ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS PROMOTING IN-HOUSE EAP IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM IN LIMPOPO

by

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

MA SOCIAL WORK (EAP)

In the Department of Social Work and Criminology at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SUPERVISOR: Prof. G M Spies

March 2018

SUMMARY

Organisational factors promoting in-house EAP in the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in Limpopo

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The researcher observed in practice that in-house EAP services renders a comprehensive EAP services to the organisations, although there are always factors involved that contribute to the failures and success of the internal EAP's. EAP is usually a small directorate reporting under human resources and staffed by professionals who are positioned in middle management in an organisation. This study aimed to explore and describe the organisational factors that may promote the in-house EAP in the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in Limpopo. The study focused specifically on the organisational factors that may play an important role in promoting service delivery of in-house EAP's by exploring the views of the EAP professionals in the Department under study. The main objectives of the study was to determine which organisational factors may promote an in-house EAP in the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in Limpopo. Certain recommendations regarding the way these organisational factors can promote an effective in-house EAP, were also formulated.

A qualitative collective case study research design was utilized in order to reach the goal of the study. The population represented EAP professionals in the specific department and a semi-structured interview schedule was used to interview the participants. The empirical findings of the study suggest that factors such as insufficient budget, lack of professionals specifically allocated for EAP services may have a negative impact on the promotion of an in-house EAP. Factors such as availability of approved EAP policies, management support and involvement, financial support, accessibility and location of EAP services, marketing of the EAP services, as well as the appointment of relevant professionals to render EAP services, were recognised as factors that may contribute to the promotion of an in-house EAP at the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in Limpopo.

Key concepts

- Organisation
- In-house EAP
- EAP Professional
- Promotion

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION, DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.1.　INTRODUCTION

Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) were introduced in South Africa in the early 1980s. The Public Service ordered in 2001 that all national and provincial government departments must render EAPs to their employees and that led to the appointment of in-house EAP professionals (Republic of South Africa, 2001). Attridge, Herlihy and Maiden (2013:79) indicate that EAPs provide an array of services, including: problem assessment and referral, critical incident interventions, stress debriefing/trauma debriefing, supervisory training, substance abuse treatment and referral, short-term problem reduction, drug free workplaces, violence prevention, legal and financial referrals, retirement or outplacement counselling, diversity management, organisational consultations, management consultation, training, information, support, and programme evaluation. While the Standards Committee of the EAPA-SA (EAPA-SA, 2010:34) indicates that an EAP provides clinical services, such as trauma management, crisis intervention, assessment, short-term interventions, case monitoring and evaluation, aftercare, and reintegration services, it is also a known fact that an EAP provides non-clinical services, such as organisational consultation. However, the researcher identified that there are certain environmental or organisational factors that can play a crucial role in the promotion of in-house EAP service delivery in government departments, which need to be explored in the field of practice.

This study focused on organisational factors that may play an important role in promoting the service delivery of in-house EAPs by exploring the views of EAP practitioners at the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (DEDET) in Limpopo. The researcher is currently an employee of the Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure and through her observations and interaction with colleagues, she realised that there might be organisational factors that have an effect on the effectiveness of in-house EAP service delivery. Organisational factors, such as the core function and the structure of

the organisation, may influence the way things are done in an organisation and may cause discrepancies in terms of personnel policies, services and programmes, and operational functioning.

Through this study, the researcher intends to identify, explore, and understand the organisational factors that may promote the in-house EAP in the DEDET in Limpopo.

1. 2.   LITERATURE REVIEW

In-house EAP service rendering is a type of service rendering whereby the EAP personnel are appointed as full-time employees of the organisation to render services to the employees and the organisation. In a study conducted by Csiernik (1999) in Canada on internal versus external EAPs, he identified the strengths and weaknesses of the internal EAP on service delivery and the strengths include the fact that the use of the internal model will produce organisational cost savings, organisational belongingness, and understanding of the dynamic environment of the workplace, as well as organisational position and support. In a study conducted by Azzone, McCann, Merrick, Hiatt, Hodgkin and Horgan (2009:345), it was discovered that organisational factors such as perceptions of confidentiality, efficacy, adequate safeguards for employee's confidentiality, high levels of management and supervisory support, and greater programme promotion may promote EAP service rendering.

The following points reflect some of the organisational factors that contribute to the promotion of the in-house EAP. The role that each factor plays within the organisation's EAP will be described.

1.2.1.   Leadership support of the EAP

The leadership of the organisation is expected to fully support the implementation of the in-house EAP. The support from the organisation's leadership will help to promote the programme. The employees will develop more trust in the programme once they realise that

their leadership is supporting it. The Employee Assistance Society of North America (EASNA, 2009:29) is of the view that the senior leadership of the organisation can explain management's motives for offering EAP, as well as the availability of EAP services within the organisation. During the announcement of EAP services, the leadership of the organisation should emphasise the organisation's interest in maintaining a healthy workforce and outline all the necessary steps that one needs to take to access EAP services. This may help in integrating the EAP in the organisational culture and encourages its use (EASNA, 2009:29).

The Public Service Commission of South Africa (2006:32) also added that management and leadership's commitment has proven to be one of the most important factors contributing to a successful EAP. The supportive and committed role of top and middle management in this regard can influence and benefit the EAP. This statement was also supported by Chabeli (2007:61), who recommends that leadership must support the programme and consider it a strategic programme that will assist in attaining the employer's strategic goals if properly utilised. Dickman (in Richard, Emener & Hutchison, 2009:48) states that it is necessary that the senior management of the organisation actively support their in-house EAP. This will ensure EAP access to management at all levels, as well as adequate financial support and provision of resources for the EAP. The researcher is of the opinion that the EAP leadership in the organisation must occupy senior positions that will allow them to attend management meetings in order to be able to influence management's support to the programme.

1.2.2. Training of management and labour union representatives

The EAP can be mainstreamed into human resource activities and general management training. The integration can be achieved when it is used as a management tool to solve problems that managers experience with employees at work. This may include employee discipline and dealing with difficult people. According to the Standards Committee of the EAPA-SA (EAPA-SA, 2015:21), EAP management and supervisory training is used to empower labour representatives, supervisors, and management with information that will enable them to perform their roles, namely to promote access to EAP services, support and

encourage utilisation of the EAP, as well as enhance the functioning of the EAP in the organisation. The researcher is of the opinion that training management and unions will promote the in-house EAP, because when management and labour unions understand the EAP and their roles in the programme, they will be able to encourage employees to utilise the programme and also obtain the resources necessary for the success of the programme. Terblanche (1992:26) also added that managers and union representatives must be trained in order for them to gain an understanding of the EAP; they should not only be aware that it exists within the organisation, but should also be knowledgeable of the impact of personal/work related problems on job performance. The role of the supervisors in the actual functioning of the EAP should be considered and as such, the training programmes should be prioritised so that more than 56% of supervisors will be trained. The same priority should be afforded to the union representatives (Terblanche, 1992:26).

1.2.3. Organisational development

Du Plessis (in Matlhape, 2003:36) describes an EAP as a unique programme that is in a position to encourage organisational development. EAPs have the greatest access to a wide range of various employees in the organisation and this can increase its chances of encouraging organisational development (Matlhape, 2003:36). The role of the EAP needs to be broadened from being just counselling for individual employees, in order for the organisation to receive more value from it. The main goal of the EAP is to develop a working process that is integrated into organisational structure and culture and when such an integration has taken place, all the stakeholders can be empowered. This will lead to ownership of the programme and early identification of problems affecting employees (EASNA, 2009:34).

1.2.4. Positioning of the EAP within organisations

The role of the EAP is to assist employees so that productivity can be enhanced. The activities rendered by EAP professionals makes EAP services an important component of the workplace because of the role it plays in enhancing job performance and improving

productivity. Matlhape (2003:31) suggests that because of the important role it plays, the EAP should be located in the core strategies of the organisation and be treated as a strategic programme. It must be accessible anywhere in the company in order for it to deliver the intended results. This will enhance the wellbeing of the employees and the strategic responses used to support organisational goals towards achieving total quality of work (Matlhape, 2003:31).

1.2.5. Education and promotion

Marketing of the EAP is one of the core technologies of the EAP and resulting activities should be planned and executed accordingly. Appropriate marketing strategies should be developed and implemented in order to ensure the visibility of EAP services and to make a positive presentation of the programme to all beneficiaries (EAPA-SA, 2015:22). According to Csiernik (2003:21), management, labour representatives, and other counselling staff should be educated about their respective roles in coordinating the utilisation of EAP services. Training should be conducted regularly. All persons eligible for the programme should be notified about the organisation's EAP and the available services in the programme. He further indicated that an organisation should be dedicated and committed to ongoing education through the EAP. The education and promotion of programmes, such as prevention programmes and reactive programmes, and dealing with problems experienced by both individuals and their family members should be focused on (Csiernik, 2003:21).

1.2.6. Marketing

Marketing is one of the most important factors in promoting the service delivery of the in-house EAP. It should occur regularly and be the focus of the EAP committee, senior management in the organisation, labour unions, employees, and EAP providers. Information updates about the programme and its confidential nature should occur regularly to ensure continued support and usage (Csiernik, 2003:21).

Public Service Regulations (2016:72) suggest that the health promotion programme, including an effective internal communication strategy, should be ensured by the head of the department. The objective of effective communication is to communicate clear messages that the service recipients can understand (Public Service Commission, 2006:32). According to Chabeli (2007:61), an extensive marketing strategy should be implemented and should outline the rationale for an in-house EAP model, as well as its advantages and disadvantages. This could also motivate the reason that an in-house EAP model is regarded as the best model for the organisation (Chabeli, 2007:61).

1.2.7. Resources and budgets

The Public Service Regulations (2016:71) require that the head of the department in an organisation or government department to implement health promotion programmes and, consider forming partnerships with stakeholder relevant for the implementation of the health promotion programmes. It further indicates that the head of the department should allocate adequate financial and human resources to such programmes. According to the Public Service Commission (2006:36), government departments differ significantly regarding budgets and resource allocation for the EAP. It states that those with budgets specifically allocated to EAPs and who are actively involved in the EAP provide a successful programme to the organisation. The issue of adequate funding was found to be in direct relation to the commitment of management. Whenever a senior manager commits to implementing and developing the EAP, funding will be more readily available.

1.2.8. Staffing level and criteria

Staffing of the EAP personnel is also an important organisational factor in promoting service rendering by the in-house EAP. An appropriate number of EAP professionals is crucial in order to achieve the EAP goals and objectives (EAPA-SA, 2015:10). According to Joja (2004:19), for the EAP to be effective, a minimum number of staff is necessary to manage and administer it. For more comprehensive services to be provided, there must be an appropriate number of professional EAP staff who are suitably qualified to perform their

duties, gain credibility within the organisation, create effective communication channels with management, and improve relations with employees. Dickman (in Richard et al., 2009:48) also supports the issues of staffing and stated that EAP personnel must possess specialised marriage and family counselling techniques, alcoholism treatment, as well as expertise in dealing with other typical problems such as finances.

1.2.9. Policy and procedures

Organisations must develop a clear policy which recognises that employees experience problems in their lives. According to the EAPA-SA (2015:4), EAP policies ensure that the mandates, principles and focal areas of the EAP are fair, consistently applied, and balanced in respect of the interest of all the various stakeholders. The policy must ensure that employees' participation in the EAP will not affect their status in the organisation or be a threat to their job security. It must fully support the treatment and rehabilitation of employees in their efforts to resolve their problems. According to Dickman (in Richard et al., 2009:49), a clear policy statement serves as philosophy and explains the intent of the programme.

Dickson (in Richard et al., 2009:49) states that a policy should highlight that human problems are unavoidable and they sometimes affect job performance. Troubled employees are restored to full capacity by being provided with the appropriate assistance in a professional manner. The procedures should spell out how the policy is to be implemented, what steps should be taken, and what the proper roles of management and treatment personnel are (Googins, 1975:466). The EAPA-SA (2015:9) also supports that procedures should be developed to operationalise the policy in order to provide specific guidelines for EAP professionals regarding the core technologies and standards and their unique application in each organisation.

The above-mentioned factors will form the basis on which the empirical study will be conducted.

1.3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research was undertaken from the framework of the person-centred approach according to which a person is seen as essentially trustworthy, having vast potential for understanding themselves, and able to resolve their own problems (Corey, 1996:198). This trust resides in the belief that every organism, the human being included, has an underlying and instinctive movement towards the constructive accomplishment of its inherent potential. Therefore, clients' perceptual worlds will be determined by the experiences they have rejected or assimilated into their self-concept (Dryden, 2007:148).

According to this theory, Carl Rogers (Grobler & Schenck, 2009:34) emphasises that counsellors should accept whatever feelings and perceptions clients express as realities for them. Rogers assumed that the best vantage point for understanding how people behave is from an internal frame of reference of such a person and that the focus will be more on the actualising tendency of a human being as the basic motivational force that leads to change in a person's life. This theoretical framework confirms that a person has the ability to move forward in a constructive manner if the appropriate conditions that foster growth are present. It further indicates that people are trustworthy, resourceful, capable of self-understanding and self-direction, and able to make constructive changes and to live effective and productive lives. Communication of these attributes will assist the person to be less defensive and more open to themselves and their world, and they will behave in social and constructive ways. Based on the research topic, this approach is more relevant for the study, because it allowed the researcher to explore and describe organisational factors promoting the in-house EAP from resourceful, trustworthy participants that are capable of self-understanding and self-direction. The researcher gathered information regarding the participants' views on organisational factors promoting in-house EAPs based on their individual experiences (Corey, 1996:200).

1.4. PROBLEM STATEMENT/ RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

EAPs have been designed to improve job performance, as well as the employees' quality of life in both public and private organisations. However, most EAPs are unable to achieve their planned and intended goals and objectives, despite being well-planned in terms of the formal standards set by the EAPA SA and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) for government departments (Ndhlovu, 2010:03). Although the Public Service Regulation (2001) rules that all national and provincial administrations are legally required to render assistance to their employees by means of the EAP, the researcher observed that little research has been conducted on the organisational factors promoting in-house EAPs in the public service sector.

Although this study did not look specifically at legislation, it's important to note that there is no single specific legislation used in South Africa to ensure the implementation of and adherence to in-house EAPs. The DPSA introduced the EAP through a number of legislative frameworks. Section 27 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) stipulates that an employee has the right to access health care services. Section 17 of the Public Service Act (No. 103 of 1994) determines that the power to discharge an employee rests with the relevant authority or its delegate. This power should, however, be exercised taking the applicable provisions of the Labour Relations Act (No. 66 of 1955) into consideration. Paragraph 8 of Schedule 8 of the Labour Relations Act (No. 66 of 1955) stipulates that an employee should not be dismissed for unsatisfactory performance, unless an employer has offered an employee the appropriate evaluation, instruction, training, guidance or counselling as a corrective measure.

The EAP needs to be introduced according to a specific model to meet the specific needs and demands of a specific organisation (Terblanche, 1992:19). The researcher will focus on the in-house model, which is a kind of model where the programme management and most of the clinical staff work on a full-time basis for the organisation that the EAP serves (EASNA, 2009:18). The in-house model is a model adopted by the majority of the public service departments and the department where the study was conducted also uses an in-house

EAP. According to Cagney (1999:64), one of the unique strengths of the internal model is that the EAP would possess a better understanding and knowledge of the organisation as compared to external vendors and, as a result, will deliver a higher quality service to that specific organisation.

The research problem springs from the experiences that the researcher has had as an EAP practitioner at the Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure for the past six years. The researcher observed that factors such as staffing, policies and procedures, positioning of the EAP, and allocation of resources in the organisation may have an important role to play in the service delivery and promotion of an in-house EAP. In the researcher's experience as an EAP practitioner, there were not enough staff members to render EAP services. According to the EAPA-SA (1999:7), there should be one full-time, in-house EAP official for every 350 employees in a centralised workforce, and in a decentralised workforce the ratio is one EAP official for every 200 employees. In-house EAPs are not allocated enough financial resources to execute their duties and that has an impact on the promotion of the in-house EAP. To change the current situation, there must be policies and EAP specific legislation guiding the implementation of the EAP in the workplace. There is currently not enough literature available to address the problem in question.

The research question that guided this study is: "What are the organisational factors that promote the in-house EAP in the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in Limpopo?"

1.5. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1.5.1 Goal of the study

The goal of the study was to explore and describe the organisational factors that promote the in-house EAP in the DEDET in Limpopo.

1.5.2   Objectives of the study

The main objectives of the study were:

- To conceptualise and describe the in-house EAP and the different organisational factors that promote it.
- To determine which organisational factors are promoting the in-house EAP in the DEDET.
- To formulate certain recommendations regarding the way organisational factors can promote an effective in-house EAP in the DEDET.

1.6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Welman, Kruger and Mitchel (2005:52) define a research design as a plan according to which researchers select participants and collect information from them. This is a plan detailing how the research will be conducted. The researcher selected a collective case study design, as it provided the best opportunity to collect rich data from participants in the DEDET (Bouma, Ling & Wilkison, 2012:108). The case under study was an in-house EAP and the exploration and description of the cases took place through detailed, in-depth data collection methods, involving multiple sources of information that are rich in context, through face-to-face interviews (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport, 2011:321).

The goal of the study was to explore and describe the organisational factors that promote the in-house EAP and the objectives were explanatory in nature, describing and conceptualising the in-house EAP and the different organisational factors promoting it.

Applied research was utilised, as the emphasis was on describing the organisational factors that may enhance the quality of the in-house EAP in the DEDET in Limpopo. A qualitative research approach was used and data was collected through semi-structured interviews which were organised to get an in-depth understanding of the organisational factors

promoting the in-house EAP at the DEDET. The semi-structured interviews also allowed considerable flexibility in scope and depth of the interviews, and this allowed the researcher to gain a detailed picture of participants' beliefs or perceptions of organisational factors promoting the in-house EAP (Dicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006 in De Vos et al., 2011:348). The semi-structured interviews were supported by an interview schedule and certain principles such as neutrality was applied (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004:53).

The semi-structured interview schedule was piloted at the Department of Transport in order to ensure that the instrument is easy to understand and unambiguous. Two EAP practitioners possessing the same characteristics as those in the main study, were interviewed to test the instrument.

Qualitative data was analysed using the data analysis spiral, as described by Creswell (2009:185). Data was prepared by reading transcripts, categorising the data using the coding process, capturing the data in text form, and finally interpreting the prepared data.

1.7. DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS

Below are the definitions of the main concepts in the study.

- **Employee Assistance Programme**

    This is "a set of professional services specifically designed to improve and maintain productivity and healthy functioning of the workplace and address the workplace particular business needs through the application of specialized knowledge and expertise about human behaviour and mental health" (EAPA-SA, 2010). According to the EASNA (2009:1), the EAP is an employer-sponsored service designed to alleviate and assist in eliminating a variety of workplace problems. It typically provides screening assessment, brief interventions, referrals to other services, and case management with longitudinal follow-up for mental health concerns and substance abuse problems.

- **In-house Employee Assistance Programmes**

  According to Mthethwa (2002:34), in-house models refer to programmes staffed by personnel who are employees of the organisation, even though they may consist of multi-disciplinary professionals. She identifies two internal models, namely employer and union-initiated models. Ndhlovu (2010:32) refers to an in-house model as an approach where employee assistance professionals are employees of the organisation; they are recruited and paid by the organisation just like any other employee of the particular organisation.

- **Organisation**

  This refers to a social system comprising a variety of interrelated sub-systems, such as human or social sub-systems, administrative sub-systems, decision making sub-systems, technological sub-systems, and production sub-systems (Fox, 2006:01). An organisation is also defined as an organised body, especially a business, government department, or charity (*Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, 1995).

The above definitions indicate clearly that the in-house EAP model provides services within an organisation and creates a direct link between the EAP and the employee's workplace, because internal staff members are the ones running the programme. An in-house EAP model therefore refers to a structure which is totally staffed, controlled and administered by the specific department.

1.8. CHAPTER OUTLINE

The report outline is as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction, definition of concepts, and statement of the problem

This chapter focused on the introduction and rationale of the study, summary of the literature review, theoretical framework, as well as an outline of all the chapters.

Chapter 2: In-house Employee Assistance Programme

This chapter focuses on the EAP as a programme within the organisation and the different models used to deliver services to the organisation, with specific emphasis on the advantages and disadvantages of each model.

Chapter 3: Organisational factors

This chapter presents a view of literature in terms of organisational factors and their direct link to the EAP. It focuses on factors within the organisation that affect the EAP as a programme within the organisation, as well as the employee and the employer in terms of the in-house EAP.

Chapter 4: The empirical process

This chapter presents the goals and objectives and provides detailed information that answers the research questions. It describes the research approach, methodologies, ethical considerations, and data analysis method used.

Chapter 5: Data analysis and discussion of findings

This chapter analysed the data collected during the interviews. It also confirmed the research findings.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and recommendations

This chapter provides a brief summary of the research findings, conclusions from the research, as well as the recommendations based on the findings.

1.9. CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the introduction, rationale of the study, summary of the literature review, as well as the theoretical framework. It also provided an outline of all the chapters.

CHAPTER 2

IN–HOUSE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the EAP as a programme within the organisation and its different models of delivering services to the organisations and the employees. EAP has three different models and it is up to the organisation to select the model that best suits them. The selection of a model is important and that is determined by various factors. In this study, the researcher focuses on the organisational factors promoting in-house EAP, therefore it is important to discuss various models of EAP and compare an in-house model with the other models, in order to get a clear understanding of what in-house EAP implies. This will support the discussion of the different organisation factors that is promoting in-house EAP.

2.2. DESCRIPTION OF EAP AND IN-HOUSE EAP MODEL

An Employee Assistance Programme is a work-based programme designed to assist employees at the workplace. According to EASNA (2010:1), an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is an employer sponsored programme designed to alleviate and assist in eliminating a variety of workplace problems. It provides screening, assessments, brief intervention, referrals and case management for problems emanated from either personal or work related contexts. Barker (2003:141) describes EAP as services offered by employers to their employees to help to overcome personal problems that may negatively affect productivity. There are different models in the field of EAP that employers can implement, although such a model should be selected carefully to meet the needs of the organisation. An EAP model is a structure that an organisation uses to plan, implement and serve the needs of troubled employees (Myers, 1984:70). There are three models to choose

from namely, the in-house, external and hybrid model. For the purpose of this study, the researcher will focus on the in-house model.

In-house Employee Assistance Programmes are being run by the full time EAP personnel member appointed by the organization to render services to the employees and the organization. In a study conducted by Csiernik (1999) in Canada on internal versus external EAP, he has identified the strength and weaknesses of the internal EAP on service delivery and reported that the use of an internal model will produce organizational cost savings, organizational belongingness and understanding of the dynamic environment of the workplace as well as organizational position and support. An In-house EAP's provides a higher quality of services that are designed for a specific organization to fit such organization's need and to link with other parts of the organization and other stakeholders within the organization (Sharar, Pompe and Attridge, 2013:01).

2.3.   BACKGROUND OF EAP IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

EAP development in the public service started in 1995 with a representation being made to the Public Service Commission regarding the introduction of EAP in the public service. The team that made the representation, view EAP as playing a crucial role in restoring stability in the government departments by reducing labour turnover and facilitating change and adjustment to the transformation that was taking place as a result of socio-political change (Govender and Terblanche, 2009:395).

The public service regulations and public service Act serves as a point of departure for the implementation of the EAP and it both state that the working environment should support effective and efficient service delivery while as reasonable as possible, taking employees personal circumstances into account (Public Service Regulations, 2001:24). According to the evaluation study that was conducted by the Public Service Commission in 2006, EAP was implemented in the South African Public service to deal with various employee

problems. They were originally introduced to deal with problems that public servants encountered and which had a direct influence on productivity in the workplace. This includes problems such as substance abuse, mental and personal relationship problems, employee conflict, personnel development and other deceases. This development benefited governments department by improving its performance and productivity, especially with reference to absenteeism. Currently, EAPs in the public service form part of the employee wellness pillar called wellness management, which is a combination of EAP and work-life balance. The implementation is therefore guided by the Employee Health and Wellness Strategic Framework for the public service developed in 2008 and which led to the development of the Wellness Management policy of 2009.

According to the researchers' observation, most government departments in Limpopo are utilizing the in-house model. These departments appointed their own full time EAP personnel that takes the responsibility for short term interventions, marketing, management consultations and all EAP core technologies.

2.4. DISCUSSION OF DIFFERENT EAP MODELS, THEIR ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

The following EAP models exist in practice and can be discussed as follows:

2.4.1. In-house model

This is an EAP model whereby the programmes are staffed by personnel who are employees of the organisation they serve (Myers, 1984:70). An in-house EAP model has programme management and clinical staff working full time for the organisation that the EAP serves, therefore the organisation establishes its own internal resources to provide a full range of services. This type of model is used by large organisations such as corporations, government and universities (EASNA, 2009:3). The organisation utilising in-house EAP,

takes full ownership of all EAP core technologies which are training and development, marketing, case management, consultation to workplace management, networking and monitoring and evaluation (Sonnenstuhl & Truce, 1986:22). It is positioned to deliver high quality organisational services and can be more integrated with the organisation, it focuses on its core components and allow closer supervision of EAP practitioners (Cagney 1999:64).

This model has advantages and disadvantages which can be highlighted as follows (Liebenberg,sa: 19-19):

- Programme control is completely internal

The organisation is able to control the EAP staff, the costs of the programme as well as the physical location of the programme. In-house EAP enables closer management of EAP staff.

- Knowledge of the organisation

The internal EAP professionals knows the work organisation in a way that few external vendors ever will. They are positioned to deliver high quality organisational services designed for that specific organisation. This makes them to be more integrated with the employer organisation than the external service provider (Oher, 1999:64). The EAP professional will gain knowledge of the organisation by serving on the task forces and initiative teams that are outside the routine domain of EAP, as well as participating in executive coaching or mentoring programme with the organisation (Beidel, 2005:297).

- Communication with organisations

There is easier communication between the in-house EAP professionals and the organisation. Communication barriers such as lack of trust and misunderstanding are

eliminated. It allows easy access and communication with managers, supervisors, union representatives as well as employees (Chabeli, 2007:18).

- On-site problem assessment capacity

The in-house EAP professionals are always available in the organisation and that promotes timeous on–site problem assessment. They provide easy access for employees and their availability encourages utilization.

Csiernik (1999:5) also added the following advantages for in-house EAP:

- Quicker response to organizational changes.
- Immediate response to critical incidents.

Disadvantages of an in- house model as described by Liebenberg (sa: 18-19):

- Problems of confidentiality or appearance of such problems

The major concerns about in-house EAP is that it may be perceived as being too closely identified with any particular department, group or individuals in the organisation and that it is often difficult to maintain confidentiality (Oher, 1999:64). According to Chabeli (2007:21), organisations should seriously consider where they locate the EAP offices and their referral processes when using the in-house model.

- Only large organisations can justify full-time staff

The size of the organisation is important in deciding the model suitable for the organisation. According to Brummet (2000:19), internal EAP occurs mostly in large organisations with large budgets. Factors such as size, diversity of employee population, number and location of sites are important. Therefore, it is not suitable for small to medium organisations.

- Numerous roles to be filled by limited staff

Organisations appoint EAP staff responsible for the implementation of all EAP core technologies to the entire work force. There are instances of understaffing that may create possible burnout to a few EAP professionals. For example, in the Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure where the researcher is working, one EAP professional is responsible for a District with almost 600 employees. This limited the skills and expertise that could be provided by various professionals or more staff and could lead to burnout with one-person programme.

Csiernik (1999:5) indicates the following disadvantages of an in-house EAP:

- Ethical conflict over who is the client

According to this researcher, the intensions of an in- house EAP model is to allow the organisation to take ownership of the programme, appoint its own clinical staff and provide resources. Furthermore, this model becomes a problem when the organisation is implementing the programme only for compliance with the national labour legislations. This may lead to frustrations to both the EAP personnel and employees due to lack of support from management, as well as limited resources to implement the programme. The disadvantages of an in-house model as described by Liebenberg (sa:18-19), can be

managed and eliminated if management support and sufficient, human and financial resources exists.

2.4.2. External model

The external model is defined as a model that is operated by personnel who are employed by an organization that sells EAP service (Myers, 1984:70). In this model a vendor can be hired to provide all or most aspects of the EAP programme. The model emphasize the use of telephoned based counselling and interaction with management through management consultations and other organisational services tend to be low as compared to the in-house model (EASNA, 2009:4).

Govender (2009:38) identifies the contract, consortium and hotline models as sub–models within the external EAP. With a contract model, the work organisations contracts with an independent EAP service provider in the community to provide EAP functions. In this case, the contract firm typically offers package of services on per capita basis and setting an annual fee per employee. The other sub-model is the consortium model and in this model several companies pool their resources to develop a collaborative programme with the intention of maximising individual resources. This allows vendors to reach multiple employers under one programme (Masi, 2000:407).

The last sub-model is the hotline model that offers a local or distance telephone services. The troubled employee usually calls the hotline number and receives telephone counselling and if there is a need for one on one consultation, employees will be referred to the appropriate service providers (Myers, 1984:82). Harper (2000:319) supports the latter and added that call centres are cost effective, uses multiple languages, multi sectorial services are available and accessible to various people including their families. The following are advantages and disadvantages of the external model as described by Sharar, Pompe and Attridge (2013:2).

Advantages of an external model:

- Less costly for small or medium size employers

In small organisations, the external model is less costly as the employers may choose different payment methods, namely capitated pricing (pay per employee, per year), utilization based pricing (pay for the service that the employee receives) and pay for performance (this is based on the improved treatment outcomes) EASNA, 2009:21. It allows the service providers to take advantage of the centralised administrative services that could lower costs for the employer (Cagney, 1999:19).

- Confidentiality is easy to maintain

It is easy to maintain confidentiality when using an external EAP model as there is less contact between the organisation and service providers and employees may not be seen when calling or visiting the external EAP.

- Off-site counselling

Employees may prefer not to be seen by colleagues or supervisors when visiting the EAP offices and external EAP is able to cater for the latter as they are able to render offside services. This may promote utilization of the programme and create more trust in the programme.

- Better identification and utilization of community resources.

External EAP's are able to identify and utilize community resources. They affiliate different professionals available in the community and register them on their data base. This assist in efficiency and effectiveness on services they render.

- Increased range of employees served

External EAP increases the range of employees served. Employees are able to choose from on-site, offside or telephone counselling unlike with an in–house EAP where the EAP services are rendered within the organisation.

- Better communication with professionals in community resources

The external EAP affiliates with professional within the society were the organisations are based and this lead to the easy access of community and referral resources.

- More diverse professional staff

External EAP's are able to appoint different professionals on a full time basis and also have affiliates from different professions.

Disadvantages of an external model:

- Usually no on-site counselling capacity

The external EAPs are usually not available for on-site counselling. They usually use affiliates who own practices and it is not always easy to attend on-site clients.

- No ownership

The external EAPs do not have ownership of the programme. The service provider only comes to the organisation to render EAP services without owning the programme. Commitment and dedication on the part of the service provider is not guaranteed. According to Chabeli (2007:20), lack of ownership may also result in less effective control of EAP costs by the organisation.

- Supervisors may be reluctant to deal with outsiders

EAP may be challenging to most supervisors and they may not trust outsiders with their employees especially when supervisors do not understand how the programme works. It may be difficult to refer employees to external EAP providers.

- Lack of knowledge about the organisation

The external EAP may not know and understand the organisation they are working with. The knowledge of the culture, norms and standards of the organisation are important aspects when dealing with an organisation and it may be difficult for external EAP professionals to perform if they don't understand these aspects. According to Franklin (2003:29), an external model may result in a longer counselling sessions as the counsellor may take some time to understand the culture of the organisation they serve.

- Difficult communication between service centres and work organisations

Communication is often a problem when organisations and EAP service providers prefer or uses different modes or channels of communication. EAP service providers may be advanced and using high technology such as emails, webcam and others whereas the organisations they serve, are in rural areas where such facilities are not available.

Csiernik (1999:5), also identified the following as disadvantages of an external model:

- Fewer informal contacts

The external EAP is not based within the organisation. Therefore, it is difficult to contact the clients on an informal basis. The service providers visit the organisations for marketing or render services as per their contract with the organisation.

- Ethical conflict over who the client is

External service providers are in business and they may not want to jeopardize their relationship with the organisation. There is always an ethical conflict during the service rendering on who the client is.

- Fewer supervisor consultations.

According to EASNA (2009:18), the use of EAP supervisor consultations is more substantial to an in-house EAP model as compared to an external model. Consultation are important to

provide guidance about how to appropriately support employees, support the return to work and work accommodation efforts and offering performance management guidance for managers concerning their employees.

- Slower response time to immediate crisis or critical incidents

External service providers do not work within the organisation, therefore they need to be called in cases of critical incidents and it is difficult for them to be available immediately to attend to the latter.

- Lower use of services for alcohol and drugs and for work related problems.

The researcher supports Sharar, Pompe and Attridge (2013:2), views that this model is financially more popular and provide more diverse professional staff but that can be done best if there is professionals appointed full time within the organisation. The appointed professional will manage and monitor the services that external service providers are providing in order to ensure value for money and to serve as a link between the external service provider and the organisation. This will ensure that the outsourced EAP is benefitting the organisation. Unlike with the in-house EAP model, communication between the employees, supervisors and the external services is dependent on the availability of resources such as telephones and emails. Therefore, it may be difficult for employees in remote areas or without access to such resources, to access services of an external EAP on time.

2.4.3. Hybrid / blended model

This model is a combination of an in-house and an external model. In this model, a small number of staff is employed full time by the organisation that directs the EAP and provides

some on-site clinical and management related services while most of the clinical services are provided by affiliate counsellors who work from the external vendor but coordinate their activities through the in-house EAP (EASNA, 2009:4). Organisations utilizing blended models do not adopt a particular model, but rather adopts parts of EAP models that addresses its workplace issues the best. The blended arrangements offer organisations a great deal of flexibility to meet their changing needs (Modise and Maruping {sa}:5). According to Harper (1999:15), the hybrid model is an inexpensive assessment and referral model. However, the model depends on the quality of resources available in the immediate community of the organisation and the availability of a case coordinator to manage the process.

Advantages of a blended model can be described as follows:

- Affiliate network to serve dispersed population

EAP staff appointed full time by the organisation, can be centralised at the head office and co-ordinated and monitored the activities of the service provider. This serves as an advantage as the service provider is able to utilize the affiliates located closer to the work stations.

- More diverse professional staff

Blended models allow the use of diverse professional staff as it uses different professionals appointed by the external service provider.

- Confidentiality easy to maintain.

A blended model is able to maintain confidentiality as there is less contact between the service provider and the organisation. The in-house personnel co-ordinates and make necessary referrals and the external service provider will only give feedback without full details of the problem.

- Off-site counselling.

Internal EAP refers and co-ordinate cases to the external EAP professionals who renders offside counselling. This serves as an advantage as some employees may not want to be seen when visiting the EAP offices.

Disadvantages of a blended model can be summarized as follows:

- High costs.

The blended model has more advantages than disadvantages. The services rendered by the in-house personnel and those of the external EAP, complement each other as a way to provide the best services for the organisation. The challenges such as under staffing, confidentiality, limited skills and expertise may be eliminated when using this model. Although the model is expensive because of the fact that the organisation must pay both the in-house personnel and the external service provider, the researcher view this model as the best model for large organisations.

2.5. **CRITERIA TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN SELECTING AN EAP MODEL**.

Selecting the right model for an organisation, is crucial of nature as that will ensure the most effective model for service delivery that is cost effective and able to ensure a balance

between expenditure and benefits. According to Fleisher and Kaplan (in Govender, 2009: 43), the following should be considered when selecting an appropriate model:

- Size of workforce.

According to Govender (2009:43), the companies with a workforce less than 500 or 1000, may not be able to implement an in-house EAP as they may be unable to support their own internal programme. These companies may use the consortium option and outsource EAP services.

- Distribution of workforce.

Geographical demarcations of the work station within the workplace, is also a determining factor in terms of the model which will work best for the organisation. An organisation whose employees are based in one location or town may use a different model from the one with few employees in different provinces.

- Mission.

Fleisher and Kaplan (1988:32) state that organisations like government departments may prefer to use the in-house model in order to protect confidentiality in the workplace. Good examples of organisations in South Africa that effectively use an in-house model, is the South African Police Services, South African National Defence Force and the Department of Correctional services. The rationale for the latter may be because these organizations are faced with sensitive and confidential information that must be protected.

- Cultural climate.

Fleisher and Kaplan (1988:32) state that unless the cultural climate of the organisation is conducive, the realization that troubled employees cost millions in health care and lost productivity will not lead to implementation of an EAP. The executives and managers need to be convinced of the effective impact of an EAP on individual work performance and productivity and the allocation of the necessary resources, to launch an EAP model that is manned by well trained staff.

- Allocation of resources.

The funds allocated to the programme is directed by the EAP model that the organisation selects. Funds are usually allocated for the appointment of staff, training and preventative programmes (Govender, 2009:44).

- Target population.

The target population must be clear and specific. Fleisher and Kaplan (1988:33) suggests that management must decide on whether the EAP services covers the employees only, employees and their immediate family members and/or even extended to retired and contract workers. These must be started clearly in the EAP policy.

- Range of services.

According to Govender (2009:45), services can range from problem identification and referrals only, to the provision of a full range of services incorporating all the core technologies of EAP and may even integrate health/work life and other related such as

disability, which are traditionally not covered in an EAP model. The researcher agrees with the author that EAP services should incorporate all EAP core technologies. Is furthermore important that all services rendered, must be based on need assessment and the trends identified within the organisation.

- Funding source

Govender (2009:45) suggests that the financial source of the EAP depends on the financial strength of the organisation and the type of benefits offered by the medical companies to meet the needs of the employees. According to the researcher, the typical example of an organisation with financial strength will be government departments. The EAP is budgeted for at the beginning of the financial year and is guided by the spending trends in the previous financial year as well as the current needs.

EAPA SA (2015:7) supports Fleisher & Kaplan (1988), and add that professional capacity, employee preferences and accessibility to programme and community resources are crucial when selecting an EAP model. The researcher is of the opinion that the correct selection of the EAP model will lead to effective and efficient service rendering to both the employer and employees. Funding, staffing, and the target group, are all guided by the selected model and population to which services are rendered to. An in-house EAP may not receive the same funding, staff and other resources similar to external EAP as it is the case with an in-house EAP. The organisation appoints its own EAP staff and provide resources unlike with external EAP whereby a fixed financial contract is signed and the service provider has a sole responsibility over staff and resources.

2.6. IMPLEMENTATION OF AN IN-HOUSE EAP WITHIN AN ORGANISATION.

Nelson and Emener (in Richard, Emener and Hutchison, 2009:39) identified the following as critical to the implementation of an in-house EAP within the organisation:

2.6.1. Structure.

The structure explains the way in which an organisation combined its human resources for its goal–directed activities. The structure consists of complexity, which is differentiation within the organisation; formalization, which is the degree to which jobs in an organisation are standardized and also centralisation; which is the degree to which formal decision making powers are concentrated in a single position within the organisation. Therefore, it is crucial for EAP to take into consideration such structure in the process of initiating, developing, implementing and evaluating EAP.

The structure of the organisation contributes to the manner in which EAP services are rendered and supported in the organisation. If the structure is in a way that EAP can be mainstreamed in all the core components of the organisation, it can be easily recognised as one of the important units that promote service delivery by ensuring that employees problems are dealt with. EAP should be visible in all components.

2.6.2. Culture.

Schein (in Richard, Emener and Hutchison, 2009:40) defines culture as a pattern of basic assumptions that are invented, discovered, or developed by a group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration. EAPs within the organisation

must know and understand the culture of the organisation they work for in order to be able to choose the appropriate programme for it.

Although it is not easy to change culture, it is important to know and understand the organisational culture of the population that an in-house EAP serves. An EAP must explore the culture of the organisation and find a way to penetrate the organisation without undermining the existing assumptions. Culture is not always negative, therefore EAP professionals must understand it in order to design relevant programmes for the organisation.

2.6.3. Organizational dynamics

Organizational dynamics such as power, politics, decision making, and allocation of resources should be taken into consideration by the EAP professionals. Power refers to an interpersonal or intergroup relationship in which one individual or group has the ability to cause another individual to take action that would not be taken otherwise. Power is related to politics and politics includes the resolution of differing preferences in conflicts over allocation of scarce resources and mostly people with power are the ones taking decisions of selecting among alternatives. The EAP professionals must always be curious about who takes decisions within the organisation because such knowledge is useful in understanding the organisation they serve. EAP professionals must be able to learn how resources are allocated within the organisation, as the priorities of the organisation become clearer during resource allocation. Resources may include but not limited to financial, personnel, materials and physical resources.

An in-house EAP professional must understand the dynamics of the organisation so that they can be able to negotiate for allocation of resources and management support to the programme. EAP professionals must establish and maintain a good relationship with

individuals that has decision-making powers in terms of the ways things should be done within the organisation.

2.7. CONCLUSION.

The researcher came to the conclusion that it is crucial to select an EAP model that best suite an organisation considering all factors discussed in this chapter. When the choice of the model is not based on needs assessment, the organisation may not benefit fully from the services that a specific EAP model is supposed to render and that may lead to the undermining of the programme.

CHAPTER 3

ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS

3.1   INTRODUCTION

EAPs are becoming popular in the South African workplaces seeking to address personal problems affecting productivity. Dickman (1988:110) identified components that contribute to the success of the EAP, such as management endorsement, labour endorsement, policy statements, confidentiality, supervisor training, financial aspects, professional personnel, broad service components, accessibility, EAP awareness, and programme evaluation. Due to the nature of services EAP is rendering, which is completely different from the core functions of the organisation, EAPs somehow need to be promoted. In a study conducted by Azzone, McCann, Merrick, Hiatt, Hodgkin and Horgan (2009:345), it was discovered that the organisational factors such as confidentiality, supervisory/management support, programme efficiency, the effect of promotion, and training knowledge promote the EAP service rendering.

This chapter focuses on the organisational factors and its direct link to an EAP. It will focus on factors within the organisations that affect an EAP as a programme within the organisations, as well as the employee and the employer in terms of an in-house EAP.

3.2   FACTORS PROMOTING IN-HOUSE EAP

The following reflect on the organisational factors that contribute in promoting an in-house EAP. It will describe the role that each factor plays within the organisation's EAP.

3.2.1. Leadership support of EAP

According to the EAPA SA (2005:45), support from management is vital for the utilisation of the programme and communication of the vision of the programme at different levels within the organisation. Senior management of the organisation can introduce the availability of EAP services and explain the reasons behind the establishment of these programmes. The introduction of the programme should indicate the importance of an EAP and the organisation's interest in maintaining healthy personnel and indicate all the efforts they took in offering an EAP. This may help in integrating an EAP into the organisational culture and encourages its use (EASNA, 2009:29).

According to Public Service Commission of SA (PSC, 2006:32), management and leadership commitment were found to be one of the important factors contributing to the successfulness of an EAP. It further recognise the diversity in the role and influence that leadership commitment and support has on the programme. The Public Service Commission (2010) also supports that in order to improve employee health and wellness, management and leadership should provide the financial support and staff to implement and maintain the programme. Furthermore, senior management and heads of departments should participate in these various programmes as a way to give their stamp of approval, and their commitment to and support of the programme should also be seen and heard. Chabeli (2007:61) recommends that senior managers must support these programmes and regards it as one of those programmes that, when properly utilised, will assist employers in attaining their strategic goals. Dickman (in Richard, Emener & Hutchison, 2009:48) also agrees that it is important that management at its highest level declare its support and actively support the EAP by ensuring that "doors are open" to EAP personnel at all levels of management and that there is adequate financial support for the programme, while making it clear that they will support it on middle and lower management.

The researcher agrees with the above authors that management support and commitment are crucial for the success of an EAP and believes that this will be more effective if an EAP is added as one of the key performances in the management performance agreement. Managers must be rated for overseeing an EAP, make provision for financial and human resources, and be held accountable for activities within an in-house EAP.

3.2.2. Supervisory Skills Training

According to Taute and Manzini (2009:389), supervisors are the first to observe any deterioration in work performance, as such, they are essential to EAP by identifying employees early and make appropriate referrals. This is crucial to the success of an EAP. Therefore, it is important to train supervisors to have the insight of functioning and benefits of an EAP in order for them to be able to utilise and refer appropriately.

Supervisory training is recommended to be conducted at least once a year and it should be training that caters for both managers and labour unions at the same time in order to promote joint management-labour ventures (Dickman, in Richard et al., 2009:51). An EAP can be integrated into the human resource development programmes and the integration can be achieved by regarding an EAP as a management tool for managers to deal with problems.

The researcher agrees with the above authors that EAP supervisory training must be conducted once a year, although there are instances whereby training should be done more than once a year. The researcher is of the opinion that training should also be conducted as part of the induction to new management staff every time there is a new appointment, in order for them to have the same knowledge and understanding in terms of an in-house EAP implementation and their role in that regard. It should therefore be a continuous process and not a once-off activity.

3.2.3. Organisational development

The role of an EAP needs to be broadened from being just counselling for individual employees, in order for the organisation to receive more value for the EAP. The main goal of the EAP is to develop a working process that is integrated into organisational structure and culture and when such an integration has taken place, all stakeholders can be empowered. This will lead to ownership of the programme and early identification of problems affecting employees (EASNA, 2009:34).

The researcher concurs with the author that an EAP should be part of organisational development. The EAP should be integrated into the organisational structure and culture so that the organisation can take ownership of the programme. In that way an EAP will be promoted within the organisation.

3.2.4. Positioning of the EAP in organisations

The position of an EAP is not only limited to the physical location of an EAP office, but also includes the position in the organisational structure, other directorates, and the decision-making bodies. The positioning of an EAP will be discussed below:

- **Strategic position**

According to Matlhape (2003:31), the role of an EAP, is to assist employees so that productivity can be enhanced. The activities rendered by EAP professionals makes EAP services an important component of the workplace because of the role it plays in enhancing job performance and improving productivity. Matlhape (2003:31) suggests that because of the important role it plays, an EAP should be located in the core strategies of the

organisation and be treated as a strategic programme. It must be accessible anywhere in the company in order for it to deliver the intended results. This will enhance the wellbeing of the employees and the strategic responses used to support organisational goals towards achieving total of work (Matlhape, 2003:31). She further indicated that most organisations prefer positioning an EAP in occupational health and safety, social responsibility, or in human resource management. The placement of an EAP with occupational health may work for most organisations, although it may not enhance complete benefit from an EAP. She believes that an EAP is an organisation development function, and should be placed at the centre of human resource functions in an organisation (Matlhape, 2001:71). Chabeli (2007:33) stated that the position of an EAP practitioners within the organisation is very important, as it can contribute to the support or lack of support to the programme. Prevatt (in Richard et al., 2009:375) recommends that an EAP be placed as high in the organisation's chain of command as possible. Preferably, the director should report to the head of department in that particular organisation, as the programme is headed by a coordinator who reports to the assistant director, who in turn reports to the director and the head of department. This may advantage an EAP as it gains access to the level of the primary decision makers in the organisation.

The researcher agrees that an EAP must be positioned at the core strategies of the organisation, such as strategic planning, and must be mainstreamed in the core functions of the organisation. It must be visible and accessible throughout the organisation.

- **Accessibility**

Accessibility of the programme is very important in ensuring that the programme is effectively utilised. EAP offices must therefore be located where clients will easily reach them (Chabeli, 2007:32). According to Sithole (in Chabeli, 2007:32), those offices must be in a convenient place that does not demand unnecessary travelling or transport before they can be reached. Terblanche (1992:23) also argues that the physical location of EAP

personnel determines to a great extent the degree of support to the programme. He also indicates that location should enhance participation in the programme by means of the assurance that confidentiality will be respected. Employees may not use the EAP if counselling offices are located in an area where they can be seen upon entering and leaving (Terblanche, 1992:23).

The researcher agrees with the above authors, namely Chabeli and Terblanche, that EAP offices must be accessible to clients and should preferably not be in the same building as the organisation it services, as some employees do not want to be seen visiting EAP offices due to the stigma attached to it. Therefore, if EAP offices are separate although not too far from the employees they serve, that may promote an in-house EAP. Prevatt (in Richard et al., 2009:375) also supports the fact that EAP offices should be separate from other offices at the organisation, as confidentiality could be compromised where there is high employee traffic.

3.2.5. Education and promotion

According to Csiernik (2003:21), management, labour representatives, health and other counselling staff should be thoroughly informed about their respective roles in facilitating the usage of an EAP. Training of management, organised labour and peer counsellors should be conducted regularly. All the programme beneficiaries should be informed about the programme and the services it offers. The organisation should commit on continuous education focusing on prevention, health promotion and various problems facing both individuals and their families (Csiernik, 2003:21).

According to Beidel (2005:297), it is important to position training done by an EAP in the larger context of the organisation's training effort so that an EAP can be included in the training programme of the entire organisation. EAP professionals will be engaged in the

teaching of a variety of courses, such as stress management. This will assist an EAP to further integrate with other operational entities in the organisation.

The researcher is of the view that education and promotion are factors that will promote an in-house EAP, as each stakeholder within the organisation will know and understand their roles and responsibilities.

3.2.6. Communication

Communication is one of the important factors in promoting the service delivery of an in-house EAP. It should occur regularly between an EAP committee and the senior management in the organisation, labour unions, employees, and the EAP providers. Information updates about the programme and its confidential nature should occur regularly to ensure continued support and usage (Csiernik, 2003:21). Chapter one of the Public Service Regulations (2001:25) states that a head of department shall ensure that there are functional communication strategies to cater for the health promotion programmes. The objective of effective communication should be disseminate clear messages that reach the total workforce (Public Service Commission, 2006:32).

The researcher supports the fact that communication is crucial in promoting an in-house EAP. Verbal and non-verbal communication should be clear to avoid mixed messages. An EAP must also know and understand the line of communication within the organisation, as well as the different communication styles the organisation is using to reach its workforce. Furthermore, an EAP should utilise a language that the employees understand in order to make sure that they do not misinterpret the messages that need to be communicated.

3.2.7 Resources and budgets

Public Service Regulations (2001:16) require that the heads of departments in an organisation or government department to implement health promotion programmes and, consider forming partnerships with the stakeholders relevant for the implementation of the health promotion programmes.

According to the Public Service Commission report RP256 (2006:36) government departments differ significantly regarding budgets and resource allocation for an EAP. The PSC also states that those with budgets specifically allocated to an EAP and actively involved in an EAP, provide a successful programme to the organisation. The issues of sufficient funding were found to be related to commitment of management. Whenever a senior management person was committed to implementing and developing an EAP, funding would be relatively available. The Public Service Commission report RP33 (2010:32), also recommends that appropriate budgets should be allocated to an EAP to ensure that it functions effectively, and senior management and heads of departments should assume that responsibility. The EAPA-SA (2005:45) suggests that the heads of organisations should allocate human and financial resources to implement health programmes and, where appropriate, form partnerships with other departments, organisations and individuals who are able to assist with promotional health programmes.

The researcher agrees with the EAPA-SA that an EAP should be allocated enough financial support and resources for it to be successful. Resources and budgets play a significant role in promoting an in-house EAP and it communicate staff support for the programme.

3.2.8. Staffing level and criteria

White and Sharar (2003:20) state that staffing in an EAP field grew out of a wounded healer tradition which assumed that people who had resolved a particular problem were credentialed by experience to help others who are facing that problem. Staffing occupational alcoholism programmes with recovered alcoholics reflected this belief. The credential of personal recovery became less credible in the transition from occupational alcoholism programmes to an EAP. Since 1986, the EAPA offered voluntary certification credentials, Certification of Employee Assistance Professional as a way to qualify the competency of employee assistance professionals, and it was based on work experience and knowledge (White & Sharar, 2003:20).

Staffing of an EAP personnel is also an important organisational factor in promoting services rendered by an in-house EAP. Appropriate number of EAP professionals is crucial in order to achieve the goals and objectives of a programme (EAPA-SA, 1999:15). According to Joja (2004:19), for an EAP to be effective, a minimum number of staff is necessary to manage and administer an EAP. For more comprehensive services to be provided there must be an appropriate number of EAP professional staff members who are suitably qualified to perform their duties, gain credibility within the organisation, create better communication with management, and improve relations with employees (Joja, 2004:19). Dickman (in Richard et al., 2009:53) added that an EAP professional must have expertise in alcoholism treatment, marriage and family counselling, and general emotional problems, have basic counselling and case management skills, and also be able to deal with typical problems such as financial, legal and conflict issues. Harper (in Maiden, 1999:9) also argues that the EAP should be staffed by people practicing or qualified in psychology, social work, psychiatry and psychiatric nursing in order to ensure quality and cost-effective services. He also indicated that it is important to consider the balance between administrative and counselling staff functions, as counselling is not the only function that practitioners perform. They also spent time on administration issues such as policy development, training, and

employee wellness education (Harper, in Maiden, 1999:9). In a study that was conducted by Chabeli (2007:35) at the Department of Education, he discovered that the success of an EAP depends on the level of education of EAP professionals. According to him, an EAP practitioner should at least be in possession of a Bachelor's degree in psychology/social work, as well as being registered with the health council and having at least two years working experience. Chabeli is also of the opinion that qualifications are not the only factor that determines one's capacity; registration with professional bodies is also an important factor (Chabeli, 2007:35).

According to the researcher, staffing of EAP personnel is important for the promotion of an in-house EAP. The EAP personnel must have the relevant qualification plus experience in the helping professions, be registered with a professional body, and also fall under the EAPA-SA classification, i.e. personnel are either practitioners or professionals. The number of EAP personnel per number of employees must comply with the standards set by the EAPA-SA, namely one full-time EAP personnel member for 350 employees in a centralised workforce, and one full-time personnel member for 200 employees in a decentralised workforce. The researcher is also of the opinion that organisations must appoint in-house EAP managers with relevant qualifications so that they can be able to advocate and manage the programme that they understand. In-house EAP professionals should be encouraged to attend necessary professional development courses that are related to the EAP, such as advanced EAP short courses.

3.2.9. Policy and operational guideline

Anderson (2011:19) defines a policy as the proposed course of action of a person, group, or government within a given environment providing obstacles and opportunities which the policy was proposed to utilise and overcome in an effort to reach a goal or realise an objective. According to Winegar (2002:7), a policy describes the purpose of the programme, its scope, mandate and the roles of personnel involved in its functioning. Policy statements

for an in-house EAP are one of the factors that promotes the in-house EAP in the organisation. Dickman (in Richard et al., 2009:49) states that a policy highlights that human problems are unavoidable and it sometimes affects job performance. Troubled employees restore full capacity by being provided with the appropriate assistance in a professional manner. The above authors indicated that an effective policy statement implicates the following:

- Problems are human, and the workplace is immune.
- The organisations prefer that interfering problems must be dealt with professionally and as soon as possible.
- Problems brought to the EAP to be treated as confidential.
- Alcoholism and drug dependency are diseases that can be treated.
- The EAP exists to assist employees and their family members.

Yende (2005:47) states that a policy should set out important parameters for the entire operation of the EAP. It may indicate how confidential information will be handled, some methods for programme evaluation, and how client records should be kept. The objective of the policy statement should be to describe referral procedures, ensure uniformity of referrals, and specify those social problems impacting negatively on job performance and social functioning (Yende, 2005:47). Organisations must establish a clear policy which will recognise problems which do occur in the lives of employees and that those people must be fully supported by means of treatment and rehabilitation to resolve their problems and to make sure that their job security and status in the organisation will not be threatened. The policy should clearly indicate the implementation procedure and the proper roles of management, as well as treatment personnel (Googins, 1975:466).

Maseko (2015:28) states that it is important for the employer to develop an EAP policy that is aligned with the EAP standards and is linked to the overall functions of the organisation for effective implementation. She also mentioned that it is critical for the employees to know

about EAP policy immediately after new appointments are made to avoid the situation whereby employees are not familiar with the policies of the organisation. This will also give employees a sense of belonging and lead to improve EAP policy implementation. Chabeli (2007:32) added that an EAP policy statement should reflect and emphasise the fact that EAP practitioners should not be involved in the disciplinary procedure in the workplace. According to him, the involvement of EAP professionals in disciplinary procedures would jeopardise the programme.

According to EAPA-SA (2015:9), operational guidelines must be developed to operationalise the purpose in order to provide specific procedural and logistical guidelines for the implementation of an EAP according to the unique circumstances of the organisation.

The researcher agrees with the above authors namely, Googins and Maseko, that the EAP should have a policy statement and operational guidelines that will serve as a guideline towards the implementation of a programme, which may promote an in-house programme if it is rolled out to every employee within the organisation. All stakeholders must be involved and take part in providing inputs to the draft policy before it is finalised and which must be in line with the EAPA-SA standards.

3.2.10. EAP advisory committee

There should be an EAP advisory committee at the highest possible level within the organisation involving representatives from all segments of the workplace in order to ensure that all relevant role players in the organisation, such as top management, employees, supervisors and union representatives, contribute to the effective design and operation of an EAP. EAPA-SA identified the following as the functions of the advisory committee:

- To formulate policy and strategy.
- To advise on the implementation and procedure.
- To assist with marketing and promotion of the programme.
- To act as a board for EAP practitioners.
- To support the programme.
- To contribute to monitoring and evaluating the programme.

The critical part of an EAP is the initiation of an advisory committee which is comprised of labour, management, and EAP personnel. The committee is always the first group to receive the reports on the evaluation data and the research recommendations for the programme modification. The committee's function is to provide critical input into an EAP regarding the operational and administrative dynamics throughout the organisation, and also serves as an adviser to the organisation and its bargaining units on issues of critical importance to an EAP's implementation, its integration into the organisation, as well as its ultimate success.

According to the researcher, an EAP advisory committee has to assist in promoting an in-house EAP, as it involves many stakeholders within the organisation who are influential to the components within the organisation. If an EAP advisory committee consists of members from the highest possible level within the organisation, they are able to be influential to the decision makers and at times they are the decision makers within the organisation which may benefit the programme.

3.2.11. Labour unions

Nelson and Emener (in Richard et al., 2009:39) state that the local union is the formal organisation through which the member deals with his or her employer on a day to day basis. Therefore, an EAP can be more meaningful if it is supported by the labour unions and has a close working relationship with it. From history, it is clear that labour unions play an

important role in the promotion of an EAP in the workplace. The history of an EAP as a field, is marked by the diminishment of the role of labour within the field, as labour leaders have played a significant role in addressing the problem of substance-impaired workers (White & Sharar, 2003:4). In South Africa, labour organisations are very influential to the workforce regarding an in-house EAP and as such its involvement may benefit the programme. According to Matlhape (2001:21), the success of the EAP also depends on its acceptance of labour union representatives within the company. The traditional relationship between employers and labour unions may lead to failure of acceptance of an EAP by employees (Matlhape, 2001:27). An EAP must also recognise and appreciate their cooperation, be knowledgeable and understand how they operate.

According to Dickman and Emener (2003:57), mutual involvement and trust of both labour unions and management can benefit management, employees and an EAP when they described the benefits as follows:

Benefits to management:

- **Increased cooperation.**
  An EAP involves key personnel in their training that focuses on referrals, policies and procedures. Therefore, when supervisors, management and labour representatives are trained together, cooperation and togetherness among leaders are improved.

- **Enhanced morale.**
  When union and management corporately work together to help troubled employees through an effective EAP, employees' morale tends to increase and they become more positive.

- **More troubled employees are helped.**

  The cooperation between unions, management and the EAP shall increase the likelihood of a higher penetration rate and will reach more troubled employees.

  The researcher supports this statement as working together, will deal with trust issues that employees often experience with the employer. When employees are assured by their own unions that making use of EAP services, are confidential and does not lead to a loss of income, the employees may understand the context better than when the message is communicated by the employer.

- **Enhanced productivity.**

  Productivity is enhanced when the management and unions work together towards assisting employees to be fully functional. The researcher is of the opinion that this can be achieved by making sure that the personal and work related problems that employees are experiencing, are being attended to by an EAP.

- **Increased alternatives and options to problem resolution.**

  There are increased alternatives when unions and management work together, unlike when they are working against one another. Both unions and managers may agree to refer the employee to an EAP instead of a disciplinary hearing, as they are both aware that the employee who requires disciplinary action is often troubled and it is better to explore a helping alternative through an EAP.

Benefits to employees:

- **A well-Run EAP.**

The mere existence of an EAP is a valuable benefit to the employees and that becomes even more effective when there is joint labour-management support. This makes an EAP to be efficient, effective and also helpful to the larger proportion of employees and their family members.

- **Real help in response to a cry for help.**
  It takes caring, trained and cooperating individuals to recognise and assist a hurting employee crying out for help. For example, there are instances whereby an employee can display certain kinds of unacceptable behaviour at work that can be viewed as a sign that there may be hidden problems. It takes a good labour-management relationship to recognise that some problems need EAP intervention before disciplinary actions are taken.

- **Affordable access to help**
  Employees seek assistance from an EAP as they can afford it. They attend an EAP without fear that it may cost them their jobs. Joint labour-management supported EAPs eliminate the fear of victimisation and promote access to help.

Benefits to EAP:

- **Joint training session.**
  Training management and labour unions together creates cooperative interaction and allows the EAP personnel to work with these two different groups of people in a non-crisis, non-problem oriented situation in order to train and market EAPs. Labour management EAPs also help to eliminate pitfalls characteristics of other types of interventions.

- **Early intervention**

   In organisations where unions and management cooperate to support an EAP, early intervention to employees' problems are usually reported and the employees show more satisfaction with EAP services.

The researcher suggests that an EAP should guard against bias and being caught up in the middle between the unions and employers. Labour unions are very influential within the organisation. Employees have trust in the labour unions, therefore bringing them on board will assist in building trust between an EAP and the employees. Unions are able to convince the employees that an EAP is available to serve them, and not as a watchdog for management.

3.2.12. Marketing

Oher (1999:02) argues that the key to a successful internal marketing plan for an EAP is rooted not only in the knowledge of where the programme currently is, but where the organisation wants it to be. Taute and Manzini (2009:386) further added five primary objectives of EAP marketing and they are as follows:

- To increase employees' knowledge of the EAP and its services.
- To increase familiarity and comfort with EAP operations and to enhance use of services by employees, managers, labour representatives, and leadership of the organisation.
- To increase utilisations at all levels.
- To increase integration of the EAP within the organisation
- To maintain visibility of the EAP as vital to productivity and general well-being of employees.

EAPA-SA (2015:22) also supports the fact that marketing is important to ensure the visibility of an EAP in order to encourage the targeted beneficiaries to utilise the programme. According to Chabeli (2007:61), an extensive marketing strategy has to be put in place and implemented. This, inter alia, outlines the rationale, advantages and disadvantages of the programme in general, as well as an in-house EAP model in particular. This could also motivate the reason why an in-house EAP model is a valuable option for the organisation (Chabeli, 2007:61).

According to the researcher, an in-house EAP can be promoted through marketing the programme in order to increase the knowledge of all the stakeholders within the organisation. It can be done through pop-up messages on the employees' desks or laptops, banners, flyers, automatic emails after a specific period, verbal presentations during staff and management meetings, as well as through promotional materials. An EAP must be visible in all spheres within the organisation.

3.2.13. Social support and formal referral

According to Naicker and Fouché (2003:26), certain organisational factors, such as social support and formal referrals, are potential determents to the success of an EAP. They further indicated that colleagues' support of an EAP usage influences and increases the likelihood of EAP usage by others. Formal referral occurs when a supervisor or manager refers the employee to an EAP in writing due to lowered job performance, attendance and/or problems that may cause an employee to be unproductive at work (Khorombi, 2007:50). Supervisors' encouragement and support is also one of the factors promoting an in-house EAP, as they may encourage troubled employees to seek help and do formal referrals to the programme. The employee is given the option of EAP support in order to address the concerns as identified by the supervisor and shall voluntarily agree to participate in an EAP. The treatment programme should be confidential, although the supervisor will be privileged with

information on whether the sessions are continuing as expected or not, without disclosing the contents of the treatment.

The researcher agrees with the above authors namely, Dickman and Emener, that social support and formal referral plays an important role in promoting an in-house EAP, because if colleagues do not trust an in-house EAP, they may not encourage any troubled employees to use an EAP services and vice versa. The fact that supervisors encourage the employees to consult an EAP, is a signal of trust to the programme, especially when the supervisor has a good relationship with employees and explains the reasons for the referral without being judgemental or arrogant to the troubled employees.

3.2.14. Monitoring and evaluation

Ligon and Yegidis (in Richard et al., 2009:167) state that programmes are evaluated in order to determine the worth or value of the programme by assessing whether the programme was effective or ineffective in reaching its objectives. It seeks to determine if the target population was reached, the effectiveness, as well as the cost. This is done to justify programme existence, marketing purposes, verification service rendered, improvement and understanding of the programme. The Public Service Commission (2006:xiii) states that monitoring and evaluation is necessary to ensure the efficacy of the EAPs in dealing with employees' problems in the workplace and also to ensure the on-going improvement of the EAP in the public service. Monitoring and evaluation may include, but is not limited to, impact evaluation, which involves utilisation rates and clients' satisfaction with the programme, and efficiency evaluation, which is about the cost benefit ratio of the programme (Naicker & Fouché, 2003:27). EAPA-SA (2005:26) also agrees that the effectiveness of an EAP should be continually monitored and evaluated to ensure that an EAP adds value to the organisation and its beneficiaries. That allows the organisation to judge the programme's progress and usefulness, and to identify the need for programme modification.

The researcher agrees with the above authors, namely Dickman and Emener, that monitoring and evaluation of an EAP is crucial. Monitoring can be done by a specific unit appointed by management to monitor the implementation of the programme against the operational plan to check if an EAP is rendering the services that are expected. Evaluation of an EAP, can be done by the organisation, clients or managers who refer clients, which assist in checking the effectiveness, efficiency and efficacy of the programme.

3.3. CONCLUSION

The researcher came to the conclusion that there are certain organisational factors that may promote an in-house EAP and that can contribute to the meaningful implementation of such a programme. Management support, positioning of an EAP within the organisation, as well as the allocation of human and financial resources are the core factors for the successful implementation of the programme, followed by non-clinical services, such as training the appointment of an advisory committee as well as the monitoring and evaluation thereof. It is thus important that organisations must be aware of these factors so that they can be able to manage the implementation of the programme and sustain an EAP that will add value to the organisation.

CHAPTER 4
THE EMPIRICAL PROCESS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The content of this chapter will focus on the research methodology that was utilised to facilitate the research process to gather the empirical data for the study. The focal point of the study will be on the goal and objectives of the study, the data gathering process, and the ethical aspects that were taken into account during the research process.

4.2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study focused on organisational factors that promote the in-house EAP at the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (DEDET). It set out to explore and describe the organisational factors that promotes the in-house EAP at DEDET. To achieve the latter, the following objectives were of importance to finalise the study:

- To conceptualise and describe an in-house EAP and the different organisational factors that promote it.
- To determine which organisational factors are promoting an in-house EAP programme in the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in Limpopo.
- To formulate certain recommendations regarding the way organisational factors can promote an effective in-house EAP in the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in Limpopo.

4.3. RESEARCH APPROACH

The researcher used a qualitative research approach, which is also explanatory in nature (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport, 2011:98). According to Morrow (2007:211), qualitative research is particularly appropriate to answer the "what and how" questions. In this study the researcher is intended to find out in which way organisational factors may promote an in-house EAP in the DEDET in Limpopo. This approach is useful in understanding the people's interpretation of their own experiences in a specific context. The study established the relationship between organisational factors and the quality of an in-house EAP.

4.4. TYPE OF RESEARCH

The researcher used applied research and the emphasis was on describing the organisational factors that may enhance the quality of the in-house EAP in the DEDET in Limpopo. Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006:44) indicate that applied research aims at solving a particular problem facing a particular community's challenges. In this way applied research has the potential to assist the community to overcome a problem or design interventions which will help to solve the latter.

4.5. RESEARCH DESIGN

Research designs are methods utilized by the researchers to select participants and collect data from the selected participants (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005:52). This refers to a plan on how the research will be conducted. The researcher has selected the collective case study as the design, as she believed that it would provide the best opportunity to collect rich data from participants in an attempt to answer the research question (Bouma, Ling & Wilkison, 2012:108).

4.5.1. Research population and sampling

The population for the study was in-house EAP professionals in the DEDET in Limpopo, who are based at the head office and five district offices in the DEDET in Limpopo, and who have some characteristics in common that the researcher was focusing on. (Mouton, 1996:134). According to Welman et al. (2005:53), a population refers to a complete set of cases where a sample can be derived from. The researcher used the whole population with the following characteristics as criteria:

- Both male and female in-house EAP professionals at the DEDET in Limpopo.
- EAP professionals who are appointed as full-time personnel of the DEDET in Limpopo.
- EAP professionals who have worked for the DEDET in Limpopo for more than one year.

There was no sampling because of the limited number of EAP professionals that form part of the population in this study. The department has nine EAP professionals who originally formed part of the sample.

4.6. DATA COLLECTION

EAP professionals working for the DEDET were identified as sources of data for this study. Seven out of eight EAP professionals participated in the study. The EAP professionals who did not participate in the study did not meet the criteria, as she has worked for the DEDET for less than one year.

4.6.1. Interview

The researcher used semi-structured interviews to collect the research data. Semi-structured interviews are defined as organised questioning focusing on an area of interest, while still allowing considerable flexibility in scope and depth (Dicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006 in De Vos et al., 2011:348). Semi-structured interviews were utilized to source out the comprehensive information of EAP practitioners regarding their beliefs and perceptions of organisational factors promoting an in-house EAP. The method is flexible for both the

researcher and participants as it allowed the researcher to probe for more information on the interesting subjects that emerged during the interview. The interviews were supported by an interview schedule. The interviews were used as a mechanism or technology according to strict principles of neutrality and it produced information that represents reality more or less through the response of the interviewee (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004:53).

The themes of the interview schedule were as follows:

- The participants' own understanding of an in-house EAP.
- The participants' views on the departmental budget for EAP.
- The participants' perspectives on the departmental EAP policy.
- The participants' perceptions on the implementation of EAPA-SA standards and guidelines with the organisation.
- Participants' views on aspects that promotes an in-house EAP.
- Participants' perspectives on how the organisation should implement an in-house EAP.
- Participants' views on management support of an in-house EAP.

4.6.2. Pilot study

In qualitative studies, a pilot study enables the researcher to deal with areas that are unclear and to test certain questions (Janesick, in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994:213). The pilot study was conducted at the Department of Transport in Limpopo and two EAP professionals were interviewed. The EAP professionals had the attributes similar to the ones in the main investigation and this assisted the researcher to identify questions that need more probing in order to get a clear response. The pilot was targeted at a different department, because the whole population at the DEDET in Limpopo was used during the main investigation.

4.7. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis in qualitative research is a continuous process that unfold in a non–sequential manner prior transcription of analysed data, which means text from the interviews is typed into word processing programmes (Henning et al., 2004:127). According to Creswell (2009:184), data analysis involves working on data collected using open-ended questions and developing an analysis from the data supplied by participants.

In this study the researcher used the data analysis spiral, as described by Creswell (2009:185) as well as De Vos et al. (2011:408), and the process was as follows:

- Organising and preparing the data for analysis.
  According De Vos et al. (2011:408) the researcher should organise data into file folders, index cards or computer files and also convert the files into appropriate text units. The researcher transcribed all information gathered from the EAP practitioners and opened a hard copy file for the data collected immediately after every interview to prevent the loss of information (De Vos et al., 2011:408).

- Read through all data.
  After the organisation and conversion of data, the researcher continued the analysis by getting a feel for the entire database. According to De Vos et al. (2011:409), it is generally expected that the researcher will read the whole transcript several times in order to absorb all the details and to get a sense of the interview as a whole before separating it according to the categories.

- Data analysis using a coding process.
  The researcher organised the material obtained through interviews into chunks or segments of text before combining information into meaningful data and labelled the informational categories of information with a term (Creswell, 2009:186). This enabled the researcher to develop a topic for each category of responses and alphabetise codes.

- Coding process in order to generate a description of settings, people and categories for analysis.

  In a qualitative study, data is organised into more detailed abstract categories based on themes, concepts or similar features (Neuman, 2012:354). The researcher provided detailed biographic details of EAP professionals and classified events as per theme, and also generated codes for description of EAP professionals and themes. The codes were used to generate themes or categories for the research study, and those themes appear as headings of the major findings in the study.

- Presentation of description and themes in the qualitative narrative.

  The researcher presented the collected data in the form of text information by using narrative passages to convey the findings of the analysis.

- Interpretation and meaning of data.

  De Vos et al. (2011:416) state that interpretation involves making sense of data, meaning and the knowledge gained. Several forms exist, such as interpretation based on hunches, insights and intuition. In this research, the researcher discovered the understanding established from comparing findings with literature.

4.8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics are a crucial part of research. Ethics were considered in order to conform to a set or a code of principles and assist the researcher in understanding her responsibility as an ethical scholar. Research ethics emphasised the sensitive and compassionate behaviour towards the research participants who may be at risk due to the research procedure (Bless et al., 2006:140). The following ethical aspects were considered during the research process:

- No harm to participants

  The researcher avoided physical harm to the participants and explained beforehand that there is no risk of physical harm, as there will be no physical activities. Emotional harm

was also avoided as no inappropriate personal questions were asked during the interviews. The research questions focused more on participants' understanding, views and perceptions of an in-house EAP.

- Informed Consent and Voluntary Participation

The participants were made aware of the fact that participation in the research process was voluntary (Babbie & Mouton, 2015:521). The researcher explained in detail to the participants the goals and objectives of the research, and their right to decline to participate or to discontinue their participation at any time during the process if they chose to do so. The researcher also requested participants to sign the informed consent letter, which was an indication that they understood what the researcher had explained and that they gave their consent to participate (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013:32).

- Anonymity and Confidentiality

According to Babbie and Mouton (2015:523), the research project guarantees anonymity when the researcher and any other reader is unable to link a particular response to a particular participant. This means face-to-face interviews can never be considered totally anonymous, since the interviewer collects information from identifiable participants, even though the names of the participants were not published. The researcher ensured participants that their names, whereabouts and work stations would never be disclosed without their consent (Bless et al., 2013:32).

- Deception

The researcher identified herself as a researcher to the participants and ensured them that she had the capacity to facilitate the particular research process. Furthermore, the researcher informed the participants that the particular research formed part of the requirements to fulfil her Masters in Social Work (Employee Assistance Programme) at the University of Pretoria.

- Compensation

   The researcher did not promise any form of compensation to the participants as a way to convince them to participate in the study. The participation was thus voluntary and without any remuneration (De Vos et al., 2011:118).

- Publication of findings

   The researcher published accurate information regarding the research findings. She informed the participants beforehand that the possibility exists that the research findings will be published in a dissertation and an academic journal. She also informed them that the research findings will be not be limited to positive findings only, but that negative findings will also be reported (Babbie & Mouton, 2015:526).

5. CONCLUSION

This chapter presented a detailed description of the process of data collection, methodology and ethical considerations utilised during the study. It established how the research project was conducted with the intension of developing a baseline for the research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will focus on the analysis of the data collected from the participants, namely EAP professionals regarding the organisational factors that may promote the in-house EAP at the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism. The objectives of the study, namely to conceptualise and describe an in-house EAP and the different organisational factors that promote it, to determine how and which organisational factors promote the in-house EAP, and also the formulation of recommendations regarding the way in which organisational factors can promote an effective in-house EAP in the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in Limpopo, were aspects that guided the researcher during this process. An interview schedule that consists of different themes, as indicated in Chapter 4 of this study, was utilised to conduct the semi-structured, face-to-face interviews.

5.2. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

The following table indicates the biographic details of participants. The table indicates specifically the age and gender of the participants, the appointment dates, as well as their language and specific posts in the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in Limpopo.

Table 5.1: Biographic details of participants

Participants	Age	Appointment Date	Gender	Language	Occupation
A	40	September 2007	Male	Xitsonga	Deputy Director
B	36	April 2012	Male	Sepedi	Assistant Director
C	36	March 2012	Male	Tshivenda	Assistant Director
D	55	March 2002	Female	Xitsonga	Deputy Director
E	35	June 2015	Female	Xitsonga	Assistant Director
F	51	September 2006	Female	Sepedi	Deputy Director
G	45	February 2012	Female	Sepedi	Assistant Director

5.2.1. Discussion of the contents of the table

The ages of participants range between 35 and 55 and they are all full-time employees of the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism. The duration of their employment ranges between two and 12 years, and they all occupy positions on middle management level in the specific state department. There is a gender balance in the sample that was utilised in the study, namely three male and four female participants. All the participants are Africans who speak different languages. Three of the participants speak Sepedi, three Xitsonga, and one Tshivenda.

5.3. DATA GATHERED DURING THE INTERVIEW

Data was gathered by means of semi-structured interviews which were based on a clear interview schedule. The following table lists the different themes that form part of the interview schedule.

Table 5.2: List of themes

Theme 1	Participants' own understanding of an in-house EAP.
Theme 2	Participants' views on the departmental budget for the EAP.
Theme 3	Participants' perspectives on the departmental EAP policy.
Theme 4	Participants' perceptions on the implementation of EAPA-SA standards and guidelines within the organisation.
Theme 5	Participants' views on aspects that promote an in-house EAP.
Theme 6	Participants' perspectives on how the organisation should implement an in-house EAP.
Theme 7	Participants' views on management support of an in-house EAP

5.3.1. Theme 1: Participants' understanding of an in-house EAP

Participants B, C, D and F showed an understanding of the concept of an in-house EAP and were able to describe it as an employer-funded programme that is used to assist employees with personal and work-related problems. This is supported by the comment of Participant C, who concluded that:

"In-house EAP is a practice whereby services are rendered by professionals appointed by the department, most services are offered within the department, professionals are appointed by the department and refer cases that are out of in-house EAP scope."

Participant A described an in-house EAP as follows:

"In-house EAP is an employer-funded programme which seeks to assist employees with personal and work-related problems which has a potential to affect work productivity. It is actually funded by the employer and it is within the employment sector for easy access."

Participant E described an in-house EAP as follows:

"The organisation employs professionals I that provide all EAP services including the health screening, aftercare services and social activities such as sports, farewells."

The participants understand the concept in-house EAP as a service rendered by EAP professionals. The full-time professionals that are appointed by the organisation render most of the EAP services in the organisation, except for those that are not in the scope of an in-house EAP professionals' responsibility. This understanding is clearly in line with the definition of an in-house EAP by Myers (1984:70), who defines an in-house EAP model as a model whereby the programme is staffed by personnel who are employees of the organisation they serve.

5.3.2. Theme 2: Participants' views on the departmental budget for the EAP

A clear budget is important for the effective implementation of an EAP. Planned activities for the financial year are costed and if the budget is not sufficient, some activities will be compromised and as a result service delivery may be hampered (Public Service Commission, 2006:36).

Participants D, F and G indicated that although there is a budget for an EAP, it is not sufficient. This statement is supported by the following comments of Participant F:

"There is a budget allocated for the programme although it is not sufficient because the programme shares a budget with other components namely, special programme, service delivery and other employee wellness programmes such as occupational health and safety and HIV/AIDS management programmes."

Participants C and G commented that there are barriers in terms of budget allocation. Participant C commented as follows:

"The budget is centralised at head office and that creates a barrier for certain EAP activities. The budget is also affected by the external factors such as the appointment of extended personnel, for example EPWP (extended public works programme), who are not included at the beginning of the financial year when the budget is prepared."

Participant F added on the mentioned barriers and commented as follows:

"We are located within a transformation directorate. There are three sub-directorate under transformation and that is; employee wellness, special programmes and service delivery; and they all share a budget. However, in the beginning of the year we meet and discuss procurement programmes based on our operational plans and divide it as such. The budget is not sufficient, because although they divide the budget equitably, there is a challenge that sometimes by the time you want to implement a certain activity, the budget is consumed by the other sections even though you have shared."

Participants A and B showed more satisfaction on the allocation of the budget. Participant A explained it as follows:

"The little budget we have enable us to reach our goals for each financial year. We have other programmes that are also competing for the same scare resource, but we are able to meet our targets. We cannot complain so far. We are able to share the budget equitably with employee health and wellness, service delivery and special programmes."

Participant D gave an example of an indicator that supports the provision of budget to the programme and made the following comment:

"There is always a sufficient budget that enables us to reach our targets, although it is not enough."

The empirical data revealed that the departmental budget for the EAP is not sufficient. The disadvantage of sharing the budget with other units within the transformation directorate was also confirmed. The participants' views are in line with the findings of Rakepa (2012:114), who indicates that when the EAP falls within another directorate, it may lead to ineffective implementation of the EAP because of an insufficient budget, as well as insufficient human resources, and this has a negative impact on the services that need to be rendered. He further suggested that the EAP must be structured as a directorate on its own and with its own budget.

5.3.3. Theme 3: Participants' perspectives on the departmental EAP policy

For the implementation of an EAP, a clear policy needs to be followed. It serves as a guideline and gives direction to the processes of the programme. A well-developed and implemented EAP must have a policy that was consulted with all beneficiaries and stakeholders, approved by management, and accessible to all beneficiaries in order to address the problems affecting work performance. According to Maseko (2015:28), an EAP policy must describe the function of the programme and its goals in order to ensure that services are fairly applied to all relevant stakeholders. She further indicated that the policy must be in line with EAPA-SA standards and be linked to the functions of the organisation.

Participants A, B, C, D and F perceived the departmental EAP policy as clear and easy to implement, which is confirmed by the following statement of Participant A:

"The department has an EAP policy with clear objectives, addresses the needs of the department and it is easy to implement. The policy is approved and is being reviewed after every three years after consultation with the employees, labour unions and management."

Although most of the participants perceived the departmental EAP policy in the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism as accurate and informative, and that it addresses the needs of the department, Participant G identified certain challenges with regard to the departmental EAP policy when he said the following:

"There is a challenge in terms of accessibility of the policy, because it is written in English and some staff members may not understand the language. Poor attendance to policy consultation meeting to review the policy, is also a challenge."

The study revealed that there is an EAP policy in the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism, which was approved and implemented after all the relevant parties in the organisation were consulted, and which is being reviewed every three years. Although the policy is accessible and available to all stakeholders there is a language barrier, as not all beneficiaries speak English as a first language. This finding is in line with the recommendation by Maseko (2015:135), namely that the policy statement should be available to all employees in the form of brochures or displayed on the notice boards of the companies or state departments.

5.3.4. Theme 4: Participants' perceptions on the implementation of EAPA-SA standards and guidelines within the organisation

EAPA-SA standards serve as a guideline towards EAP implementation in South Africa and should be adapted without compromising the underlying principles. The standards provide a benchmark for the EAP, promote the establishment of a quality EAP, describe the scope of EAP services, and enhance the quality and functioning of the existing EAP (EAPA-SA, 2015:1).

Participants A, D, E and F indicated that EAPA-SA standards are fully implemented by the department and serve as a guideline for the programme. This was specifically confirmed by Participant A when the following statement was made:

"*EAPA-SA standards are being fully implemented by the departmental EAP staff of the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism and it serve as a blueprint for EAP activities. Standards are implemented as it is and issues such as confidentiality and record keeping are highly considered. The departmental policy in the DEDET is benchmarked against EAPA-SA standards.*"

Another participant, namely Participant F, commented that EAPA-SA standards are necessary and also beneficial to other programmes in the organisation. The participant explained as follows:

"*To a larger degree, we are implementing EAP according to the EAPA standards. Standards also assist in implementing other programmes such as HIV and Occupational Health. We are able to use technologies as capsulated in the EAPA standards document. It is helpful as it provides the professional with a map to implement the programme.*"

Participant C identified ethics as an important aspect that needs to be enforced by the organisation during the implementation of the EAPA-SA standards. Although the participant supports the fact that EAPA-SA standards are being implemented, the following comment was added to that effect:

"*The standards are being implemented although the ethics need to be enforced.*"

Participant B identified a shortage of resources as a challenge towards implementing the EAPA-SA standards and commented on it as follows:

"*We are trying our best to adhere to the standards, especially on case management systems although sometimes it is difficult due to the shortage of resources.*"

Participant E indicated that she is still familiarising herself with the standards.

The feedback on this theme is that EAP practitioners and professionals in the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism are aware of the EAPA-SA standards and are implementing these standards. It is believed that EAPA-SA standards are user-friendly and easy to implement, therefore they use them as a guideline for all the departmental EAP activities. This finding is in line with the analysis of Lefakane (2015:96) that EAPA-SA standards are understood by the professionals implementing them and they are being applied correctly in practice.

5.3.5. Theme 5: Participants views on aspects that promote an in-house EAP

According to Azzone et al. (2009:345), organisational factors such as confidentiality, supervisory/management support, programme efficiency, and training promote EAP service rendering. During the study, the participants gave some feedback on their views regarding the factors that promote an in-house EAP and they are discussed below.

Participant B and G identified support from management and management involvement as factors promoting an in-house EAP, and participant G stated the following:

"Support, management and supervisors' involvement in the programme promotes in-house EAP. Supervisors and management must be directly involved in the EAP."

While Participant B indicated that:

"The trust illustrated by management and supervisors towards the programme is the one promoting the programme."

Participant A and F shared the same sentiment, namely that management's contribution and support is crucial for the promotion of an in-house EAP. This is supported by Participant A when stating the following:

"Management buy-in and funding of the programme promotes an in-house EAP. Management should view EAP as a strategic intervention and provide funding for it.

He further indicated that prioritising staff appointment, as well as appointing the rightful skilled implementers of the programme/professionals is important.

Participant C and D indicated that the geographical location of the EAP offices is an important aspect to take into consideration for the promotion of an in-house EAP. The need was identified for the EAP offices to be housed separately from the rest of the staff offices, and the response of Participant C was as follows:

"Accessibility promotes an in-house EAP, because employees will get me when they need me and they know who they are going to talk to. EAP offices must be housed separately from the rest of the organisation because employees don't want to be seen visiting EAP professionals. The one on one counselling services must be outsourced due to the age and cultural barriers that are taking place between the employees and the EAP professional. The departmental staff do not feel comfortable discussing their problems with practitioners of my age and I think it may be different if the professional is from outside the department."

Participant D commented that the location of the EAP offices is important for the successful implementation of an in-house EAP, as it will contribute to the effective utilisation of the programme. The participant formulated the following:

"We have a separate office from the rest of the offices and the designs of the offices promotes confidentiality, because they are structured in a way that when a client is coming to my office, other colleagues may not be able to see him/her. All employees from all levels are free to visit our offices."

Participant D and E added the following points regarding the promotion of an in-house EAP through the marketing and funding of the EAP. Participant E explained it as follows:

"Marketing of EAP services to both management and staff through information sessions with management and staff at various workstations promotes EAP."

Participant D indicated that professionalism, as well as funding of the programme may promote an in-house EAP.

The study revealed that support and trust from management and supervisors, as well as the provision of human and financial resources, are crucial in promoting an in-house EAP. This finding is in line with the EAPA-SA (2005:45), namely that management support ensures utilisation of the programme and will lead to the provision of financial support for the EAP (PSC, 2006:36). The results also showed that marketing, appointment of rightful professionals, and the location of the EAP offices separately from the rest of the departmental offices all serve as advantages that can promote an in-house EAP. It will encourage confidentiality that can lead to the effective usage of EAP services. The participants' views on what promotes an in-house EAP is in line with the findings of Rajin (2012:56), who indicates that when employee assistance professionals are located in the main building of the organisation, it may create discomfort for the employees consulting the EAP. Chabeli (2007:71) supports the idea of having EAP offices outside the main building of the organisation. He also adds that a well-trained EAP professional with enough experience in this field can promote an in-house EAP.

5.3.6. Theme 6: Participants' perspectives on how the organisation should implement an in-house EAP

There are certain requirements that need to be followed to make sure that the organisations are implementing characteristics that guide them on how to implement an in-house EAP. According to Khorombi (2007:61), the following characteristics serve as the main

ingredients: a written policy statement, union involvement, professional personnel, supervisory training, programme evaluation, and top management endorsement.

The participants shared different perspective on this theme. Participant A indicated that the organisation should implement an in-house EAP by taking the following aspects into consideration:

"The EAP policy based on needs assessment, management support to the programme and appointment of relevant EAP professionals to render EAP services are crucial aspects to be taken into consideration."

Participant C further commented on this and indicated the following:

"The department should out-source counselling services and that will address the issues of confidentiality and barriers caused by cultural beliefs."

Participants B and G agreed with each other when they responded on the structure of the departmental EAP of the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism. Participant B summarised it as follows:

"The current system of implementing the in-house EAP is working. A need analysis and climate structure was done. We have three deputy directors at the head office and assistant directors at various districts, therefore we are able to reach clients."

Participant G added the following:

"More staff should be appointed. At least three EAP staff per district will be sufficient to render services."

Participant E commented on the importance of using a top down approach when implementing the programme. Management must be trained to understand the programme and the following was indicated:

"There must be a top down approach during the implementation of the programme. Managers should be aware of EAP services and this could be done through management training."

The summary of participants' perspectives is as follows:
- There should be an EAP policy.
- The relevant professionals should be appointed to render EAP services.
- More staff should be allocated at the district offices to render EAP services.
- A sufficient budget should be allocated to the programme.
- Counselling services should be out-sourced.
- Management should be empowered to support the programme.

The opinions of participants in terms of how the organisation should implement an in-house EAP are in line with the description by Yende (2005:47), who identifies a written policy statement, appointment of professional staff, staffing levels and criteria, having community referral network, funding of the programme, union support, and management support as characteristics of how the EAP should be implemented. The finding, namely that the appointment of effective EAP professionals is necessary to deliver a meaningful service, is in line with the suggestion of Harper (in Maiden, 1999:9). This author indicates that an EAP should be staffed by people who are qualified as psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists and nurses in order to ensure quality services. Chabeli (2007:35) also adds that these professionals must at least have two years' working experience in their field and must be registered with the professional council.

5.3.7. Theme 7: Participants views on management support of an in-house EAP

Management support is important for the implementation and sustainability of the EAP. When management views the EAP as important, the staff will share their view. In a study conducted by Chabeli (2007:61), it was recommended that senior managers must support the EAP and regard it as one of those programmes that, when properly utilised, supports the achievement of the strategic goals of the organisation.

Participants A, B, C, D and F stated that the executive management of the department is very supportive towards the programme. Participant A supported all other participants' views with the following statement:

"*The management are positive about the programme, they attend pro-active programmes, market the EAP to employees, EAP is promoted on executive meetings and financial and human resources are being provided to achieve the goals of the EAP.*"

Participant F supported the above view with the following:

"*Management is supportive of the programme, hence we have resources. We are three professionals at head office and supervising two Districts each. The Districts have EAP practitioners and without management support that would not be possible. The budget is not enough although we always get additional budget when there are critical services to be rendered. We have a private house, gym facility with few machines, a spiritual wellness programme, sports hour, budget for professional development and such things are indicators of management that support to the programme.*"

Some participants did not share the views of the previous participants. Participants G and E criticised management and Participant G indicated the following:

"*Support from management is limited. Management only provide moral support, but failing to provide enough financial resources for the implementation of the programme.*"

The above findings reflected that the management of the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in Limpopo supports an in-house EAP. They utilise the programme and even market it at executive management meetings. Management allocates a budget to the EAP, although it is not sufficient, and always provides additional funds for critical cases when the budget is exhausted. This was also supported by the assertion of Dickman (in Richard et al., 2009:48), who indicates that it is important that management at its highest level declares its support and actively supports the EAP by ensuring that there is adequate financial support for the programme.

6. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the views of participants' regarding the organisational factors that promote an in-house EAP in the Department of Economic, Development, Environment and Tourism were explored, presented and interpreted. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews and the findings of the interviews concluded that there are organisational factors promoting the in-house EAP, but also indicated that there are still some challenges that can be viewed as barriers towards promoting the in-house EAP. Those factors are located mostly within the financing of the programme in the specific department. The participants identified management support as key and financial support as a barrier towards promoting the in-house EAP.

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. INTRODUCTION

Researchers aim to arrive at findings and make conclusions regarding the subject under study. The findings in this study emanated directly from the data as presented by the participants. The previous chapter indicated the results and this chapter will provide a brief summary of the research goals and objectives, themes utilised to collect data, limitations of the study, and recommendations, with the intention of improving the problem under study and for further research.

The researcher is working as an EAP practitioner at the Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure, therefore the rationale of this study develops from the researcher's observation while practicing. The researcher observed that there are certain organisational factors that may promote an in-house EAP. The outcome of the study was based on the research question: "What are the organisational factors that promote the in-house EAP model in the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in Limpopo?"

6.2. RESEARCH GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the study was to explore and describe the organisational factors that promote the in-house EAP in the DEDET in Limpopo. This goal was achieved and the researcher was able to attain information from the EAP professionals on organisational factors that may promote the in-house EAP at the DEDET in Limpopo.

The researched attained the goal by developing and achieving the objectives discussed below.

- **Objective 1:** To conceptualise and describe an in-house EAP and the different organisational factors that promote it.

  The researcher used the person-centred approach as a point of departure in order to conceptualise and describe an in-house EAP and the different organisational factors that promote it. The researcher collected data from EAP professionals regarding their views on an in-house EAP based on their individual experiences, as well as their views on the organisational factors promoting an in-house EAP. Data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews and guided by a well-formulated interview schedule that was based on an extensive literature review of an in-house EAP and organisational factors.

- **Objective 2:** To determine which organisational factors are promoting an in-house EAP programme in the DEDET in Limpopo.

  The literature review that the researcher discussed in Chapter 3 confirmed that there are organisational factors that may promote an in-house EAP. Data that were gathered on the views of EAP professionals regarding organisational factors that may promote an in-house EAP were collected from seven participants and the findings confirmed that there are certain organisational factors that can indeed promote an in-house EAP at the DEDET.

- **Objective 3:** To formulate certain recommendations regarding the way organisational factors can promote an effective in-house EAP in the DEDET in Limpopo.

  The researcher was able to formulate certain conclusions that were based on the outcome of the empirical study and made certain recommendations regarding further research in this field, as well as the possibility of implementing certain changes in practice to promote an in-house EAP.

6.3. CONCLUSIONS

Below are the conclusions of the study.

6.3.1   Theme 1: The participants' own understanding of an in-house EAP

The participants' responses regarding their own understanding of an in-house EAP led to the following conclusions:

- The participants understand the concept of an in-house EAP and their descriptions are in line with the definitions of an EAP as cited in the literature. According to Myers (1984:70), an in-house EAP is a model in which the programme is staffed by the personnel of the organisation they serve. In general, the participants described it as a service in which full-time EAP professionals are appointed by the organisation to render EAP services and refer cases that are out of their scope of practice.
- The participants understand that an in-house EAP is designed to assist employees to deal with their problems which have the potential to affect their work performance, and the services are rendered by full-time EAP professional staff.

6.3.2   Theme 2: The participants' views on the departmental EAP budget

The conclusions that emerged from the participants' views on the departmental EAP budget are as follows:

- Although two participants showed satisfaction with the allocated budget, the conclusion is that the current budget for the EAP activities is not sufficient.
- The EAP shares a budget with other directorates and this may lead to ineffectiveness when rendering certain EAP services, for example clinical services.
- Due to the nature of the services rendered by the EAP, the programme should have its own budget in order to make specific allocations and reserve funds for emergency

services. This is not easy to do when sharing a budget with other directorates within the department.

- Rakepa (2012:114) supports the idea and states that when the EAP falls within other directorates, it becomes ineffective due to an insufficient budget.

6.3.3 Theme 3: The participants' perspectives on the departmental EAP policy.

Based on the responses of the participants regarding their perspectives on the departmental EAP policy, the following conclusions were made:

- The departmental EAP policy is clear and addresses the specific needs of the DEDET.
- Although the participants view English as a barrier, the fact that formal communication in the government department occurs in English cannot be ignored.
- It became evident that some employees do not prefer to be addressed in English, especially on issues that affect their personal well-being. Employees may prefer to be addressed in their home language when discussing certain psycho-social issues, therefore translation of the policies into the departmental staff's various home languages may be beneficial to the programme.
- Policy is the heart of a successful EAP in the workplace. If the policy is able to respond to the needs of the employees and is being received positively by the beneficiaries, it will surely promote the in-house EAP at the DEDET.

6.3.4 Theme 4: The participants' perspectives on the implementation of EAPA-SA standards and guidelines within the organisation

The perception expressed by the participants regarding the implementation of EAPA-SA standards and guidelines were concluded as follows:

- It is concluded that EAPA-SA standards and guidelines are understood by the participants and are being implemented accurately in their entirety by the organisation. The finding that EAPA-SA standards are easy to implement was also discovered in a

study conducted by Lefakane (2015:96), who mentions that EAPA-SA standards are understood by the professionals implementing them and they are being applied correctly.

- EAPA-SA standards are being used as a map when providing EAP services and moreover, they are easily applicable to other programmes within the employee wellness field, hence the DEDET is using it as a benchmark for their programme.

- It is commendable that the EAPA-SA standards are implemented correctly and used as a map for service delivery. EAPA-SA standards encourage the effective implementation of the EAP and this may promote the in-house EAP at the DEDET.

6.3.5 Theme 5: Participants' views on aspects that promote an in-house EAP

The conclusions on the views of the participants on aspects that promote the in-house EAP are as follows:

- Management support and involvement
  The Public Service Commission of South Africa (2006:32) supports the finding that management and leadership commitment are the most important factors contributing to the success of the EAP. This encourages the employees and other stakeholders in the workplace to treat the EAP like any other core programme within the organisation, and may promote utilisation of the EAP.

- Financial support
  The EAP needs funding to perform its activities. It is important that enough financial resources be provided in order to render prevention programmes such as workshops and awareness campaigns, and re-active services such as therapy and debriefing, as well as to procure marketing materials and other EAP related equipment. The Public Service Commission (2006:36) indicates that employers with budgets specifically allocated to the EAP provide more successful EAPs than those without a budget specifically allocated to the programme. This is unfortunately not the case in the DEDET, because the department is unable to provide sufficient financial resources for the EAP.

- Accessibility and location of EAP offices

The EAP offices are accessible in terms of the physical location, although there is a barrier in terms of utilisation. EAP offices at the district offices are housed in the same building as other personnel offices and this may create a barrier, as some employees may not want to be seen visiting EAP offices for fear of being stigmatised by other personnel. The situation is different at the head office's EAP offices, as it was reported that EAP utilisation is high, and this might be because the EAP offices are housed in a separate building away from other personnel offices.

- Marketing of the programme to staff and management

The programme is being marketed throughout the DEDET by both management and EAP personnel. This practice may promote an in-house EAP, because management is influential and able to reach employees of all levels.

- Provision of human resources

All the EAP posts in the DEDET are filled. There is dissatisfaction with the number of personnel per district. According to the EAPA-SA (2015:11), the ideal ratio for EAP staff in a decentralised workforce is one EAP professional for every 200 employees in an in-house comprehensive model. The workforce at the DEDET is decentralised, although the number of employees differs from one district to another.

6.3.6 Theme 6: Participants' perspectives on how the organisation should implement the in-house EAP

The conclusions on how the organisation should implement an in-house EAP are as follows:

- Appoint relevant professionals for the programme.

The department should appoint EAP professionals registered with a statutory body, namely SACSSP or HPCSA, and they must be qualified EAP professionals. According to the EAPA-SA (2015:11), the professionals must have at least a fourth-year level

qualification in either social work, psychology, psychiatry, occupational health, or pastoral counselling.

- Allocate more EAP staff to the district offices.
  Each district is operated by one EAP professional who occupies the position of assistant director. This can be a challenge when a professional is on leave or unable to perform due to some personal reasons. The professionals at the district offices are also responsible for other programmes within the wellness unit, such as HIV/AIDS management and Occupational Health and Safety, and this may overload the professionals with work and cause burnout.

- Budget for the programme.
  Although a budget is allocated to the EAP, it is not sufficient to sustain the programme throughout the financial year. The programme may not be able to attain its goals and objectives within the limited budget.

- Out-source counselling services.
  Due to cultural diversities and the geographical areas of EAP offices in the districts, it is important that counselling services be out-sourced to address the issues of trust, stigma, and cultural beliefs related to the usage of in-house counselling services.

The above conclusions are in line with the elements of implementing an in-house EAP as identified by Khorombi (2007:61) when she specified policy statement, labour union involvement, professional personnel, supervisory training, and programme evaluation as necessary for the implementation of an in-house EAP.

6.3.7 Theme 7: Participants' views on management support of the in-house EAP

The aspect of management support to an in-house EAP is concluded as follows:

- Management support can be proven by the allocation of resources, such as human and financial resources. When such resources are not sufficient, management cannot provide full support to the programme. Management at the DEDET supports the in-house EAP and participates in the activities of the programme. Human resources are provided and this is proven by the availability of EAP professionals in each district and at the head office. Financial resources are also provided, although it is not sufficient. The availability of human and financial resources may benefit and promote an in-house EAP at the department.

- This conclusion is supported by the Public Service Commission (2010:32), which states that in order to improve employee health and wellness, management and leadership should provide the financial support and staff to implement and maintain the programme.

6.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The formulated recommendations are discussed below.

6.4.1   Departmental EAP budget

It is recommended that the EAP be allocated its own budget, as well as an allocation code that is different from that of special programmes and service delivery directorates at the DEDET. All the districts, namely Mopani, Capricorn, Sekhukhune, Waterburg, and Vembe, should also be allocated their own budgets so that they can plan and manage their own budgets. This will enable the EAP professionals in the above-mentioned districts to control their expenditure without interference from other directorates.

6.4.2   Departmental EAP policy

It is recommended that EAP policy be translated to all the spoken languages in the Limpopo Province and be accessible to all employees, including employees with visual impairment.

This will allow employees who are not comfortable using English as a language and those using brail to utilise the policy.

6.4.3   Implementation of the in-house EAP

It is recommended that the DEDET allocate additional staff to the district to implement the programme or alternatively allocate enough financial resources that will enable the programme to outsource counselling services. Currently the EAP at the district is managed by one EAP professional who is also responsible for other activities within the employee wellness directorate, such as HIV/AIDS management and Occupational Health and Safety. The outsourcing of counselling services will address the barrier of underutilisation of in-house clinical services due to sharing office accommodation with the employees. The EAP staff complement at the districts is not large enough to provide both clinical and non-clinical EAP services while managing other non-EAP services. Thus, it is recommended that clinical services be outsourced.

6.5. FURTHER RESEARCH

It is necessary for a study to be conducted to determine the effectiveness of an in-house EAP in government departments, as perceived by management and supervisors in that particular organisation.

6.6. CONCLUSION

The researcher was able to reach the goals and objectives of the study. Conclusions and recommendations were made and are based on the research findings. The findings in this study emanated directly from the data as received from EAP professionals at the DEDET. The researcher was also able to make recommendations for future research.

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