent with the researcher's observation that administrators mostly use circulars to communicate. However, the most popular means of communication among support services staff is the memo.

All that these findings communicate is that academic, administration as well as support services staff, are distinct groups of a university community. An Employee Assistance Programme that is established within a university campus must recognise the uniqueness of each group and try to accommodate each.

The findings may further suggest that it is easier for personal problems to be detected amongst academics because of their frequent face to face communication than it would be amongst administration and support services staff. Among this group of employees, an Employee Assistance Programme has to rely on supervisor training and job deterioration as criteria for intervention.