

**PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYEES REGARDING THE INTEGRATED
EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMME AT THULAMELA LOCAL
MUNICIPALITY**

BY

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DECLARATION

I Tendani Constance Malange declare that this mini-dissertation titled, “Perceptions of employees regarding the Integrated Employee Wellness Programme at Thulamela Local Municipality” is my own work. All sources used in this research report have been fully acknowledged and referenced in accordance with the requirements of the University of Pretoria.

I understand what plagiarism is and I am aware of the University’s policy and its implication in this regard.



Tendani C. Malange

DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to my grandmother, Mushanganyisi Tshililo Jenneth, who made me the person I am today and my mother, Malange Mavhungu Doris who taught me perseverance and to trust God at all times. To my son, Dakalo who has been an inspiration for my hard work and my life. Lastly to my sisters, Ndivhuwo, Tshisikhawe and Vhukhudo your unconditional support motivates me to always set the highest targets throughout my journey of life.

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ABSTRACT

The goal of the study was to explore and describe the perceptions of employees regarding the implementation of the integrated Employee Wellness Programme (EWP) model at Thulamela Local Municipality. TLM have implemented an integrated EWP internally with a professional employed by the municipality since 2012. After six years in operation, the perceptions of employees towards the programme and EWP utilisation had not yet been assessed. The study therefore has the potential to draw conclusions and make recommendations that can be implemented to minimise the weaknesses of an internally-implemented programme, while maximising its strengths. The research undertakes to provide an answer to the question: “What are the perceptions of employees regarding the implementation of the integrated EWP at TLM?”

As the researcher intended to explore and describe the perceptions of employees regarding the integrated EWP at TLM, it was appropriate to follow a quantitative approach in this applied research. The researcher explored the goal of the study by means of a questionnaire designed for data collection from the respondents. The population from which a sample was drawn consisted of 501 TLM permanent employees. A combination of stratified random sampling and a systematic sampling technique was utilised to select the sample. A total of 101 respondents (20% of the entire population) were sampled by selecting every third case from the list per stratum. The sample thus consisted of senior management (2), members of the middle management (10), line managers (15), support section employees (34) and general employees (40). The data collected from the respondents was electronically analysed using figures and tables.

The study findings illustrate that employees have knowledge and are aware of EWP at TLM. However, the utilisation rate of some components of the EWP dimensions such as professional and confidential counselling is considerably low (6.06%), thus not tallying with the knowledge levels. A significant percentage of respondents recommended that the EWP unit be elevated to be strategically positioned and to be part of management meetings and organisational change management processes. More visibility of senior management during EWP activities, more marketing sessions of EWP services and training of supervisors were also alluded to. Finally, it is concluded that the research

results answers the research question by indicating that, in general, the employees have positive perceptions towards the integrated EWP at TLM. This is demonstrated through their favour for future use of EWP and high levels of confidence in the programme. Based on the findings of the study, conclusions and recommendations have been made to ensure successful implementation of the integrated EWP in the work organisation.

KEY CONCEPTS

Employee Assistance Programme

Employee wellness programme

Integrated model

Thulamela Local Municipality

South African Local Government Association

Service utilisation

Wellness Programme

Work-Life Balance

ACRONYMS

DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
EAP	Employee Assistance Programme
EWP	Employee Wellness Programme
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SAMWU	South African Municipal Workers' Union
TLM	Thulamela Local Municipality
WHO	World Health Organisation
WLB	Work-Life Balance
WP	Wellness Programme

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Companies have long recognised the benefits of helping employees to lead healthy and productive lives both inside and outside the workplace. The response to this has been to make Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs), Work-life balance (WLB) and Wellness Programmes (WPs) a normal part of the workplace (Kelly, Holbrook & Bragen, 2005:184). Most organisations started with EAPs before the initiation of larger integrated service offerings such as managed behavioural health or general health programmes, which led to the development of Employee Wellness Programmes (EWPs) (Sharar, 2009:12). The author is of the notion that the integrated programme emphasises ways of helping people become more balanced and effective, healthwise, with the end goal of improving workplace productivity. It is therefore essential to design and implement an Employee Wellness Programme that will address the needs of the employees and the organisation, so as to optimise productivity in the workplace.

In South Africa, most employers do not really take time to think through, design and implement EWP strategies that are based on the needs of the employees and the organisation (Nyati, 2013:47). This view is supported by Metsing (2015:iv) who observed that the intention of EAPs in government institutions has been influenced by instructions from the Department of Public Service and Administration rather than implementing a programme guided by employees' needs and EAP professional standards. The author further suggests that this might be the reason why government departments and institutions are still experiencing challenges with regards to implementing an effective programme within the public sector. Nyati (2013:14) is of the view that to eliminate challenges with regards to implementing effective EWPs, it is essential to develop monitoring and evaluation measures in order to determine if the programme is adding value to the human capital strategy and the overall business strategy. Without monitoring and evaluation measures in place, the resources used for the programme tend to not give

the organisation meaningful returns on their investment. One way that could be utilised to determine the effectiveness of a programme is to ask the employees/beneficiaries about its efficacy. The following key concepts were applicable to the study: Integrated model and Employee Wellness Programme.

1.1.1 Integrated Model

Integration in this context refers to “bringing together in a synergistic way, the specialised knowledge and trained expertise of professionals in different but related fields to better serve organisations and their employees” (Gornick & Blair, 2005:3). A model, as defined by Mahlahlane (2003:32), “is a structural plan that explains the manner in which services will be rendered”. Thus, the term integrated model means an organisation’s method of bringing together inputs, management and services of related fields to improve programme implementation in relation to access, quality and user satisfaction. In the context of this study, integrated model refers to the systematic combination of EAP, WP and WLB to develop an EWP as an intervention strategy by the organisation to improve employee and workplace effectiveness.

1.1.2 Employee Wellness Programme

Employee Wellness Programme is:

a set of organised activities and systematic interventions, offered through corporations/work sites, managed care organisations and governmental/community agencies whose primary purposes are to provide health education, identify modifiable health risks and influence health-behaviour changes (Mulvihill, 2003:13).

This approach acknowledges the importance of addressing all aspects that contribute to employee’s wellbeing. An EWP includes mental and physical health, as well as a healthy balance between work and family life in a single solution, rather than in separate silos (Kelly, Holbrook & Bragen, 2005:184).

1.2 EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMME VALUE

Employee Wellness Programme can be viewed as an approach comprising of personal satisfaction, work-life satisfaction and general health. EWP provides different services aimed at balancing the integrated dimensions (physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, occupational and social) of an individual's existence. This broad concept seems to have far-reaching benefits for employees and their families as well as the work organisation, in respect of achieving their goals (Ledimo & Martins, 2018:67). It is therefore essential for EWP to be able to effectively demonstrate its value to the work organisation.

The researcher is of the view that when EWP successfully demonstrates its value within the work organisation, it will gain management support and high utilisation of services by the beneficiaries, and these assist in ensuring that the programme gets adequate resources to be effectively implemented. This view is supported by Jorgensen and Brooks (2007:16) and the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015:26), with emphasis on the importance of conducting monitoring and evaluation for the programme to communicate to the work organisation in terms of what it does as well as providing verified evidence in a format that employees and management understand and appreciate. In addition Beuermann-King (2005: 29) states that when EWP is able to demonstrate its value, it provides the work organisation with assurance that the programme belongs to the world of work and not just the world of health care. The researcher concurs with the author that in order to demonstrate the success of an EWP its value should be calculated. The benefits discussed below can be utilised to calculate and demonstrate the EWP value (Attridge, Amaral, Bjornson, Goplerud, Herlihy, McPherson, Paul, Routledge, Sharar, Stephenson & Teems, 2010:2-3; Ledimo & Martins, 2018:67).

- **Health care value (Direct cost):** Reduced cost associated with employee health plans and employee compensation. EWPs provide employees with proactive and preventative services that assist them to identify and resolve personal and work related issues before they have serious medical, family and/or workplace consequences therefore making financial and business sense.
- **Human capital value (Indirect cost):** Refers to the programme's impact on absenteeism, presenteeism, turnover and employee engagement. When an

employee is suffering from personal/work related problems, his/her productivity will be affected too, resulting in the work organisation incurring financial losses. EWPs are designed to reduce the impact of the psycho-social or physical problems employees encounter in order to reduce the financial impact on the work organisation. Such programmes also assist in reducing the work organisation's cost of replacing valued employees who are lost to occupational and lifestyle illness or injuries. This is due to the fact that EWPs are equipped to prevent, or at least prevent reoccurrence of, workplace incidents or accidents, through providing services that look after the mental health and ability of employees ensuring that they are able to function at a required level.

- **Organisational value:** Refers to reduced cost associated with safety risk management, legal liability, organisational culture change and improved morale. EWPs insures that employees are well taken care of as individuals in order to perform as part of the team, through the provision proactive, preventative and early intervention services. As a result a happy and healthy employee is a productive and effective one. This results in an increase on employee retention since employees know that the work organisation supports them, therefore they feel a connection to the work they are doing and are more committed to achieving desirable results.

An Employee Wellness Programme is designed to benefit both employees and employers. This implies that EWP helps work organisations to address productivity and performance related issues by ensuring an interdependent balance among the wellness dimensions through providing proactive, preventative and early intervention services for employees to identify and resolve any personal or work related concerns that might affect their productivity or performance (Ledimo & Martins, 2018:3). The benefits of implementing an effective EWP resulted in Thulamela Local Municipality designing and implementing the programme in the municipality. The Municipality allocates resources towards the programme; therefore there is a need to demonstrate accountability, provision of quality of services and the overall programme value to the work organisation (Dickman & Challenger, 2009:32). Through the study of exploring the perceptions of employees regarding the integrated EWP at TLM, the researcher was able to evaluate

the programme's effectiveness and user-satisfaction. By systematically collecting information about the design, implementation and applicability of the EWP at TLM, with the intention of formulating recommendations relevant to an integrated EWP, it is possible to ensure successful functioning of such programmes.

1.3 THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY (TLM) AS AN ORGANISATION

The study is conducted at Thulamela Local Municipality, hence it is crucial to understand its mandate as a government institution. According to the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, chapter 2: the term municipality refers to an institution which consists of political office bearers (i.e. the municipal council), administration structure (i.e. municipal employees), local communities and demographic areas within the municipal boundary. The researcher's understanding of a municipality is that it consists of a municipal institution with the political and administrative structures, people who live in the local area, including the entire area which falls within the municipal boundary. The Act further clarifies the legal nature of municipalities as part of a system of co-operative government. The system of co-operative government allows the three spheres of government to work together. The rights and responsibilities of the municipal council, municipal administration and local communities are also clarified within the Act. It is also essential to indicate that the municipal council might consist of different political parties, which is important for strengthening the democratic contract at the local level. Section 155 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996' identifies the following three categories of municipalities:

- Category A: A municipality that has exclusive municipal executive and legislative authority in its area.
- Category B: A municipality that shares municipal executive and legislative authority in its area with a category C municipality within whose area it falls.
- Category C: A municipality that has municipal executive and legislative authority in an area that includes more than one municipality.

Thulamela Local Municipality is a Category B municipality established in terms of the Local Government Structures Act 117 of 1998, chapter 1. TLM is situated within the

Vhembe District in the far north of the Limpopo Province and is the smallest of the four local municipalities comprising Vhembe District Municipality (Thulamela, 2018a: 7-8). It is the most eastern local Municipality in the District, making up 10% of its geographical area. The name Thulamela is a Karanga word meaning 'the place of giving birth'.

The TLM area covers vast tracks of mainly tribal land and Thohoyandou is its political, administrative and commercial centre. In terms of population it is the second largest of all the municipalities in Limpopo Province. The political leadership of the municipality is vested in the Municipal Council with the Municipal Manager as the head of administration.

1.3.1 THE VISION AND MISSION OF TLM

- **Vision:** "We, the people of Thulamela would like our Municipality to achieve a city status by 2030, to promote urban regeneration and comprehensive rural development whilst encouraging Local Economic Development to improve the quality of lives of our People" (Thulamela, 2018a: 6).
- **Mission:** "To build prosperity, eradicate poverty and promote social, political and economic empowerment of all our people through delivery of quality services, community participation, local economic development and smart administration" (Thulamela, 2018a: 6).

The effectiveness of municipal governance depends on various aspects which include political, social and economic factors. The structure, processes and resources also contribute to the effective functioning of the municipality. It also rests upon the skills and motivation of the political leaders, staff and other stakeholders. But performance is also a key factor in ensuring that the municipality is functioning effectively (Bratton & Gold, 2007:44). According to the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, chapter 6: every municipality must develop a performance management system which is informed by the municipality's circumstances and it must be in line with the priorities, objectives, indicators and targets contained in the integrated development plan of the municipality. The performance management will assist the municipality with monitoring and measuring the staff performance, organisational culture, practices and attitudes which inform how the staff works on a daily basis. In addition, Bratton and Gold (2007: 56) indicate that the

municipality must promote the culture of performance management within employee structures to encourage working practices which are economical, effective, efficient and accountable. TLM established EWP within the municipality with the belief that provision of EWP fosters the employee's wellbeing and sustains optimal functioning, which results in organisational culture that is both task oriented and caring (Thulamela, 2015a: 3). Therefore EWP can be viewed as a performance management improvement system through the services offered by the programme. The researcher is of the view that EWP promotes the wellbeing of employees which assists to ensure that the municipality upholds its vision and mission, since a happy and healthy employee performs optimally. Therefore the employees and the municipal structures will follow the municipality motto which is to serve with dedication (Thulamela, 2018a: 6).

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In an attempt to explore and describe the perceptions of employees regarding the integrated EWP at TLM, the programme theory was utilised. A programme theory is defined by Wilder Research (2009:11) as the underlying rationale for a programme describing how and why a programme should lead to the intended outcomes. In addition, Sedani and Sechrest (in Sharpe, 2011:72) indicate that the programme theory:

consists of a set of statements that describe a particular programme, explains why, how and under what conditions the programme effects occur, predicts the outcome of the programme and specifies the requirements necessary to bring about the desired programme effects.

The programme theory can be developed prior to the commencement of the programme, during the operation of the programme, or prior to evaluating the programme (Sharpe, 2011:72). The author further indicates that the development of a programme theory is necessary when hoping to determine why a programme is succeeding or failing and if and where programme improvement should be focused.

The EWP at TLM was developed in 2012 and was directed by the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) EWP strategy, introduced in 2012. A policy for EWP for the municipality was later developed in 2015 and this was intended to give effect to

the concept of integrated EWP, as well as to provide a framework for the implementation of the programme in the municipality. The SALGA EWP strategy and the TLM EWP policy both consist of statements that indicate why, how and under what conditions the programme's effects occur, predict the outcome of the programme and specify the requirements necessary to bring about the desired programme effects. These are characteristics of the programme theory. The researcher is of the view that TLM developed the programme theory for EWP prior to the programme commencement through adoption of the SALGA EWP strategy and during the implementation of the programme with the development of the TLM EWP policy. Through conducting the study of exploring the perceptions of employees regarding the integrated EWP at TLM, the researcher has determined the extent to which the integrated EWP at TLM has achieved the intended outcomes, based on the municipality's existing theory underpinning the programme.

All human service programmes, including the integrated EWPs, are designed to bring a difference and improvement in the lives of people. The underlying philosophy of most integrated EWPs seems to rest on the notion that a healthier employee is a happier one, while a happier employee is a more productive one. In this regard, both the employee and the organisation experience positive outcomes from effective EWPs (Field & Louw, 2012:6). A good programme's theory must reflect that change happens in stages, hence the theory can be based on a series of 'if-then' statements to demonstrate the different stages that would bring the intended change to the beneficiaries of the programme (Wilder Research, 2009:2). To demonstrate the 'if-then' statements among others, SALGA (2012:14) indicates that if the marketing strategies- communicate the integrated EWP, then they would increase employees' awareness of the programme and drive participation. This notion has led to the development of programme logic models, which are pictures of a programme theory that shows how one thing leads to the next, like a flow chart (Wilder Research, 2009:2). Field and Louw (2012:6) and Rogers (2008:33) describe the following logic model that can be utilised to demonstrate an integrated EWP programme theory:

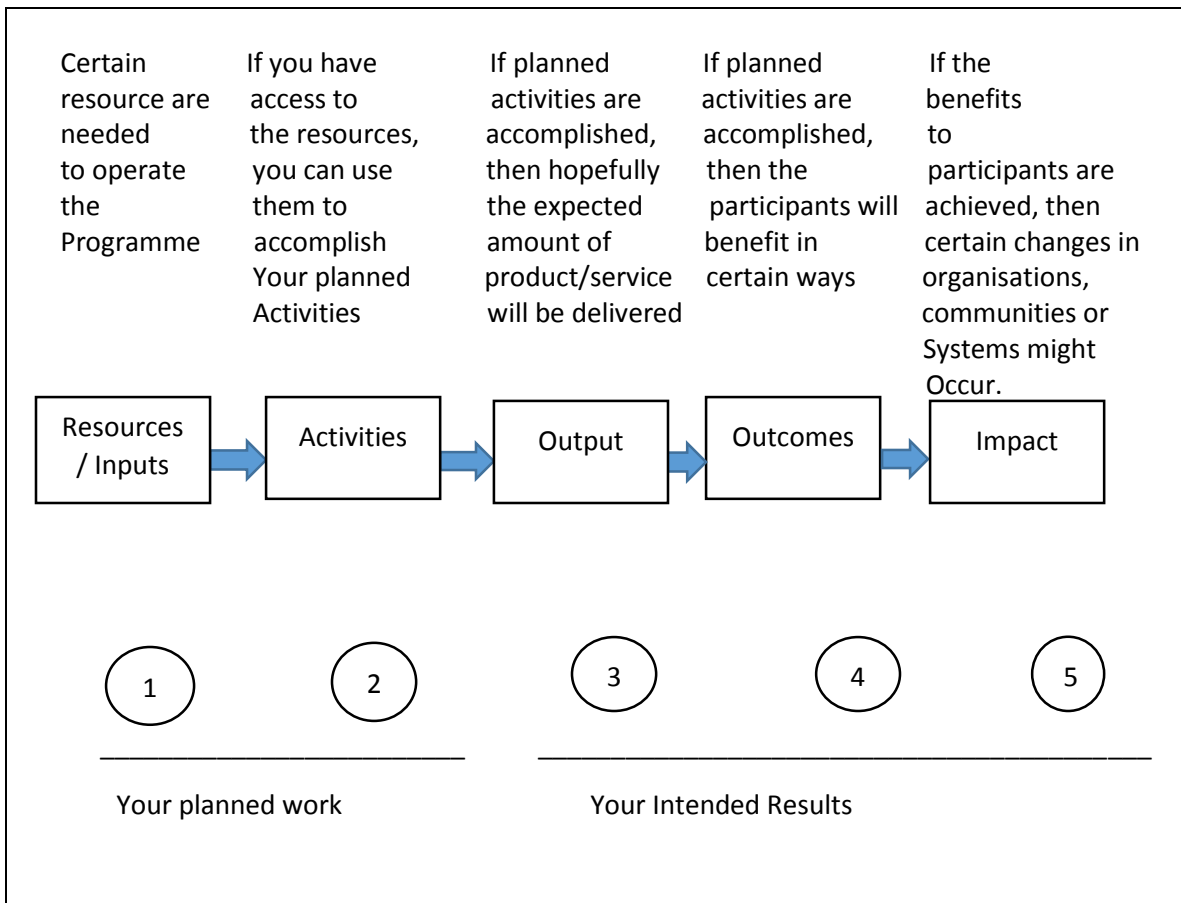


Figure 1. 1: A representation of EWP programme theory logic model

A programme theory logic model can be a very useful way of bringing together existing evidence about a programme and clarifying where there is agreement or disagreement about how the programme is understood to work, as well as where there are gaps in the evidence (Rogers, 2008:33). The integrated EWP at TLM is implemented as an internal programme. Csiernik (2005:78) identifies the weaknesses and strengths of an internal programme. The author for instance has identified poor utilisation of an internally implemented programme due to the beneficiaries' perception of the programme's inability to uphold confidentiality. Therefore the researcher is of the view that, exploring the perceptions of the employees regarding the integrated EWP at TLM assists in determining the changes that could be implemented on the overall programme to minimise the weaknesses of an internally implemented programme, while maximising its strength. The study has established the knowledge of employees about the programme, which in return,

has assisted in identifying the stages of the logic model which influence the under-utilisation of some of the services and draw conclusions to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme.

1.5 RATIONALE AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Since the establishment of EWP at TLM in 2012, the utilisation of the psycho-social service is not as satisfying as the utilisation of the other services such as physical health activities (Makungo, 2016). An exploration of the perceptions of employees regarding the integrated EWP at TLM will therefore assist to ascertain the level of knowledge that the employees have about the programme, which in turn, assists in identifying what causes employees to utilise less of the psycho-social services. The integrated EWP at TLM is implemented as an internal programme which is strongly recommended by SALGA (2012:3). Hence, in addition, this study assists in determining any adverse effects of implementing the EWP as an internal programme in the organisation. The study therefore has the potential to draw conclusions and propose strategies that can be implemented to minimise the weaknesses of an internally-implemented programme, while maximising its strengths.

Monitoring and evaluation have a significant role to play in wellness interventions, as they assist in assessing whether the programme is appropriate, cost effective and meets the set objectives (Department of Public Service Administration, 2010:11). This is further supported by the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015:26), which indicates that “monitoring and evaluation allow the organisation to judge the programme’s progress and usefulness, and to identify the need for programme modification”. Since the development of the programme, it has never been formally monitored and evaluated as a measure to determine its effectiveness and user-satisfaction. One of the ways that could be employed to determine the effectiveness of a programme is to conduct a study which requests the employees’ views about its efficacy. The study, therefore also serves as a monitoring and evaluation tool for the integrated programme that is being implemented within the municipality.

In view of the above, the research question for the study was formulated as follows: **What are the perceptions of employees regarding the implementation of the integrated EWP at TLM?**

1.6 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the study was to explore and describe the perceptions of employees regarding the implementation of the integrated EWP model at TLM. The objectives of the research were the following:

- To conceptualise the integrated EWP as a workplace programme
- To determine the employees' knowledge and awareness of the EWP at TLM
- To ascertain the employees' perceptions about the possible overlapping of services between programmes
- To formulate recommendations relevant to an integrated EWP to ensure successful functioning of such programmes

1.7 RESEARCH APPROACH

The researcher aimed to explore and describe the employees' perceptions regarding the integrated EWP at TLM. This was achieved by following a quantitative research approach. The quantitative approach allowed the researcher to draw precise numerical data measurements. In addition Fouché and Delport (2011:65) state that a quantitative approach is effective in reaching a specific and precise understanding of a well-defined problem. Through application of the quantitative approach, the researcher was able to explore the employees' perceptions of the integrated EWP at TLM by involving a large number of respondents whilst maintaining an objective distance. This is supported by Grove's (2005:23) description of quantitative research approach as an unbiased approach.

The study can be classified as an applied research because the researcher focused on a problem in real practice. According to Neuman (2011:25) applied research offers practical solutions to a concrete problem or to address immediate and specific needs of practitioners. Therefore this study was an applied research as it intended to establish the

employees' perceptions of the integrated EWP at TLM, while the findings to the research will contribute in improving certain components of an integrated EWP model.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopted the non-experimental design which allowed the researcher to pose a series of questions to willing respondents, summarise their responses through percentages and frequency counts, and thereafter draw conclusions about the employees' perceptions regarding the integrated EWP at TLM. The non-experimental design utilised for the purpose of this study was a randomised cross-sectional survey design whereby a questionnaire was designed and distributed to the sample. In addition Fouché, Delpont and De Vos (2011:156) state that a randomised cross-sectional survey design is usually associated with exploratory and descriptive studies which examine groups of people at one point in time.

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted at TLM. The municipal manager had issued an authorisation letter as permission for the research to be conducted (See Appendix B). The population of the study included all the permanent TLM employees. To gather information needed to attain the objectives of the study, the Human Resource section was consulted in order to obtain a list of all TLM employees as per their work position in the municipality. For the purpose of this study the probability sampling with stratified random sampling approach was utilised. Probability sampling provides an equal opportunity for each person in the population to be selected (Strydom, 2011a:228). The researcher was able to divide the population into five strata through utilising the stratified random sampling. This kind of sampling technique was used to ensure that all the different groups such as senior management, members of the middle management, line managers, support section employees and general employees acquired sufficient representation in the sample.

The researcher applied the systematic sampling technique within each stratum, whereby the first case was randomly selected from the strata list. Subsequently, the others were selected according to a particular interval. This notion is supported by Maree and Pietersen (2007:174) who noted that "the manner in which systematic sample is drawn is

systematically moving through the sample frame and selecting every kth element". A total number of 101 respondents which is 20% of the entire population was sampled, whereby senior management (02 respondents), middle management (10 respondents), line managers (15 respondents), support section employees (34 respondents) and general workers (40 respondents) were requested to participate in the study.

For the purpose of this study a structured questionnaire was developed as a data collection tool. The researcher is of the view that utilising questionnaires as a data collection tool is effective and time saving for studies involving a large sample such as TLM with its 501 permanent employees. This view is supported by Torrance (2005:58) with the notion that utilising questionnaires is more efficient for studies covering large demographics and large sample sizes. The questionnaire was divided into four sections, namely Section A: Demographic information, Section B: Knowledge about EWP, Section C: Perceptions regarding the implementation of the integrated EWP model and Section D: Evaluation of the integrated EWP at TLM. The questionnaires were hand delivered to respondents accompanied by a covering letter. Delpont and Roestenburg (2011: 188) indicate that field workers should deliver questionnaires by hand for respondents to complete them in their own time and they can be collected later for data analysis.

According to Monette, Sullivan and Dejong (2008:364) the purpose of quantitative data analysis is "to assemble, classify, tabulate and summarise numerical data to obtain meaning and draw conclusions". Once the respondents had completed the questionnaires, the researcher analysed their responses by entering their responses manually into a spreadsheet. Data coding was included in the questionnaires as suggested by Fouché and Bartley (2011:251) who state that coding must be included in the questionnaire itself and can then be entered manually into a spreadsheet. The data is analysed in descriptive statistics and univariate analysis, whereby the data obtained on one variable is summarised with the view of describing the variable. Numerical data is represented in different forms such as tables and graphic displays.

1.10 RESEARCH ETHICS

“Ethics is a set of moral principles suggested by an individual or group, which is subsequently widely accepted and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards respondents, employers and other researchers” (Strydom, 2011c:114). The researcher wrote a letter to TLM management to apply for permission to conduct the research at the organisation (See Appendix A). After the researcher was granted authorisation by the Municipal Manager and the General Secretary of the South African Municipal Workers’ Union at TLM to conduct the research (See Appendix B and C), she applied for ethical clearance from the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Pretoria and approval was granted (attached as Appendix D). For the purpose of this chapter the focus will be on the theoretical foundation of the ethical aspects the researcher considered for the study and their application thereof will be discussed in chapter three. The ethical aspects considered applicable to the study are discussed below (Strydom 2011c: 315-326; Rubin & Babbie, 2010: 257-260).

1.10.1 Avoidance of harm

One may accept that harm to respondents in the social sciences will mainly be of an emotional nature, although physical injury cannot be ruled out completely (Strydom, 2011c:115). The author emphasises that social research must bring no harm to respondents. For this purpose, the study was not focused on personal/private details of respondents’ lives or anything that is sensitive and has the ability to harm the respondents with regard to their family life, relationship and work.

1.10.2 Informed consent

Informed consent becomes a necessary condition rather than a luxury in social research (Rubin & Babbie, 2010: 257). The authors further indicate that the informed consent should include all the necessary information on the goal of the investigation, duration of participants’ involvement, procedures to be followed during the study and the possible advantages, disadvantages or dangers to which participants may be exposed. The researcher informed the respondents about the study, its goals and objectives so that they could make informed decisions about their participation in the study (Strydom,

2011c:118). The respondents were also informed that their participation remained voluntary and that they could terminate their participation at any time if they did not want to continue.

1.10.3 Deception of subjects or respondents

Deception can occur through misleading, deliberate misinterpretation of facts or withholding information from participants about the study. No form of deception should ever be practiced towards respondents (Strydom, 2011c:119). The researcher did not withhold any information about the study from the participants. Rubin and Babbie (2010: 259) suggest that to ensure that deception does not occur, the investigator should clearly identify herself to the participants and thoroughly discuss the purpose of the study and how the participants were selected to participate in the study.

1.10.4 Violation of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality

Every individual has the right to privacy and it is his or her right to decide when, where and to whom his or her attitudes, beliefs or behaviour may be revealed (Strydom, 2011c:119). In addition Rubin & Babbie (2010: 260) indicate that questionnaires should be completed anonymously without the possibility of relating the responses on the data collection instrument back to the respondents. To ensure privacy and anonymity, the researcher informed respondents not to write any identifying particulars on the questionnaire. To ensure that confidentiality is maintained, information received needs to be carefully guarded (Strydom, 2011c: 120). To avoid breaching confidentiality, the researcher obtained respondents' consent to share their responses without sharing any identifiable information. Information recorded and published cannot be linked to any particular respondent.

1.10.5 Actions and competence of the researcher

“Even well intentioned and well planned research can fail or produce invalid results if the researcher is not adequately equipped and if there is no adequate supervision of the project” (Strydom, 2011c:123). In this view, the researcher attended the Social Work

Research module which equipped her with the knowledge and skills to conduct research and the study was conducted under the guidance of a supervisor.

1.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher did not come across major limitations when conducting the study, however, it is essential to indicate that the study constituted a sample of 20% (101 from 507) of the total population. Contracted employees such as those on internship and Expanded Public Works Programme were deliberately excluded from the study due to an understanding that they might have not utilised EWP services by the time the research was conducted. This posed as a limitation because there are interns who have a contract with the municipality for a period of three years and who have utilised the EWP services over the years, therefore the findings of the study might have been compromised. It would not be appropriate to generalise the findings of the study. Sources older than 10 years have been used, since they contained important information relevant to the study especially in relation to EAP matters.

It was discovered during data analysis that some responses were missing or contradictory, since some respondents would only rate one aspect on the scale or respond to one question and not respond to a follow-up question. An example of a contradiction is for instance: the question would be “how does the respondent view the EWP at TLM?” and the response will be “not effective”, but the same person rates the implementation of the programme as satisfying. These discrepancies were found with only a few responses and therefore did not have much impact on the study. The discrepancies are also outlined in chapter 5.

1.12 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Below is an overview structure of the dissertation:

Chapter 1: General introduction to the study

The chapter concentrates on the introduction, rationale for the study and the research question. Key concepts are also defined in this chapter. The chapter also focuses on the value of EWP, and TLM as an organisation is also discussed from a theoretical point of

view. This chapter also focuses on the goal and objectives of the study, the theoretical framework and a summary of research methodology. A discussion on the theoretical foundation of the research ethics which were applicable in the study is also included in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature review on employee wellness programme

In this chapter the researcher provides an in-depth discussion of literature relevant to the study. The literature review focuses on the brief historical background of EAP, WLB and WP. The chapter also concentrates on the integration of EAP, WLB and WP which leads to the development of EWP. The chapter also focuses on the design of the integrated EWP model and the implementation and utilisation of the EWP at TLM.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

This chapter focuses on the research methodology used to gather and interpret empirical findings. A detailed discussion about the research methods including population and sampling, data collection tool, data analysis, validity and reliability is provided in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Empirical findings

This chapter focuses on the presentation of the empirical research findings about the employees' perceptions regarding the integrated EWP at TLM.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations

In this chapter the researcher draws conclusions from the key findings of the research in the context of the relevant literature. Recommendations are also provided to TLM, based on the findings of the study.

1.13 SUMMARY

Chapter one focused on the general introduction of the study whereby the key concepts were defined. The value of EWP to the work organisation and beneficiaries of the programme was also discussed. This chapter also concentrated on TLM as an organisation, theoretical framework and the rationale for the study. Goals and objectives

of the study were highlighted together with a summary of research methodology. The research ethics applicable to the study were also introduced in this chapter. The limitations that were experienced when the research was conducted were also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter two is a literature review on Employee Wellness Programme. A brief historical background of EAP, WLB and WP is discussed. The chapter will also explore the integration of the different programmes which led to the development of EWP. The EWP design, implementation and utilisation at TLM are also discussed in this chapter. The chapter also focuses on the ingredients necessary for EWP effectiveness and legislation directing the development and implementation of EWPs.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW ON EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMME

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review reflects on the following aspects that are paramount to this study: a brief historical background of Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Work-Life Balance (WLB) and Wellness Programme (WP). The chapter also focuses on the integration of EAP, WLB and WP which led to the development of Employee Wellness Programme (EWP).

The design, implementation and utilisation of EWP at Thulamela Local Municipality (TLM) are also discussed in relation to the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) EWP strategy and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) strategic framework in the public service. The chapter will also look into the EWP Service model used by the municipality. In addition the ingredients to ensure an effective EWP and legislations which underpin the programme in TLM are discussed. A few definitions are also provided in the chapter.

2.2 BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ON EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES, WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND WELLNESS PROGRAMMES.

In the following section, the researcher will discuss the brief historical background of EAP, WLB and WP including programme purpose and services. The researcher contends that for the purpose of this study she has not kept abreast of the details of the evolution of EAP and due to the historical nature of information, the researcher used some old sources as well.

2.2.1 Brief Historical background of Employee Assistance Programmes

Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) were first introduced in the United States of America at Akron, Ohio on the 10th of June 1935. The EAP history is closely intertwined with that of Alcoholics Anonymous (Dickman & Challenger, 2009:28). These Occupational Alcoholism Programmes (OAPs) were so successful in terms of saving money, increasing

productivity and ultimately rehabilitating skilled workers, that it was reasonable to assume that such a successful approach would be effective for other human problems as well. The authors further indicate that successful implementation of OAPs, resulted in employers expanding the programme's thrust to reach families of alcoholic workers and to persons with other living problems. This enlarged scope of OAPs led to the modern Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) known as the 'broad brush' approach in addressing a wide range of personal concerns. This approach basically increases the services of the assistance programme to include marriage and family problems, emotional problems, financial and legal problems, and other problems with drugs in addition to alcohol. This became the typical industrial counselling approach by the end of the 1970s (Dickman & Challenger, 2009:29). According to Sharar (2009:12) the 'broad brush' approach has resulted in EAPs often being integrated into larger service offering, such as managed behavioural health or general health plans.

In South Africa, a structured EAP was introduced in the mid-eighties (Terblanche, 2009:207). According to Terblanche (in Sieberhagen, Pienaar & Els, 2011:2) the first indication of Assistance to employees in industrial context was provided by the Chamber of Mines of South Africa, after it carried out a feasibility study in the mining industry from 1983 - 1985. This feasibility study is a milestone in the development of EAPs in South Africa. It was initiated with the appointment of a social worker, who was primarily responsible for treatment of those miners who were more often than not chronically ill (Terblanche, 1992:18). According to Maiden (1992:2) when EAPs were introduced in South Africa they were modeled after programmes in the United States. This was influenced by the fact that social workers and psychologists, who introduced the programme, had studied in the United States and had attended the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA) and Employee Assistance Society of North America (EASNA) conferences. The author's findings of the interviews conducted with EAP professionals to examine the development of EAP throughout South Africa show that the programme is implemented mostly by social workers, psychologists, labour relation personnel, nurses and medical officers.

Harper (1999:1, 2) indicates that since the 1980s many South African companies have recognised the potential of EAPs to play a role in improving employees' performance by improving their health, mental health and life-management knowledge and skills. Others have considered it a form of 'internal social responsibility' to their employees, especially with respect to the disadvantaged employees whose community psychosocial resources were almost non-existent. This approach resulted in EAPs being viewed as a 'nice to have or convenience programme' by many work organisations rather than an integral part of the business. This observation led to a survey conducted by Harper on Employee Assistance Programmes in 100 of South Africa's largest companies which revealed that EAPs in South Africa focused on supporting and developing the present and potential capacity of employees, their families and communities for healthier and productive lives. Although the research highlights only EAP trends within the organisations surveyed, it is evident that EAPs and the EAP professional's potential is being under-utilised by many organisations in South Africa in their quest to address the priority issues of the day compared to many countries in the global market. Generally EAPs internationally are positioned in the core of the business structure and hence are able to play a more significant role in the business of the organisation, whilst in South Africa EAPs appear to be positioned on the periphery of the organisation, thus having very little influence (Harper, 1999:17).

There is no history of occupational alcoholism programmes in South Africa (Harper, 1999:12). This notion supports Maiden's observation (1992:2) that EAPs in South African work organisations, did not evolve from Occupational Alcoholism Programmes and this has enabled EAPs to develop more rapidly. The author further indicates that although it would have benefitted the programme to recognise addiction knowledge as a 'core technology' of EAP practice, this had a positive impact on the development of EAP as it enhanced the programme to become conceptually more sophisticated in a much shorter period of time. Whatever the reasons for introducing an EAP, companies where the programme has been properly implemented and managed continue to reap the rewards for themselves and for their employees. EAP, as defined by the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2010:1), is

the work organisation's resources, based on core technologies or functions, to enhance employee and workplace effectiveness through prevention, identification and resolution of personal and productivity issues.

According to Du Plessis (1991:35), EAPs were established in South Africa for several reasons. The author further indicates that some organisations introduced EAPs as a strategy to seek alternative ways of managing poor performance. The researcher supports this notion as she is of the view that an employee who is preoccupied by challenges cannot perform optimally because he/she cannot forget about these challenges during working hours. Therefore EAPs can be of assistance in identifying challenged employees and assisting them to resolve their issues to improve productivity. In addition, Attridge (2005:40) states that the purpose of EAP is to identify and resolve workplace difficulties and mental health, marital, family, personal addictions and emotional issues that affect a worker's job performance. EAPs are also viewed as a primary solution to health care cost containment through providing early intervention when helping employees and their families find earlier solutions (Hutchison & Vickerstaff, 2009:35). The main assumption behind introducing EAP in the workplace is usually because of the belief that the programme increases productivity and promotes social functioning of the employees.

An EAP as a workplace-based service is designed to offer employees and their family members the emotional and practical support necessary to function optimally in an increasingly stressful world (Taranowski & Mahieu, 2013:172). The researcher supports this notion with the view that EAPs provide services to individual employees, family members and to the employer/work organisation as a whole. It is therefore necessary for the programme to be designed in such a manner which allows continuous identification of the employers' and employees' needs of EAPs as needs are continually changing. Burke (2004:25) concedes with the view of the researcher and further emphasises that it is naïve to think that the manner in which services are provided today will meet the needs of the organisation tomorrow. Although EAPs will be different from workplace to workplace, they tend to include the following services as applied to individuals and the

work organisation (Attridge & Burke, 2012:24; Masi, 2003:79-83; Taranowski & Mahieu. 2013:172-173).

EAP services to individuals include:

- Clinical Services

An EAP will provide informed assessment, short-term counselling and advice regarding an employee's personal, emotional, family, or other practical problems. Brief clinical support services include referral, monitoring and follow-up. Typically, short-term counselling services offered often range from three to eight sessions in length and may include referrals to other providers if the scope of the problem cannot be addressed during short-term treatment.

EAP Services to the work organisation include:

- Organisational Development/Management Consultation

The EAP provides advice and consultation to the work organisation to minimise risk and promote organisational effectiveness. The EAP provides assistance to managers to help them evaluate an employee's performance and assess the appropriateness for EAP referrals. Other EAP services to the work organisation include conducting Programme Promotion, Education Prevention Services and promoting a Drug-Free Workplace.

- Critical Incident Management

The EAP professional as expected by EAPA standards has to ensure that the work organisation has given careful thought as to how employees are supported in urgent, serious or emergency situations in a timely fashion and consistent with organisational policies.

Looking at the historical background and purpose of EAPs, the researcher is of the view that the EAP was introduced in work organisations as a reactive measure to assist in addressing employees challenges that had already started to negatively impact on productivity and effectiveness within the workplace. Work organisations realized that they are losing skilled labour due to personal and work related problems that the employees are faced with and EAP was introduced as a curative measure for challenged employees. This view is supported by Harper's (1999:16) survey findings which state that:

Nineteen percent of the organisations' EAP intervention strategies were reactive only and five percent of the organisations were involved in only proactive interventions. The former organisations appeared to view the EAPs prime purpose as a resource for addressing the 'walking wounded' and took a residual approach to employee problem management. Furthermore, there was no accent on education, not even for the purpose of heightening problem awareness to encourage early and timely referrals.

The author further emphasised that for EAPs to impact positively on the employee's health, business objectives and strategies they should be proactive, reactive and developmental. The researcher concedes truth of the above as she believes that such EAPs with integrated services and resources will be able to support overall employee physical and mental health. The programme will also provide the work organisation with EAPs offering a broad range of interventions including work-life and human resource initiatives, disease management and preventative programmes.

2.2.2 Brief Historical background of Work-Life Balance Programmes

A growing amount of research has suggested that work and family life are connected and can affect one another (Anthony & Bocchicchio, 2006:92). The researcher concurs with this notion as she is of the view that if employees get overwhelmed with the demands of work, it can affect their functioning and how they relate with their loved ones at home. The impact on productivity at work is also affected if an employee is struggling to balance family life and work. Finding the right work-life balance can make an employee more productive at work while he/she feels more at ease and less stressed at home. The belief that work-life balance is essential to retain skilled labour and improve productivity in the workplace has resulted in employers offering work-life balance options to their employees.

The development of WLB can be traced back to the mid-1970s and early 1980s when the need for work-life services became evident in response to a dramatic demographic shift in the workforce (Gornick & Blair, 2005:11). The way working women attempt to balance their roles in the family and at work has been an issue from about the time of the Second World War when women began to participate in the labour market at a historically unprecedented rate. The authors indicate that the need for WLB was influenced by the women's movement in the early 1970s, with women taking on professional roles in

addition to more traditional clerical and support roles. Those women remained in the workplace after their children were born or they entered the workforce when their children were enrolled in elementary school. Communities were not prepared to care for the influx of the children of working parents. As a result, childcare emerged as a critical issue for families, communities and the workplace. Employers, wishing to retain talented female employees, had to address the need for quality childcare. Without quality childcare, these female employees would not be able to remain in the workforce. The United States federal government sponsored the formation of the country-based Child Care Coordinating Councils (Herlihy & Attridge, 2005:71). The Child Care Coordinating Councils influenced the formation of childcare resources and referral programmes in the corporate world, during the early 1980s. This field grew throughout the early 1990s and eventually evolved into WLB, offering services focusing on helping workers to deal with the multiple demands of their careers while also caring for their children and aging parents. The Alliance of Work-life Progress (in Gornick & Blair, 2005:3) defines WLB as a “specific set of organisational practices, policies and programmes, and as a philosophy that recommends aggressive support for the efforts of everyone who works to achieve success at home and at work”. The researcher defines work-life balance as a strategy implemented by work organisations to assist employees to keep work and personal responsibilities on an equal level so that one does not overpower the other negatively.

Like in the other parts of the world, the South African interest in WLB originates from perspectives emphasising conflict between work and family roles. In addition Potgieter and Barnard (2010:3) noted that one of the driving factors behind the increased interest in work-life balance has been the decreased differentiation between work roles and home roles, particularly with regards to space and time boundaries. Many changes have occurred in the workplace and in South African homes over the past few decades. There have been changes in workforce demographics, family roles, as well as the interaction between work and non-work domains (Aarde & Mostert, 2010:1). As a result there is continued interest in work–life balance issues focusing particularly on married woman entering the job market, dual-career couples and single-parent households.

According to Brink and De la Rey (in Potgieter & Barnard, 2010:2), South African socio-economic, political and societal circumstances influence employees' experiences of WLB differently in comparison with other countries. Employment equity in South Africa is a reality and individuals from groups that were previously disadvantaged and historically excluded have increasingly become part of the workforce and are subject to the influences of westernisation, potentially transforming traditional, culture-specific family roles. Lewis, Gambles and Rapoport (2007:134) acknowledge that gender also contributes to how WLB is experienced amongst employees, for instance, women retain a much closer tie with family care and domestic responsibilities than men. Therefore WLB in the sense of time control is far from gender neutral, as time continues to be experienced differently by men and women.

An effective WLB focuses on “the extent to which an individual is engaged in and equally satisfied with his or her work role and family role consists of three components of work-family balance: time balance (equal time devoted to work and family), involvement balance (equal involvement in work and family) and satisfaction balance (equal satisfaction with work and family)” (Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw, 2003:513). Work organisations need to ensure that they render an effective WLB which include the above identified three components and that they develop policies which make provision for flexitime work schedules, flexi-place or telecommuting, job-sharing, part-time work and sabbaticals or career breaks (Downes & Koekemoer, 2011:3). Such WLB policies allow work organisations to provide the following WLB services as identified by Herlihy and Attridge (2005:78):

- Child care initiatives
- Elder care initiatives
- Flexible work arrangements
- Family participation
- Health and wellness
- Time-off policies that support work/life balance

Through creating a workplace climate that attempts to balance work and life, many organisations explore the various alternative work arrangements to capitalise on the

benefits of WLB. Chimote and Srivastava (2013:72) identified the following WLB benefits according to organisational perspectives: reducing absenteeism and turnover, improving productivity and image, and ensuring loyalty and retention, whereas the employees' perspective highlighted job satisfaction, job security, autonomy, stress reduction and improving health as the benefits of WLB. The researcher is of the view that employees experience work and life as inseparable and intertwined. Therefore WLB policies should strive towards achieving harmony between work and life roles instead of disentangling the two (Aarde & Mostert, 2010:2).

2.2.3 Brief Historical background of Wellness Programmes

An increased focus on the importance of health has occurred over the past few decades, as a result of increased prevalence of preventable illness and multiple health-related international gatherings. In addition, information regarding the specific relationship between personal behaviour and health outcomes has also become increasingly available. As a result of these historical developments, health promotion programmes at the workplace focusing on wellness have been emerging and gaining increased attention since the mid-1970s (Joslin, Lowe & Peterson, 2006:309). According to Csiernik (2005:7) the workplace is a major factor that contributes in compromising the health of the employees. For instance, poor working conditions, long working hours and little regard for the human factor can take a toll on the health status of the workforce. These have resulted in the workplace being identified and becoming a key health-promoting setting worldwide with corporate strategies and interventions directed at enhancing employees' health and well-being through implementing worksite wellness programmes.

Wellness programmes began in the 1970s as worksite-based programmes, essentially being focussed upon fitness centres and activities (Mulvihill, 2003:13). The author further indicates that the fitness focus led to the spread of modern corporate fitness facilities which included occupational and physical therapy along with other rehabilitative services. Later on during early 1980s the WP began to include cardiovascular-oriented blood pressure screenings. This development resulted in the WP being incorporated with the Health Promotion or Health and Productivity programmes (Attridge, 2005:41-42).

One of the foundational beliefs of this field is that it is better to prevent health problems than to treat them later on. The researcher supports this notion with the view that it is easier to stop something from happening in the first place than to repair the damage after it has happened. Through offering health education and promotion activities there's great potential of behaviour change and as a result employees lead healthier lifestyles. Therefore the employee's health is improved and health care costs are reduced. In addition Attridge (2005:43) notes that published research studies have generally found supportive empirical evidence that comprehensive worksite wellness programmes can improve employee health, reduce work productivity problems and increase cost savings. Berry, Mirabito and Baun (2010:4) define WPs as "an organised, employer-sponsored programme that is designed to support employees (and sometimes their families) as they adopt and sustain behaviours that reduce health risks, improve quality of life, enhance personal effectiveness, and benefit the organisation's bottom line".

The literature on the historical background of WPs within the South African context is more limited than from other parts of the world. According to the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA, 2009:4) wellness management as a workplace programme in the public sector emerged as a priority due to increasing recognition that the health and well-being of employees directly impacts on productivity of the entire organisation. It is further indicated that wellness management programmes in the public sector were introduced as a response to The World Health Organisation's Global Plan of Action on Workers Health 2008-2017, which calls for effective interventions to prevent occupational hazards, protect and promote health at the workplace and ensure access to occupational health services. According to WHO (in DPSA, 2009:4) employees represent half the world's population and they are major contributors to economic development. As such it is vital to help them produce at their optimum levels by implementing WPs.

The researcher is of the view that although WPs components vary from programme to programme and organisation to organisation, they usually have the common goals of raising awareness and reinforcing positive behaviours through helping employees to develop tools for behaviour change. In addition Csiernik (2005:34) identified that the motive behind wellness programmes is to identify, prevent, reduce and control

physiological and behavioural health risks before they develop into disabilities or premature mortality. In order to achieve the above-mentioned WP goals, the programme services offered include (Herlihy & Attridge, 2005:72; Gornick & Blair, 2005:18):

- Health Risk Assessments and Screening
- Education Health Fairs
- Behaviour change Programmes
- Fitness activities
- Disability and Disease Management

The above-identified WP services give the researcher an impression that wellness is not static and just about physical fitness. As demonstrated above the programme is structured in a manner that is both proactive and reactive. For instance the physical fitness activities, health education and screening services can all be classified as proactive services as they promote healthy lifestyles, whilst disability and disease management can be classified as reactive services since they provide support to those employees already experiencing challenges. Therefore there is a need for WP administrators to think beyond diet and exercise when offering programme services (Berry et al., 2010:4). The author further emphasises that wellness should be thought of as not merely the absence of illness but in terms of the total well-being of the individual incorporating emotional, social, spiritual, intellectual as well as physical health; healthy behaviour; and supportive environments at work, home and in the community.

EAPs, WPs and WL programmes commonly provide the kinds of interventions that have goals which include reducing health-care costs, improving employee performance and fostering healthier workplace culture (Attridge, 2005:31). The differences amongst EAP, WP and WLB are not very distinctive, although they are based on different core technologies (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA 2010:1) and core practices (Mulvihill, 2003:14,15). However, when they are implemented independently in the same organisation, there can be an overlap of services, which leads organisations to utilise the integrated EWP model. This model is the subject of discussion in the next section.

2.3 INTEGRATION OF EAP, WLB AND WP

Over the years, the integration approach has primarily come to demonstrate the coming together and partnering of varied workplace services with the more traditional employee assistance efforts and core functions (Beidel, 2005:282). The integration efforts were initially motivated by the intention to streamline programmes with similar focus on employee behaviour. The researcher is of the view that integration is convenient because although each programme addresses a different aspect of individual and organisational needs, they have a mutual goal of helping employees to be productive at work and live personally fulfilling lives outside of work. It was believed that bringing similar programmes together will reduce duplicative administrative costs (Gornick & Blair, 2005:21). The authors further indicate that the main idea was to provide a single point of contact for employees and a single contract for employers to administer. Integration can therefore be viewed as a unique opportunity to implement a new programme through exploring the interconnectedness of the three different workplace programmes.

Integration allows for the independent programmes to support each other, for instance, EAP can help WP in avoiding dropout from the programme through enhanced screening, co-management and also referral of new cases (Attridge, 2016:6). This notion contradicts the statement made by the Department of Public Service and Administration (2008:10) that the integration model is a radical departure from EAP, through implementing the wellness management pillar which focuses on proactive and preventative approaches to address individual and organisational wellness. This is because EAP is structured in a reactive manner.

The researcher is of the view that integration is about combining the independent programmes in order to maximise their effectiveness. It is essential to acknowledge that focussing on the core technologies or core practices of one field only can result in integration being ineffective. For instance, when an integrated programme focusses on prevention to promote wellness, this might result in denial of the need for the curative services of an EAP. This could also negatively impact on an employee who is already affected by a particular problem, but is not receiving assistance due to the focus of the whole programme on prevention. This view is supported by Gornick and Blair (2005:21)

who emphasise that the core skills and approaches of each should be maintained, while finding commonalities among the programmes. It is therefore essential to ensure that the service provider of an integrated programme has the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively render the different services from each field. When the EAP, WLB, and WPs are integrated the emphasis must be on both the prevention and early identification of employee problems as these will lower the administrative costs, as the three programmes will be utilised comprehensively.

Integration is good for the employer. This view is supported by Attridge, Herlihy and Maiden (2005:44,45) who indicate that an integrated EWP brings areas of greater efficiencies in overall programme management, less administrative costs due to working with only one, or a few vendors and a greater emphasis on preventative services and early detection across providers. The authors are of the notion that integration creates the opportunity for increased programme participation from cross-referral of employees from one service to another programme, which could offer some operational cost savings.

Integrated EWP is good for the employee, as it could result in increased employee satisfaction by making the use of combined programmes more pleasant and practical. Employees would have one place of contact and would not have to repeat their problems over and over to different people. It could also lead to greater awareness of the full range of services available to employees across the various programme offerings (Attridge et al., 2005:45).

Although integrated EWP has all these benefits, there are challenges associated with it. First and foremost, it requires a comprehensive strategy and effective implementation so that it can achieve its goals, as suggested by Nyati (2013:47). When employers do not take time to think through, design and implement needs-based EWP strategies then the money that they throw into the integrated programmes tends not to give them meaningful returns on their investment. The author further advises that a guiding strategic framework for the integrated programme must be developed before programme implementation commences and the employer must ensure that the customised EWP strategy is informed by the overall business and human capital strategy. The researcher is of the view that developing a customised integrated EWP strategic framework for the work organisation

will combat the challenge of commoditisation, as the programme will be designed with services that are essential to address the particular organisational and also the individual employee's needs.

Another challenge facing integrated EWP is the difficulty in monitoring and evaluation in order to demonstrate that the programme is adding value to the company's human capital strategy, and thereby to the overall business strategy compared to the 'silo' approach. To mitigate the above mentioned challenge an integrated EWP approach must be thoroughly researched and benchmarked with other organisations (Kgomo, 2008:79). In addition Nyati (2013:47) suggests that organisations must invest in conducting baseline organisational wellness audits using various specialised integrated wellness assessment tools for Occupational Health and Safety, Employee Assistance Programmes, Absenteeism, Incapacity and Disability programmes, and Disease Management programmes. The specific outputs from these wellness assessment audits will ensure that the design and prioritisation of the organisation's integrated EWP is based on established unique needs, specific key performance measures and targets that can be proactively set up, against which implementation effectiveness can be established, in order to demonstrate returns on investment.

2.4 EWP SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS

There is not a single service delivery model that fits all organisations (Mahlahlane, 2003:32). The author defines service delivery model as a structural plan that explains the manner in which the programme services will be rendered. According to the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015:8), the following should be considered by an organisation when selecting an appropriate service delivery model: office space and administrative support, locality in terms of anonymity and confidentiality, as well as legal compliance in terms of storing documentation and accessibility to outside resources. There are two main types of integrated EWP service delivery models, namely the internal/in-house and external/off-site models. However, there is also an emerging combination/hybrid model.

TLM provides EWP services as an in-house programme, which is structured as an internal section under a corporate services department within the organisation. According

to Fearing (2000:96) an in-house programme is staffed by a company employee who works with both a supervisor and self-referrals. The EWP at TLM is managed by one internal professional employee who is tasked with the responsibility of implementing the programme. According to Thulamela Municipality (2015a:10) the EWP is a free benefit to all employees and their immediate family members. However should there be a need for services beyond in-house services, such as rehabilitation the EWP Professional must make an effort to refer the employee or immediate family member to an external service provider and if costs are incurred it will be the responsibility of the employee concerned. The findings of the research undertaken in 2010 with a sample of twenty seven municipalities indicated that only six municipalities sampled the provided EWP services and the programme was received positively by the employees. These findings also indicate that in some of those six Municipalities with EWP, the demand exceeded the existing internal capacity (SALGA, 2012:3). Based on the above-mentioned findings and the Thulamela EWP Policy provisions it is essential for the researcher to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of in-house and off-site EWP service delivery models.

2.4.1 Advantages of the in-house model

Csiernik (2005:78) indicates the following strengths of an internally implemented programme: organisational cost savings, immediacy of response to critical incidence, knowledge of organisational policies and procedure, as well as quicker response to organisational changes. According to the researcher an internally positioned EWP can deliver high quality organisational services which are designed for that specific organisation because of the EWP Professional's in-depth organisational culture knowledge.

2.4.2 Disadvantages of the in-house model

The employees may not utilise an internally implemented EWP due to fear that the management and colleagues will learn of their problems and hold that against them (Csiernik, 2005:78). To address the employees' fears, TLM listed confidentiality as one of the EWP principles, whereby the EWP professional is obligated to maintain confidentiality of information shared during consultations with the employee, except when

disclosure is required in terms of law (Thulamela Municipality, 2015a:8). The researcher is also of the view that the EWP professional rendering the programme services must be a Social Worker registered with the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) and EAPA-SA, therefore any breach of confidentiality will be a violation of the professional code of ethics.

Csiernik (2005:78) also identified the following weaknesses that negatively impact on the implementation of an internal programme: staffing that may not be adequate to meet organisational diversity and a greater cost per employee influenced by replication of resources available in the community. The researcher is of the view that although an in-house model is expensive it does not mean it brings less benefits to the organisation. This notion is supported by Collins (2003:27) who indicates that it would be a mistake, however to attribute the triumph of the network model over the on-site model to cost alone. Although the in-house model is expensive to the organisation it can also save costs through early identification and intervention to assist a troubled employee. The immediate intervention helps to prevent deterioration of productivity and thus saving costs to the organisation. Some of the costs that the organisation encounters when providing an in-house model can be reduced once the EWP professional identifies community resources where employees can receive assistance.

2.4.3 Advantages of off-site Model

According to Fearing (2000:97), an off-site model refers to an external programme run by an outside agency which is under contract to provide most EWP services, including assessment. Csiernik (2005:78) provides the following features as the advantages of an external service delivery model: organisational cost savings, greater use by senior management/executives, off-site locations promote feelings of confidentiality which influences high self-referrals, wider range of clinical resources and greater likelihood of providing longer hours for access. The external service delivery model also emphasises and is more experienced in the marketing of services and self-promotion.

2.4.4 Disadvantages of Off-site Model

One of the disadvantages of an external service delivery model is the necessity for profit margin to maintain operations, which has resulted in the programme becoming commoditised (Gornick & Blair, 2005:21). In addition Csiernik (2005:78) identified the following as weaknesses of an off-site model: less awareness of organisational culture, slower response time to an immediate crisis or critical incident and capped services which result in increased costs if the threshold utilisation rate is surpassed. Fewer supervisor consultations and informal contacts by the external service provider can impact on early identification and referral of challenged employees. The researcher is of the view that to address the above possibilities organisations implementing EWP through an off-site model should consider utilising hybrid/combined service delivery models, with either an internal EWP coordinator or professional who has a better understanding of the organisation's internal procedures.

According to Attridge (2012:446), the hybrid/combined service delivery model shares elements of both the other models and it usually has a full time EWP staff, resident at the host organisation, while it also has an external contact person involved in the delivery of the services. Csiernik (2005:80) indicates that combined internal and external programmes utilise a mix of resources, including referral agents, union counsellors, self-help groups, an EAP coordinator and short-term counselling specialists who are integrated with external providers and work with long-term or very specific issues such as violence and trauma, compulsive behaviours or identified substance-abusers. The author is also of the view that the disadvantages inherent in both the internal and external models can be minimised by using dual pathways. The internal EWP professional may be the primary liaison with the external provider, oversee quality assurance issues, conduct management consultations, serve as a trainer for EWP topics and serve on various task forces. The external provider provides direct client services, assessment, clinical interventions and related services. Some institutions assign this internal role to the Human Resource generalist as a collateral duty, but it is best served by someone qualified to serve as an EWP professional who has solid understanding of substance abuse,

mental health, productivity issues as well as skills in management consulting (Prevatt, 2009:374).

2.5 THE EWP AT TLM

TLM defines EWP as a planned, systematic programme designed to provide professional assistance to all employees and their immediate families, who may be experiencing, among others, alcohol, drug, emotional or personal problems including work related, health, marital, stress, financial, traumatic, legal and other personal concerns (Thulamela Municipality, 2015a:4).

2.5.1 THE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EWP AT TLM

The purpose and the objectives of TLM EWP are stipulated in the Municipal policy, (Thulamela Municipality, 2015a:5-6) as set out below:

- To provide a comprehensive assistance programme that will address employees' personal and workplace problems that negatively impact on productivity
- To provide confidential psycho-social interventions for employees who seek to address work and personal problems which can adversely impact on productivity and service delivery
- To reduce unnecessary costs due to employee's problems
- To enhance employees' resilience and coping skills
- To enhance productivity
- To enhance social functioning
- To promote healthy life styles
- To promote a safe and healthy environment for all employees
- To improve the morale and attitudes of employees
- To prevent absenteeism and promote staff turnover

2.5.2 THE DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND SERVICES OF THE EWP AT TLM

The EWP at TLM recognises the Department of Public Service and Administration's Employee Health and Wellness strategic framework (2008). This framework originated as an attempt by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) to develop an

innovative solution in maintaining employee dignity. The EWP at TLM only implements two of the four pillars identified by the DPSA, namely the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and Tuberculosis (TB) Management pillar and the Wellness Management pillar. To implement the HIV & AIDS and TB management pillar, the EWP at the municipality conducts health-risk assessments, which help employees to manage their own health care and allow the municipality to control health-care costs to the organisation (SALGA, 2008:10).

The Wellness Management pillar strives to meet the health and wellness needs of public service employees, through preventative and curative measures, by integrating relevant programmes such as EAP, WP and WLB (Department of Public Service and Administration, 2008:31). SALGA (2012:6-7) indicates that the integrated EWP implements the Wellness Management pillar through dividing it into five different dimensions of EWP which include spiritual, emotional, physical, intellectual and social wellness. Csiernik (2005:5,6) supports this notion with the belief that the concept of wellness or optimal health involves an interdependent balance among the above mentioned dimensions of EWP. The EWP dimensions and their services are briefly discussed below (SALGA, 2012:5,6; Csiernik, 2005:5,6):

- **Spiritual Wellness Dimension:** This wellness dimension is closely equated with the Maslow's concept of self-actualisation. Spiritual wellness provides an opportunity to practice living life with balance within the body, mind and spirit. The key characteristics of spiritual wellness include the ability to love, feel a sense of purpose, to be charitable and caring towards others, to enjoy inner peace and to mediate. Van Wyk (2016:60) has identified the following ways in which spirituality services can be offered at the workplace: chaplaincy, pastoral care and counselling. In addition Karakas (2010: 90, 94) identified the following activities that the work organisation can initiate to provide spiritual wellness services to the employees: prayer groups, forming interfaith dialogue groups, reflective or contemplative sessions, mediation and yoga sessions.

- **Emotional Wellness Dimension:** This dimension is also referred to as the psychological wellness which involves the ability to maintain control over emotional states in response to life events. It is associated with stress management and responses to emotional crises. An employee with emotional wellness balance is attentive to his/her thoughts, feelings and behaviours, whether negative or positive and has the ability to form and maintain interdependent relationships with others based upon a foundation of mutual commitment, trust and respect. The researcher is of the view that to provide emotional wellness dimension services the EWP should provide the Clinical services as described by the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015:15-20). The Clinical Services include: critical incident management, crisis intervention, case assessment, short-term intervention, referral, case monitoring and evaluation aftercare and reintegration.
- **Physical Wellness Dimension:** Physical wellness is concerned with developing personal responsibility for one's own health care. This dimension promotes optimal physical wellness through developing a combination of proactive activities which include physical activity/exercise, healthy eating habits and behavioural change programmes. According to the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015:21) proactive activities could include: awareness campaigns, wellness days, posters, workshops, information sessions, seminars, training, HCTs and health-risk screening. EWP at TLM hosts an annual wellness day, quarterly wellness screenings, awareness campaigns and workshops (Thulamela Municipality, 2015b:9). To promote physical wellness employees take part in different sports activities such as soccer, netball, table tennis etc. on Wednesdays as it is provided for by the municipality workplace sports and recreation policy (Thulamela Municipality, 2015c:4).
- **Intellectual Wellness Dimension:** This dimension is all about engaging individuals in creative and stimulating mental activities to expand their knowledge and skills. Intellectual wellness encourages employees to think clearly, independently and critically. Intellectual wellness can be attained through

education, achievement, role fulfillment and career development. To implement the intellectual wellness dimension EWP at TLM provides supervisory consultations and training services. One of the objectives of providing such services includes building and strengthening individual and organisational skills and competencies (the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015:22). The supervisory training content includes amongst others aspects such as procedures for referring employees who are experiencing job-performance problems, prevention programmes according to identified risk areas and capacity building to empower both employees and management.

- **Social Wellness Dimension:** This wellness dimension involves social systems that include the following: family, work, school, religious affiliation, social values, customs, social supports and the ability to interact effectively with others. Social Wellness entails the ability to establish and maintain appropriate relationships among family, friends, colleagues and communities. Through this dimension individual employees are able to achieve balance between work, leisure time, sustaining meaningful relationships and accomplishing role-fulfillment. To achieve Social wellness EWP provides WLB services. The EWP services at TLM are also extended to the employees' immediate families at no cost (Thulamela Municipality, 2015a:10).

SALGA (2008:7,8) identified the following summary of services as being offered by the EWP which encompasses the above-identified Wellness Dimensions:

- Professional and confidential counselling
- Health and risk assessment
- Critical incident and trauma support
- Financial Wellness Management
- HIV/AIDS, TB, chronic and lifestyle-related disease management
- Supervisory consultations and training
- Sports and Recreational activities
- 24/7 phone service to employees and immediate family for various crises

2.5.3 UTILISATION OF THE EWP IN TLM

Since the establishment of the programme in 2012, monthly reports indicate that the psycho-social services are under-utilised, when compared to the other services provided by the programme (Makungo, 2016). It was further indicated that the level of participation in the other services such as health and risk assessments is high when incentives are offered to those who participate in the programme. The areas typically managed by the EWP include personal and work-related issues, conflicts and relationship issues, eldercare, childcare and parental issues, harassment, addictions, life transitions, financial or legal issues, work-life balance and team building. The employees and their immediate family members can access the programme through self, informal or formal referrals (SALGA, 2008:5).

Since the establishment of the programme in 2012 its utilisation has not been evaluated. For the purpose of this study, the researcher reviewed internal TLM EWP quarterly report documents for three consecutive financial years namely: 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/17. The duration of financial year for TLM is twelve months starting from the first of July every year until the thirtieth of June the following year. An illustration of TLM EWP service utilisation based on the quarterly report documents reviews for the above-mentioned financial years is presented in the figures below:

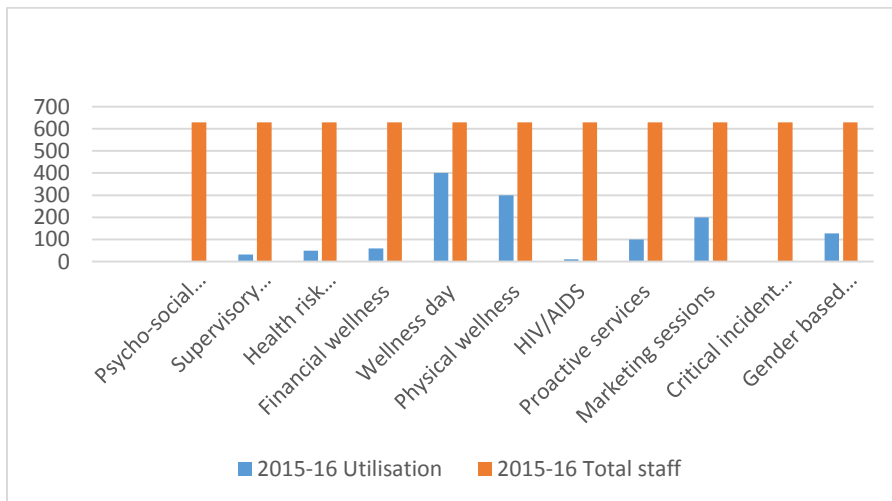


Figure 2. 1: Illustration of TLM Service Utilisation 2015/2016

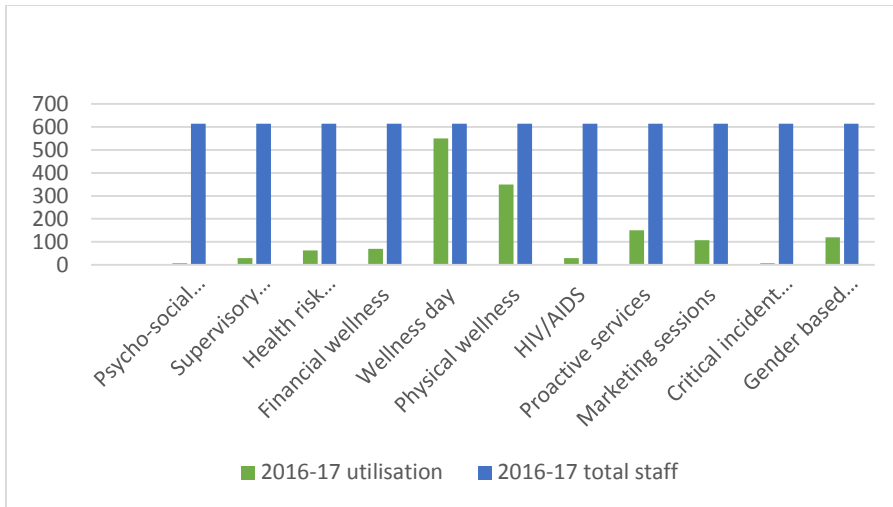


Figure 2. 2: Illustration of TLM Service Utilisation 2016/2017

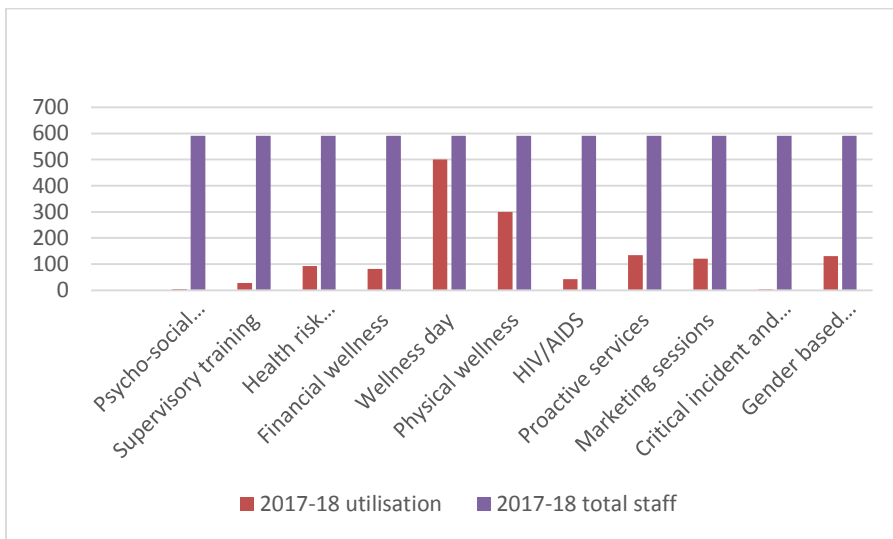


Figure 2. 3: Illustration of TLM Service Utilisation 2017/2018

EWP Services	2015-16			2016-17			2017-18		
	Utilisation	Total staff	%	utilisation	total staff	%	utilisation	total staff	%
Psycho-social wellness	2	629	0%	7	614	1%	4	591	1%
Supervisory training	32	629	5%	30	614	5%	28	591	5%
Health risk assessment	50	629	8%	63	614	10%	93	591	16%
Financial wellness	60	629	10%	70	614	11%	81	591	14%
Wellness day	400	629	64%	550	614	90%	500	591	85%
Physical wellness	300	629	48%	350	614	57%	300	591	51%
HIV/AIDS	10	629	2%	30	614	5%	42	591	7%
Proactive services	100	629	16%	150	614	24%	134	591	23%
Marketing sessions	200	629	32%	108	614	18%	121	591	20%
Critical incident and trauma support services	2	629	0%	7	614	1%	3	591	1%
Gender based services	127	629	20%	120	614	20%	131	591	22%

Table 2. 1: Description of TLM EWP Service Utilisation

The quarterly reports confirm what has been indicated above, that the utilisation of the EWP psycho-social services is low, with a maximum of 1% and 4% for the 2016/17 and 2017/18 financial years respectively (Thulamela Municipality, 2017a; Thulamela Municipality; 2018). Low utilisation of the EWP psycho-social services since the programme's inception has influenced the decision to target one psycho-social case to be reported per quarter, therefore a total of four psycho-social cases annually in the Municipal Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan 2017/18 (Thulamela Municipality, 2017b).

According to Berry et al., (2010:3) the possibility of finding employees who do not participate in the EWP is high. Such employees give different reasons for their lack of participation in the programme including: lack of time, little perceived benefit, or just a distaste for exercise. Others don't know about available programme services or blame unsupportive managers. A few think their health is none of the company's business or they mistrust management's motives. The authors suggest that management involvement in the programme activities can positively contribute in influencing programme utilisation by the employees. Makungo (2016) supports this notion citing that the activities in which the management also participates have high utilisation by the employees on all levels.

For instance the annual wellness day in which the mayor participates is one of the highly utilised programme services. Employees' participation in the Wellness day activities reached 90% of the employees (Thulamela Municipality, 2017). In addition Berry et al., (2010:3) indicate that EWPs like any other worthwhile initiative of creating a culture of health and wellness needs passionate, persistent, and persuasive leadership. If the management makes time for exercise, for instance, employees will feel less self-conscious and start utilising such programme services.

2.6 INGREDIENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE EWP

Work organisations introduced EWP with the notion that the programme is a strategic plan to prevent disease, decrease health risks and contain rising healthcare costs (Attridge, 2005:42-43). The author further indicates that the motivation to implement EWP is for employees to stay well rather than to become sick. This work organisation's intention demonstrates that employers care about their employees and the quality of their lives, which in turn impacts positively on job performance. In addition McDonald (2005:12) indicates that implementing such programmes results in sound business investment, since it has benefits which include a reduction in direct and indirect costs. For instance overtime payments for staff to cover for an employee who is absent from work due to an illness or personal problems are minimised.

Other benefits of an effectively implemented programme include an increase in retention of employees, reduction of employee stress and associated problems and it assists to aid recruitment since an organisation that provides health and wellness benefits will become an employer of choice in today's competitive markets. Healthy employees will be fit to build a healthy organisation since they appear to be enjoying life more, have better coping skills, are more enthusiastic and productive, and have a positive outlook on life in general (McDonald, 2005:12-13) The researcher is of the opinion that for work organisations to achieve higher returns on investment and maximise the benefits of implementing EWPs, the programme should be designed in a manner that will ensure its effectiveness. Berry et al., (2010: 3-8) identified the following six pillars of a successful, strategically integrated wellness programme regardless of the organisation's size:

- **Multilevel Leadership:** Management endorsement and active involvement of the highest corporate structure is necessary for EWP to be successful.
- **Alignment:** EWPs should be a natural extension of a firm's identity and aspirations. The programme should be designed to address the organisational and employee's needs.
- **Scope, Relevance, and Quality:** Wellness programmes must be comprehensive, engaging, and just plain excellent. Otherwise, employees won't participate.
- **Accessibility:** Aim to make low or no-cost services a priority. EWP Service delivery model costing should ensure convenience for the organisation and individual employees. Confidentiality should be ensured at all times for EWP to be successful.
- **Partnerships:** Active ongoing collaboration with internal and external stakeholders can provide the programme with some of its essential components and many of its desirable enhancements.
- **Communications:** Wellness is not just a mission it is a message. How you deliver it can make all the difference. A proper marketing strategy will ensure that the EWP is highly visible and is presented in a positive light to encourage targeted beneficiaries to utilise the programme.

2.7 LEGISLATION GOVERNING THE TLM EWP

A number of Public Service legislations, legal frameworks, codes of good practice and policies have been developed to assist organisations in the development and management of EWPs. Despite the fact that no specific EWP legislation has been formulated in South Africa to date, there are various legislations and labour acts that have launched drives for the establishment of EWPs and can assist in regulating the programme implementation. The details of these regulations will be discussed below.

2.7.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996'

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996' is regarded as the supreme law of the country, therefore all the other laws must comply with it. The Bill of Rights within

the constitution provides that every person has a right to equality and non-discrimination, privacy, fair labour practices, and access to information. The constitution has therefore compelled organisations, companies and government departments and entities to have EWPs available in the workplace.

Section 24 (a) of the constitution further states that everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to his/her health or well-being. In addition Section 27(1) (a) indicates that everyone has the right to health care services. This is further supported by the Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993, section 18: which states that “health and Safety representatives must be appointed in the workplace”. Their duties amongst others are to identify potential hazards and to make recommendations to the employer in relation to minimising or eliminating such hazards. The EWP Professional can be one of the representatives to fulfill these duties within the workplace and to ensure that these rights are realised while providing organisational consultations services.

2.7.2 Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997.

The purpose of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997, is to give effective rights to fair labour practices as referred to in Section 23 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996’, through making provision for the regulation of the basic conditions of employment. This Act describes in detail the working conditions such as working hours, leave, public holidays, and termination of employment, job information, payments, forced labour and enforcement of the law. Proper application of this act ensures that the employers adhere to prescribed working conditions in order to enable the employee to attain his/her full potential and be productive. Therefore despite all the personal and work related challenges an employee may be experiencing, the presence of an EWP can assist in creating an atmosphere within the work environment through developing intervention strategies that employees can implement to cope with their challenges. EWP can advocate for employees to ensure attainment of work-life balance through proper application of the provisions of this Act.

2.7.3 The Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995.

Labour relations Act 66 of 1995, aims to regulate the relationship between the employer, employee and trade unions. This Act also regulates the resolution of disputes between the employers and employees and sets out the rights of work with regard to dismissals. Schedule 8 of this Act provides guidelines for the management of employees who are poor performers as well as incapacitated employees. It further indicates that for certain kinds of incapacity such as alcoholism or drug abuse, it recommends that the employer should consider providing counselling and rehabilitation as a corrective measure, which implies the need for EWP in the workplace. The Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995, section 11: discusses the importance of union representatives as a way to involve employees in decision making. The EWP can fulfil this provision through establishment of an advisory committee which involves representatives from all segments within the workplace including unions as recommended by the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2010:22).

2.7.4 The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998.

The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, aims to promote an equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through anti-discrimination measures and affirmative action provisions. Chapter three of this Act specifically indicates non-discrimination due to HIV/AIDS status. According to the Act, employers are not allowed to test employees or applicants for employment to determine the person's HIV status unless the testing is determined to be justifiable by the labour court. The court may impose a provision for pre and post testing counselling and maintenance of confidentiality during the period which the authorisation for testing applies. HIV and AIDS is one of the important aspects covered in EWP services, therefore this Act gives guidelines to the provision of EWP service delivery in relation to HIV and AIDS.

2.7.5 The Public Service Regulation of 2016.

The Public Service Regulation of 2016 is the regulatory framework of the Public Service, which is primarily regulated by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996' and the Public Administration Management Act 11 of 2014. Part 3 of the regulation focusses on the working environment with section 53 mandating the employer to maintain a healthy

and safe workplace. The Employee Health and Wellness aspect is discussed in the Public Service Regulation of 2016, section 54: whereby it is specifically stipulated that “every department shall have a policy that promotes the health and well-being of employees”. To fulfil the provisions of the Public Service Regulation, TLM, as a local sphere of the government with public servants, has established and implements an integrated EWP to promote health and well-being of employees.

2.7 SUMMARY

Chapter Two focussed on the shift from EAP which was recognised as a reactive programme, initially developed by work organisations with the intention of retaining valuable employees and increasing productivity, to an integrated EWP which consists of both proactive and reactive services offered to the work organisation, employees and immediate family members. The development and effective implementation of EWPs resulted in workplace programmes intended to assist employees with what was referred to as a soft and a ‘nice to have’ benefit to later be recognised as part of the organisation’s overall health care strategy. This is demonstrated by the development of government legislations and regulations which have influenced work organisations to develop customised policies and programmes that will address the needs of the organisation and employees.

Chapter Three will focus on the research methodology used in the study to gather and interpret the empirical research findings.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter three provides information about the research methodology applied in the research project. It includes a detailed discussion about the steps the researcher took to gather and interpret data to address the research question. The research approach, type of research and design are also discussed in this chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

The quantitative research approach was appropriate to explore and describe the employees' perceptions regarding the integrated EWP at TLM. Maree and Pietersen (2007:145) define quantitative research as a process that is systematic and objective in usage of numerical data from only a selected subgroup of a universe to generalise the findings to the universe that is being studied. In addition Cresswell (in Fouché & Delport, 2011:64) states that quantitative research is an enquiry into a social or human problem measured with numbers and analysed with statistical procedures. The researcher selected the quantitative approach because it allowed her to draw objective and precise numerical data measurements of the employees' perceptions towards the EWP implemented within the municipality.

Quantitative research is classified as a structured approach, therefore, the researcher had to plan everything that forms part of the research in detail, such as the objectives, samples, data collection methods and measuring instruments, before the actual research could take place (Fouché & Delport, 2011:64; Babbie, 2010:34). Employing the quantitative research approach allowed the researcher to remain objective throughout the study. This is supported by Fouché and Delport (2011:63) who state that quantitative researchers choose methods that allow them to objectively measure the variables of interest and they also remain detached from the research respondents, hence they are able to draw unbiased conclusions.

3.3 PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The primary purpose of exploratory research is to examine a less understood phenomenon, to develop preliminary ideas and to move towards refined research questions by focussing on the “what” question (Neuman, 2011:33). Marlow and Boone (2005:34) further indicate that both a qualitative and a quantitative approach are appropriate when conducting exploratory research. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of employees regarding the implementation of the integrated EWP at TLM. The integrated EWP model is relatively new in the municipality as it has been implemented for only six years. The researcher wanted to gain more comprehensive understanding of the employees’ perceptions regarding the implementation of the programme. This is supported by Babbie (2013:90), who indicates that exploratory research typically occurs when a researcher examines a new interest, or when the subject of the study itself is relatively new.

The researcher is of the view that although exploratory research is regarded as not being useful for decision making purposes, its ability of seeking to explain what is happening in a specific situation is more significant. Neuman (2011: 34) is of the notion that exploratory research creates a general mental picture of conditions and assists in the development of techniques for measurement and locating future data. Therefore, through exploring the perceptions of employees regarding the integrated EWP at TLM, the study ascertains the employees’ EWP knowledge and perceptions as such, and the findings will contribute to improve certain components of an integrated EWP model.

3.4 RESEARCH TYPE

Neuman (2011:23) classifies research into two types, namely, applied and basic research. Basic research is designed to advance fundamental knowledge about how the world works and to test theoretical explanations. Similarly, Monette et al. (2008:5) state that the purpose of basic research is to advance knowledge about human behaviour, with little concern for the immediate, practical benefits.

Applied research, according to Fouché and De Vos (2011:95), is designed to offer solutions to specific problems in practice. In addition Neuman (2011: 25) indicates that

those doing applied research aim to address specific concerns or to offer solutions to the problems of their employer, an organisation they are affiliated with, or their community. Based on this distinction between basic and applied research, the study used the applied research type, as it intended to establish the perceptions of employees regarding the integrated EWP model at TLM, this will enable the work organisation to make changes in the programme, if it is not achieving the intended purpose. Therefore the research findings have the potential to contribute to improve certain components of the integrated EWP model.

3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is “the process of focusing your perspective for the purpose of a particular study” (Babbie, 2013:117). Maree and Pietersen (2007:149) classify quantitative research designs into two main classes, namely experimental and non-experimental designs. The study employed the non-experimental design. According to Maree and Pietersen (2007:152) non-experimental designs are mainly used in exploratory and descriptive research, in which the units that have been selected are measured through all relevant variables at a specific time. Through non-experimental research design the researcher was able present a series of questions to sampled respondents, analyse their responses numerically and thereafter draw conclusions about the perceptions of employees regarding the integrated EWP at TLM (Fouché, Delpont & De Vos, 2011:156).

It is essential to note that the non-experimental design comprises of two methods, namely, the randomised cross-sectional survey and the replicated randomised cross-sectional survey (Fouché, Delpont & De Vos, 2011:156). For the purpose of this study, the randomised cross-sectional survey design was adopted whereby a questionnaire was utilised to collect data from the sample. In addition Fouché et al., (2011:156) state that the randomised cross-sectional survey design involves one contact with the population; it is easier and less expensive because testing occurs over a limited period of time.

The researcher minimised the risk of two types of survey errors identified by Babbie (2013:230), namely poor measurement of cases that are surveyed, as well as the

omission of cases that should be surveyed by paying careful attention to sampling, measurement and overall design.

3.6 RESEARCH METHODS

The research methods section provides details about how the study was undertaken. The researcher will discuss the following aspects under the research methods, namely, the study population, data collection, data analysis, validity and reliability, pilot study and ethical considerations.

3.6.1 Study population and sampling

- Population

Population is the entire set of individuals to which the study findings are to be generalised (Engel & Schutt, 2013:112). The study population was all the employees who are permanently employed by TLM, as an EWP is available to all employees employed by the municipality. TLM, at the time when sampling was done, had 507 permanent employees and 580 temporary employees. The population consisted of senior management (7) members of the middle management (22), line managers (31), support section employees (205), general employees (236), internship programme employees (18) and the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) employees (562). Senior management at TLM were members of management in level 2, middle management were from level 3, line management were in level 4, support section employees were from level 5 to 9 and general workers were in level 15. The internship programme employees are mainly the youth (not older than 35 years) and they are contracted by TLM for a period of 12 months to 3 years, while the EPWP employees are contracted on a quarterly basis, which is a period of 3 months. The internship programme and EPWP employees were not included in the sample because they are temporary employees and the researcher was of the view that they would not be able to provide information that the researcher needs since they might have not utilised the EWP services at the time the study was conducted.

- Sample and Sampling methods

The research was conducted after the municipal manager and TLM general secretary of South African Municipal Workers' Union (SAMWU) on behalf of employees had issued authorisation letters for the research to be conducted (See Appendix B and C). This made it possible for the researcher to consult the human resources section at TLM for access to a list of all permanent employees as per their work position in the municipality. Taking into consideration that the coverage of the total population is seldom possible (Strydom, 2011a:224), the researcher utilised a combination of stratified random sampling and a systematic sampling technique. According to Strydom (2011a:230) a stratified random sampling method is suitable for a heterogeneous population because the inclusion of small subgroups percentage-wise can be ensured. Through stratified random sampling the researcher divided the employees into five strata, depending on the sections to which the employees are attached. This is supported by Neuman (2011: 231), who states that the sampling frame is divided according to a set of mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories. In this case the five strata were categorised according to the sections within the municipality.

To ensure sufficient representation from all the different sections, the researcher applied the systematic sampling technique within each stratum, whereby the first case was randomly selected from the strata list. Subsequently, out of the five strata, 101 (20% of the entire population) were sampled by selecting every third case from the list per stratum. This notion is supported by Neuman (2011:231), description of systematic sampling as a method whereby the first step applied is to number each element in the sampling frame followed by calculating a sampling interval. The sample thus consisted of senior management (2), members of the middle management (10), line managers (15), support section employees (34) and general employees (40). Stratified random sampling and systematic sampling provided all the employees with the same probability of being selected without considering any limitations such as considering their gender, race, age, language or education level.

3.6.2 Data collection

The quantitative approach has different techniques of data collection; administering a structured questionnaire is one of the techniques. Therefore, for the purpose of this study a structured questionnaire was selected as a data collection tool. One of the reasons for utilising a structured questionnaire is to obtain facts and opinions about a phenomenon from people who are informed on the particular issue (Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:186). In addition Babbie (2013:244) states that a questionnaire generates information that is useful for analysis. Taking into consideration that there is no standardised questionnaire on the study topic, the researcher developed a questionnaire (See Appendix F). Neuman (2011:277) highlights that the researcher developing a questionnaire should consider the structure of the questions to avoid confusion whilst keeping the respondent's perspective in mind. The questionnaire developed for the purpose of this study was in line with the broad perspective the researcher gained from the literature, as recommended by Delpont and Roestenburg (2011:191). The questionnaire consisted of open and closed-ended questions and was divided into four sections, namely, Section A: Demographic information, Section B: Knowledge about EWP, Section C: Perceptions regarding the implementation of the integrated EWP model and Section D: Evaluation of the integrated EWP at TLM.

A cover letter was attached to each structured questionnaire to introduce and explain the purpose to the respondents (Monette et al., 2008:166). The researcher hand-delivered the questionnaire to the respondents at their respective work stations as suggested by Delpont and Roestenburg, (2011:188). These authors further identify the following advantages of hand-delivered questionnaires as time saving and high response rate due to personal contact established during the distribution and collection of the questionnaire. A questionnaire delivered by hand also provides an opportunity for clarification of points if difficulties are experienced during the distribution of the questionnaire.

Arrangements were made for the respondents to put completed questionnaires in boxes positioned at the entrances to the work stations near the security officer's desk for the researcher to collect them later, as a way to save time and costs (Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:188). A total of 82 questionnaires were returned and amongst those who did not

return the questionnaires were all the senior management respondents who were sampled. This is despite the fact that questionnaire boxes remained at the work stations' entrances for over three weeks with constant reminders for respondents to put them in the boxes after completion. Additionally, questionnaires require a minimal degree of literacy and fluency in English, which some respondents may not possess (Monette et al., 2008:170,171). The researcher addressed this challenge by including contact numbers on the cover letter, to assist those respondents who were experiencing difficulties while completing them. The respondents also had an opportunity to receive clarity on how to respond to the questionnaire when the questionnaires were being distributed.

3.6.3 Data analysis

According Neuman (2011:343) quantitative data comprises of charts, graphs and tables with numbers. The author further indicates that the purpose of utilising the graphs, charts and numerical data is to give the reader a condensed picture of the collected data. As such the researcher converted the data to numerical and statistical forms. In order to analyse the collected data of the perceptions of employees regarding the integrated EWP at TLM, both descriptive statistics and univariate analysis were used, whereby the data gathered on one variable was summarised with the view of describing that variable. Descriptive statistics were used to describe basic patterns in the data (Neuman, 2011:347). Data coding was included in the questionnaire, as suggested by Fouché and Bartley (2011:254). The data was entered manually into a spreadsheet and a computer was used to analyse the data, which was presented in charts, graphs and tables (Neuman, 2011:343-344; Fouché & Bartley, 2011:254). The researcher was able to draw conclusions from the interpretation of the data analysis results.

3.6.4 Validity and reliability

The researcher upheld face validity by ensuring that the questionnaire contained issues that address the objectives of the study. This point is highlighted by Pietersen and Maree (2007:217) who indicate that face validity refers to the extent to which the instrument appears to measure what it is supposed to measure. To ensure content validity, the structured questionnaire that was utilised to collect data covered the full range of the

studied phenomenon. Reliability occurs when an instrument measures the same thing more than once and results in the same outcome (Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:177). It is noteworthy to indicate that the questionnaire used as the data collection tool was not repeatedly tested to ensure reliability. In an attempt to improve reliability and validity the researcher conducted a pilot test of the questionnaire.

3.6.5 Pilot testing

A pilot study is a trial run on a small-scale, of all the procedures planned for the research project (Monette et al., 2008:490). This means that a few cases that are similar to the planned main enquiry should be exposed to the same procedures as planned for the main investigation, in order to modify the instrument, if necessary (Strydom, 2011b:240). In view of this, pilot testing was conducted by administering the questionnaire to two people who are employees of TLM. The two employees were randomly selected from the support and general workers sections. The two were not included in the main study. Space was created on the questionnaire for comments and criticisms during the pilot testing. These were intended to be used to improve the instrument for the main investigation as suggested by Strydom (2011b:241). Based on the feedback from pilot testing, the general view on the questionnaire was positive and no adaptations were needed.

3.6.6 Ethical considerations

It is essential to acknowledge that for the research to be successful, a number of ethical issues need to be considered. Ethics can be regarded as guidelines adopted by a profession for regulation purposes to ensure that professionals are held accountable (Gray & Webb, 2010:19). The authors further identified the purpose of ethics as a measure to protect research subjects from abuse and to ensure that data collected is not misused or mishandled. As indicated in chapter one in this study, only the application of ethical aspects the researcher considered applicable to the study were adhered to. These are discussed below:

- Avoidance of harm

The study did not probe for information relating to any unjust behaviour, attitudes or personal characteristics that can be viewed as demeaning. The respondents were

informed about the purpose of the study before they participated, which is another way that the participants can be protected from harm, as they were provided with an opportunity to decide not to participate if it was perceived as being harmful to them. The study was about workplace aspects and this minimised harmful effects on the respondents because the anticipated data was not about a social condition. Although prior arrangements were made with the area social work office for debriefing, due to the nature of the study no debriefing or follow-up services were required after data collection.

- Informed consent

The researcher designed an informed consent form (See Appendix E), which respondents signed when they voluntarily decided to participate in the research. The researcher requested respondents to carefully read the informed consent letter before signing it and to submit it at the same time as the completed questionnaire. The respondents were asked not to attach the consent form to the questionnaire, but to put it in a separate box named 'EWP consent', which was at all entrances of the municipality, near the security desk. The signed informed consent forms and transcripts of raw data will be safely stored at the Department of Social Work and Criminology for 15 years as required by the policy of the University of Pretoria.

- Deception of subjects or respondents

No one was deceived in this study. The respondents were not misled and this was ensured by providing a brief background to the research on the questionnaire's cover letter and consent form, indicating all the necessary information about the study such as the research purpose as well as how the respondents' participation will benefit them and TLM as a whole. No respondent was forced to participate in the study by being promised to gain anything and they had to make their own decisions to participate in the study by signing the informed consent form.

- Violation of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality

To protect the privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of respondents the structured questionnaire had clear instructions on how to complete them, thus minimising the necessity for any questions. The questionnaire did not include space for respondents to write their names to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. The consent forms and

questionnaires were submitted in different boxes as such no response can be linked directly to a particular respondent.

- Actions and competence of the researcher

The researcher attended the Social Work Research module which equipped her with the knowledge and skills to conduct research. Furthermore, the researcher conducted the research under a supervisor at the University of Pretoria, who provided guidance to the researcher. The researcher did not commit plagiarism and has acknowledged all the sources used in the research project.

3.7 SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the research methodology used to gather and interpret empirical findings. A detailed discussion about the research approach, research type and design also formed part of this chapter. A description of applied research methods including population and sampling, data collection tools, data analysis, and validity and reliability were also provided in this chapter.

The following chapter focuses on the presentation of the empirical research findings about the employees' perceptions regarding the integrated EWP at TLM.

CHAPTER FOUR

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS ON PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYEES REGARDING EWP AT TLM

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter four focuses on the analysis, interpretation and presentation of the research empirical findings. The research findings are presented in the sequence of the sections as they appear on the questionnaires. The questionnaire was divided into four sections:

Section A: Demographic information

Section B: Knowledge about EWP

Section C: Perceptions regarding the implementation of the integrated EWP model

Section D: Evaluation of the integrated EWP at TLM.

4.2 SUMMARY ON RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this section the research methodology is discussed briefly. The detailed discussion is presented in chapter three.

The researcher employed the quantitative research approach in order to explore the employees' perceptions regarding the integrated EWP at TLM. Numerical data was gathered in a standardised manner (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:145). The study employed applied research which, according to Fouché and De Vos (2011:94), is a "scientific planning of induced change in a troublesome situation". For the purpose of this study the researcher used a randomised cross-sectional survey design and developed a questionnaire as the data collection tool. The researcher selected a sample of 101 out of 507 permanent employees of TLM. The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics and univariate analysis. The data was converted to numerical and statistical forms as part of quantitative research approach and is presented in charts, graphs and tables below.

4.3 PRESENTATION OF EMPIRICAL DATA

4.3.1 Section A: Demographic Information

Section A provides demographic details of the respondents with regard to gender, race, age, home language, educational level, years of employment at TLM and current position.

4.3.1.1 Gender of respondents

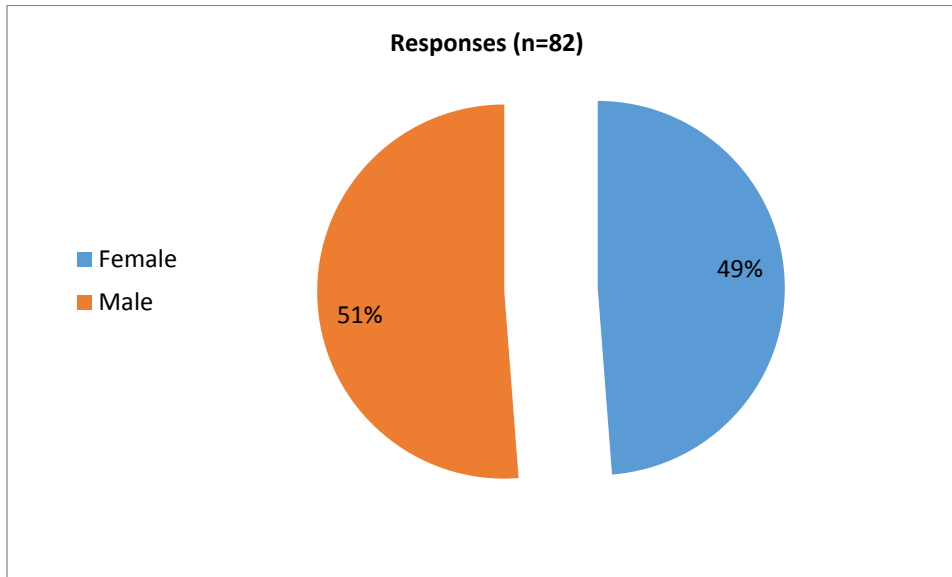


Figure 4. 1: Gender of respondents

Figure 4.1 indicates that the majority of respondents were males (51.22%) whilst (48.78%) were females. The results were more or less in line with the actual representation of TLM employees, which is 55% males and 45% females. This could be attributed to the fact that most of the general work posts are occupied by males as this work requires hard labour. The findings of a research conducted by Person, Colby, Bulova and Eubanks (2010:15) indicate that women are more likely to participate in worksite health care promotion programmes than men. This is influenced by the belief that men do not care about their health as much as women (Kronfol, 2012:1241). The researcher supports this notion and is of the view that the utilisation rate of EWP at TLM might be influenced by the fact that the municipality has more male employees who are less likely to make use of worksite wellness programmes. In addition Scanes ([sa]:2), with reference to male blue collar employees, indicates that they are less likely to participate in a workplace wellness programme if they perceive the strategy as something irrelevant to

them. Phillips (2005:25) is of the notion that men and women experience same events in different ways, therefore it becomes a challenge for work organisations to design worksite wellness programmes that meet the needs of both genders.

4.3.1.2 Race of respondents

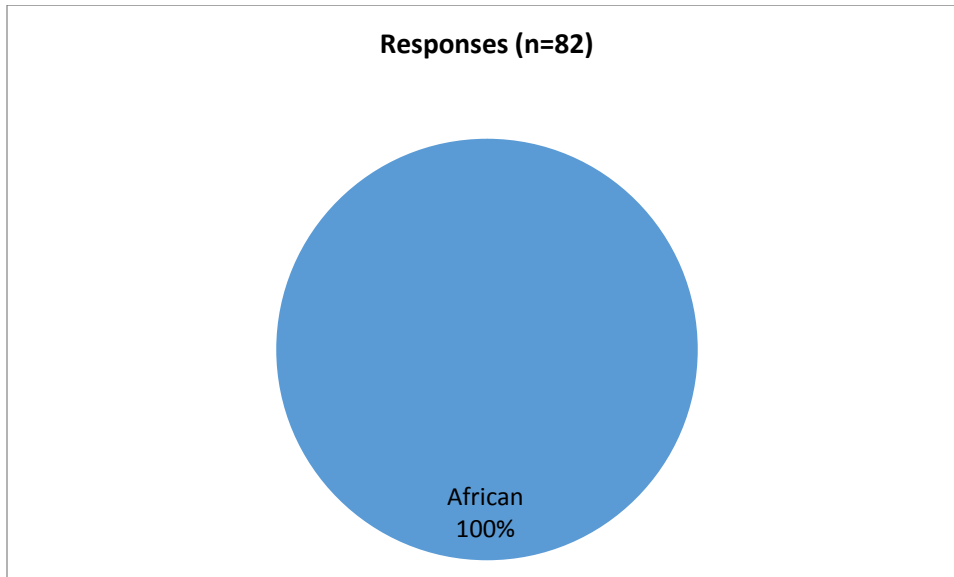


Figure 4. 2: Percentage distribution of employees by race

The race of respondents displayed in Figure 4.2 highlights that 100% of the respondents were African. The results are a true reflection of TLM employees since the Municipality only comprises of African employees. According to Census (2011:17) the highest population group in Limpopo Province is Black African, which constitutes an average of 96.7% of the entire population in the province, with 0.35% Coloured, 0.3% Indians and 2.6% White. One of the findings on a study conducted in Limpopo Province by Pauw (2005:3) was that most Asian and White people live in urban areas, while half of Coloured people live in rural areas and by far the greatest majority of Africans live in rural areas. Taking into consideration that TLM is situated in a rural area, the researcher is of the view that this has highly contributed in the municipality employing Africans only. It is also essential to note that the TLM workforce is not in accordance with the provisions of the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, chapter 2: which supports the creation of a workforce that is representative of the South African population.

4.3.1.3 Age distribution of respondents

Responses	Number	Percentage
21 - 30 years	17	20,73%
31 - 40 years	27	32,93%
41 - 50 years	18	21,95%
51 - 60 years	17	20,73%
More than 60 years	3	3,66%
Grand Total	82	100,00%

Table 4. 1: Distribution of employees per age group

The majority of respondents, 32.93%, were aged between 31 and 40 years. Robroek, Van Lenthe, Van Empele and Burdorf (2009:9) are of the notion that age has no effect on participation in worksite health care promotion programmes.

4.3.1.4 Respondents' language

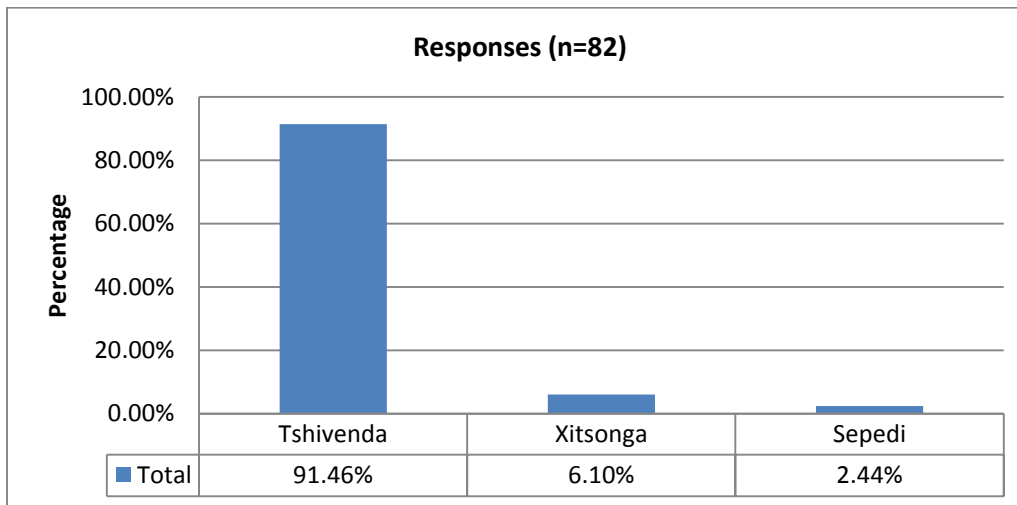


Figure 4. 3: Home language spoken by employees

Figure 4.3 shows that the home language for the majority of respondents is Tshivenda (91.46%). It is essential to note that respondents with different home languages, mainly spoken in Limpopo province, were included in the study. This figure also reflects that TLM comprises of various cultural groups. According to Schyve (2007:360) the difference in language and culture contributes to barriers to effective communication. Most of the employees' home languages are spoken within the province. Therefore the researcher is of the opinion that the effect of language as a barrier to effective communication is limited while providing EWP services at TLM.

4.3.1.5 Level of education of respondents

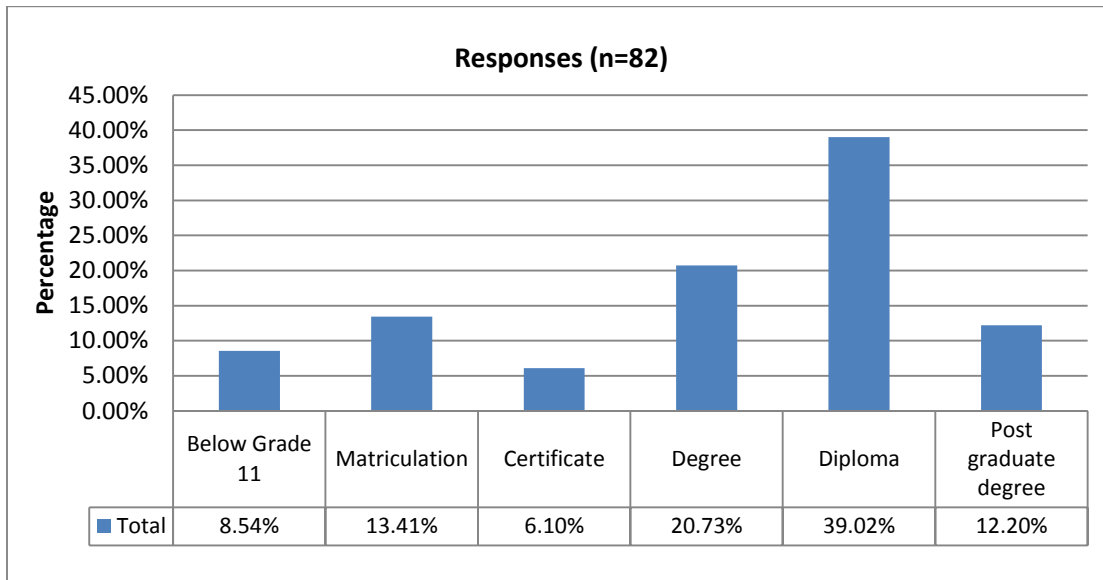


Figure 4. 4: Highest educational level

Figure 4.4 indicates that the majority of respondents have post matric qualifications. The data on the figure also shows that most of the employees are well educated. This illustration correlates with the fact that most of the public service posts require a minimum of a Bachelor's degree or equivalent qualification and usually an advert for a post would further state that a postgraduate degree or qualification will be an added advantage (Public Service Circular 37, 2014:8). About 8.54% of the respondents maintain a below grade 11 educational level whilst 13.41% have completed only matric.

The findings of the study conducted by Mchunu and Uys (2008:27) show that participants in workplace wellness programmes are mostly younger in age, well-educated and white collar workers. Robroek et al., (2009:6), disagree with this notion stating that the education level of an employee does not affect participation in worksite health care promotion programmes.

4.3.1.6 Respondents' period of employment

Response	Number	Percentage
1- 2 years	11	13,41%
3 - 5 years	22	26,83%
6 - 10 years	25	30,49%
11 - 15 years	7	8,54%
16 - 20 years	11	13,41%
More than 20 years	6	7,32%
Grand Total	82	100,00%

Table 4. 2: Distribution of employees per employment period in TLM

Table 4.2 indicates that the majority (30.34%) of respondents were employed at TLM for 6 to 10 years. The researcher is of the view that since only permanent employees were sampled and considering the vast range of years in service by the respondents, it can be postulated to be adequate time for participants to become exposed to EWP within the municipality. The researcher is of the notion that if the programme was properly marketed, it would allow adequate time for knowledge on the programme and its services. This will receive further interrogation when analysing the findings considering the knowledge about EWP.

4.3.1.7 Respondents' current position

Response	Number	Percentage
Support section	31	37,80%
General worker	26	31,71%
Line management	15	18,29%
Middle management	10	12,20%
Grand Total	82	100.00%

Table 4. 3: Distribution of employees by position

Table 4.3 shows that the majority (37.80%) of respondents were under the support section and respondents in middle management were in the minority at 12.20%. The illustration is not entirely in line with the composition of the workforce; this is mainly caused by the fact that not all respondents sampled under general workers and senior management had submitted completed questionnaires.

- Summary Section A

Section A on the demographic information of respondents, indicates fewer females than males. This is an accurate illustration of gender distribution of employees at TLM. It is essential to note that TLM is dependent on various aspects such as work experience of employees, position and age in order to realise the municipality mission of building prosperity, eradicating poverty and promoting social, political and economic empowerment of all their people through delivery of quality services, community participation, local economic development and smart administration (Thulamela, 2018a:6).

4.3.2 Section B: Knowledge about EWP

Section B includes questions aimed at exploring the employees' level of knowledge and awareness about EWP at TLM.

4.3.2.1 Hearing about EWP

Response	Number	Percentage
I attended a presentation by EWP unit	23	28,05%
Through outreach/promotion sessions by EWP unit	17	20,73%
I heard about it from a colleague	14	17,07%
I heard about it from a supervisor/manager	11	13,41%
I do not know of such a programme (EWP)	8	9,76%
Through a poster/brochure	7	8,54%
Unspecified	2	2,44%
Grand Total	82	100,00%

Table 4. 4: Respondents awareness method of EWP

Table 4.4 illustrates that 28.05 % and 20.73% of respondents became aware of EWP at TLM directly from the EWP unit after attending a presentation or awareness sessions that the unit had facilitated. The least popular source of information about EWP was through issuing of posters/brochures (only 8.54%). The data makes it clear that the majority of respondents indicated that presentations through the EWP unit are the most effective ways of becoming aware of the EWP services. It is however, a concern that the

supervisor/manager (13.41%) as a source of information about EWP is lower than that of colleagues (17.07%). Carrington (2014:24) is of the notion that managers and supervisors in any work organisation play an important role with regard to motivating employees to engage in wellness programmes at the workplace. Although not significant percentage, 9.76% of respondents indicated that they were not aware of EWP's existence within the municipality. This is reason for concern.

4.3.2.2 Knowledge of cell phone/telephone numbers for EWP unit

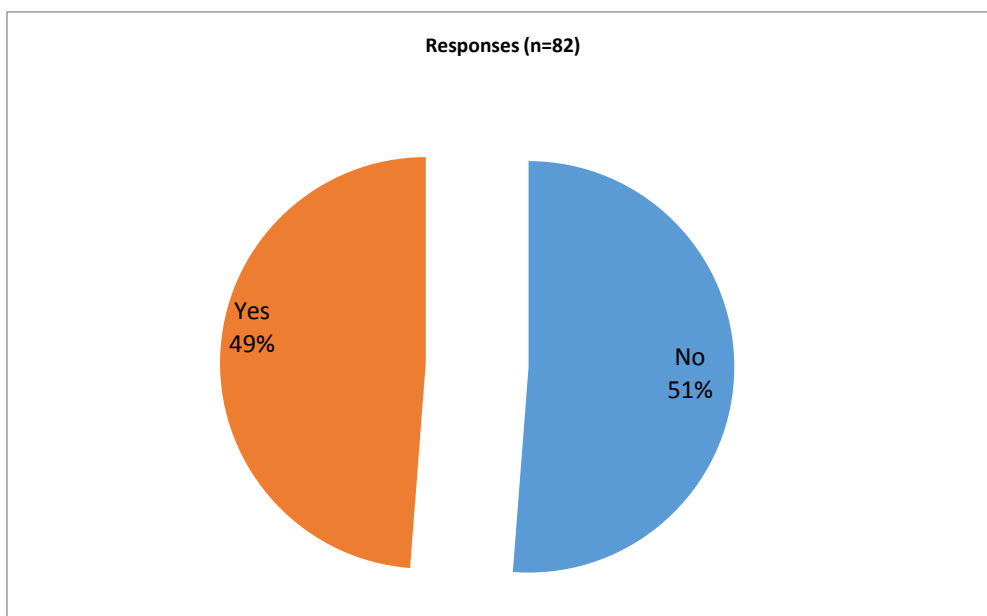


Figure 4. 5: Respondents' awareness of EWP contact numbers

Figure 4.5 illustrates that 51% of the respondents do not know EWP contact numbers. The data reflects that the majority of TLM employees seem to not be benefiting from the advantage of EWP having a 24-hour cell phone distress line for employees. This benefit can only be enjoyed and utilised by those employees who know both the telephone and cell phone numbers as they can contact the EWP unit for service anytime and anywhere.

4.3.2.3 Knowledge of EWP Unit office location at TLM

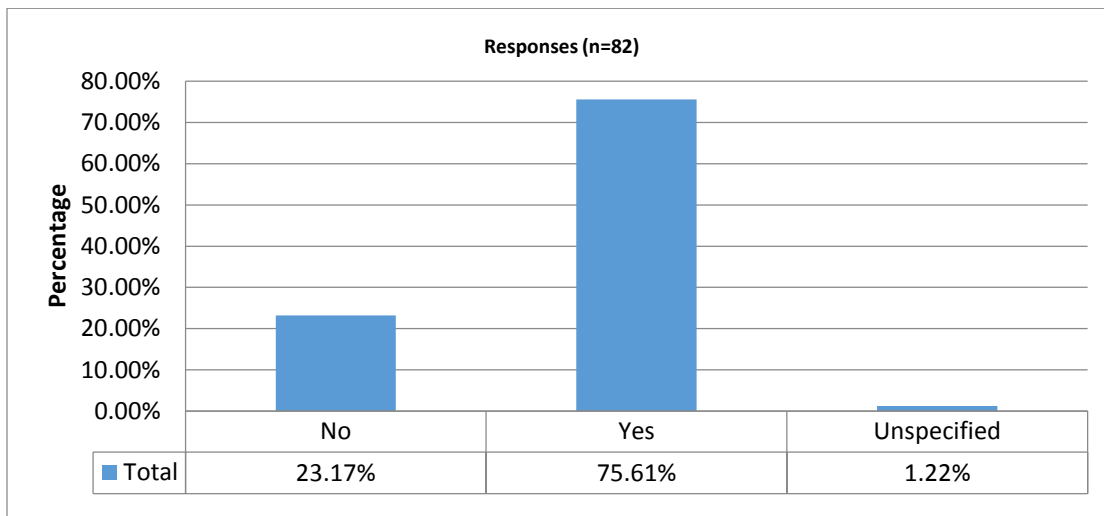


Figure 4. 6: Respondents' knowledge of EWP office location

The majority of the respondents (75.61%) are aware of the EWP unit office location, whilst only 23.17% of respondents have no idea of the office location within the municipality. The researcher acknowledges that the majority of employees at TLM are stationed at the municipal head office which is where the EWP unit office is located and this might be the reason for the high percentage of office location knowledge by the respondents. According to Lawrence, Boxer and Tarakeshwar (2002:4) there is a link between employees' familiarity with workplace wellness programmes and the utilisation rate of the programme services. This therefore, implies that having knowledge of what EWP offers, awareness of where the programme is located and how to access it is essential for service utilisation.

- Summary Section B

Section B shows that the majority of employees are knowledgeable about EWP at TLM, and the researcher views this as important. However, it is a concern that the majority of respondents (51%), as shown in Figure 4.5, are not aware of the EWP contact numbers. It was revealed in this section that the planned work of the EWP has not given the intended outcome, since the resources that the municipality have put in place for EWP are not being effectively utilised due to a lack of information of the availability of this service. The programme theory models underpinning EWP show that certain resources

are needed to operate the programme, for example the 24-hour cell phone line. When service beneficiaries have access to the resources, service will be delivered and the intended outcomes will occur (Rogers, 2008:33; Field & Louw, 2012:6). SALGA (2012:14) suggests that to combat a low level of knowledge about EWP services, marketing strategies should be used to communicate the integrated EWP to increase employees' awareness of the programme and to drive participation and utilisation thereof.

4.3.3 Section C: Perceptions regarding the implementation of the integrated EWP model

In this section the researcher's aim was to establish the perceptions of employees toward the EWP at TLM. According to Csiernik (2003:45), misconception and lack of understanding about the workplace wellness programmes have been found to hinder service utilisation.

4.3.3.1 Attendance of EWP activities.

Response	Number	Percentage
Recreation activities	47	47,47%
Health Risk assessment	20	20,20%
HIV/AIDS and chronic management education	12	12,12%
Unspecified	8	8,08%
Critical incident and trauma support	6	6,06%
Professional and confidential counselling	6	6,06%
Grand total	99*	100,00%

*Grand total > total number of respondents due to multiple responses

Table 4. 5: EWP activities attended by respondents at TLM

Table 4.5 illustrates that the majority of the respondents (47.47%) have attended recreational activities. This confirms the municipal EWP's quarterly report (Thulamela Municipality, 2017a; Thulamela Municipality; 2018) which highlights that the physical wellness activities are highly attended by the employees whilst the psychosocial services are the least utilised. It is essential to indicate that the recreational activities include activities on annual wellness days, which are even attended by the municipal senior management (Thulamela Municipality, 2015b:9) and different sports codes activities such as Soccer, Netball, Table tennis etc., which employees engage in every Wednesday as

it is provided for by the municipality workplace sports and recreation policy (Thulamela Municipality, 2015c:4).

4.3.3.2 Utilisation of EWP services at TLM in case of problems

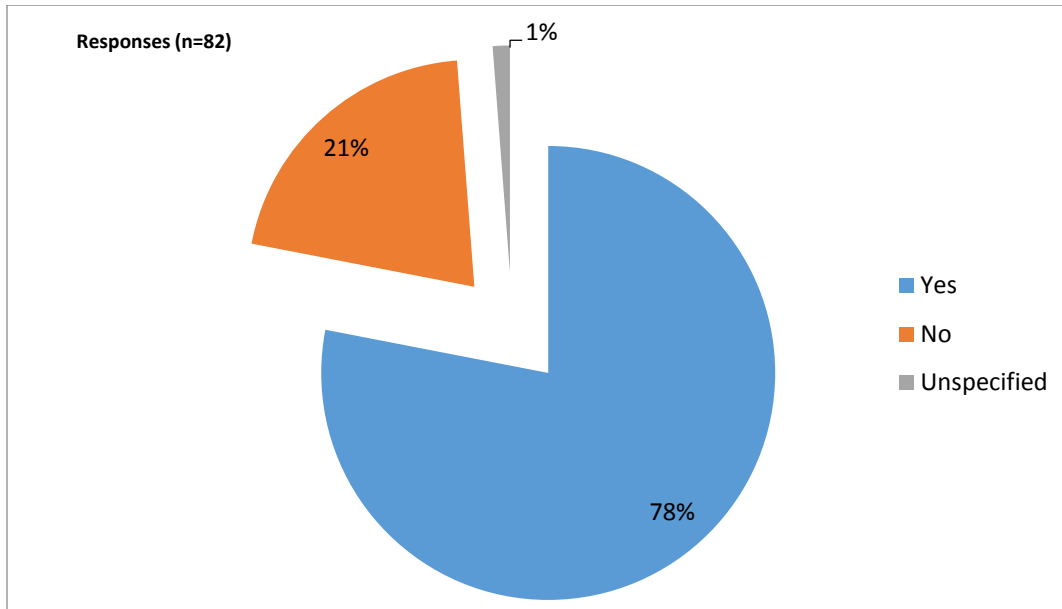


Figure 4. 7: Respondents' utilisation of EWP services at TLM when they encounter problems

In terms of figure 4.7, 78% of respondents indicated that they would utilise services at TLM when they have problems whilst 21% indicated that they would not make use of the programme services. Although the majority of respondents indicated that they would make use of the programme services if they have problems, much more still needs to be done to encourage all the employees to consider utilising EWP services. The table below illustrates the reasons given by respondents who indicated that they would not utilise EWP at TLM if they had any problems:

Response	Number	Percentage
Not aware of EWP services	3	10,34%
Do not know EWP office location	2	6,90%
Lack of professionalism and confidentiality	2	6,90%
Do not know how to access the service	1	3,45%
Do not know the process	1	3,45%
Preference of independent services	1	3,45%
EWP not welcoming	1	3,45%
Unspecified	18	62,07%
Grand Total	29	100,00%

Table 4. 6: Respondents' motivation not to make use of EWP services if they encounter problems.

The table above illustrates that 10.34% of respondents will not utilise EWP services when they encounter problems since they are not aware of the services offered. Weiss (2003:3) concurs with this notion based on the view that unfamiliarity of the programme scope restricts service utilisation, whereas awareness of the programme has the potential of enhancing utilisation. Therefore much more still needs to be done to ensure programme awareness amongst the employees. When the EWP service beneficiaries understand what the programme can and cannot do for them they will utilise it appropriately. The Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015:22-23) suggests that continuous marketing of the programme should be conducted to ensure high visibility and to encourage utilisation of the programme.

One of the key findings on an evaluation of EAPs in the South African Public sector as conducted by the Public Service Commission (2006:31), was the fact that the slightest fear of confidentiality not being maintained greatly affects the utilisation of workplace wellness programmes by the people who need the programme service most. This finding supports the 6.90% of respondents who perceive the programme to be lacking professionalism and confidentiality as a reason that will prevent them from utilising the EWP services offered at TLM.

4.3.3.3 Respondents' confidence in EWP at TLM

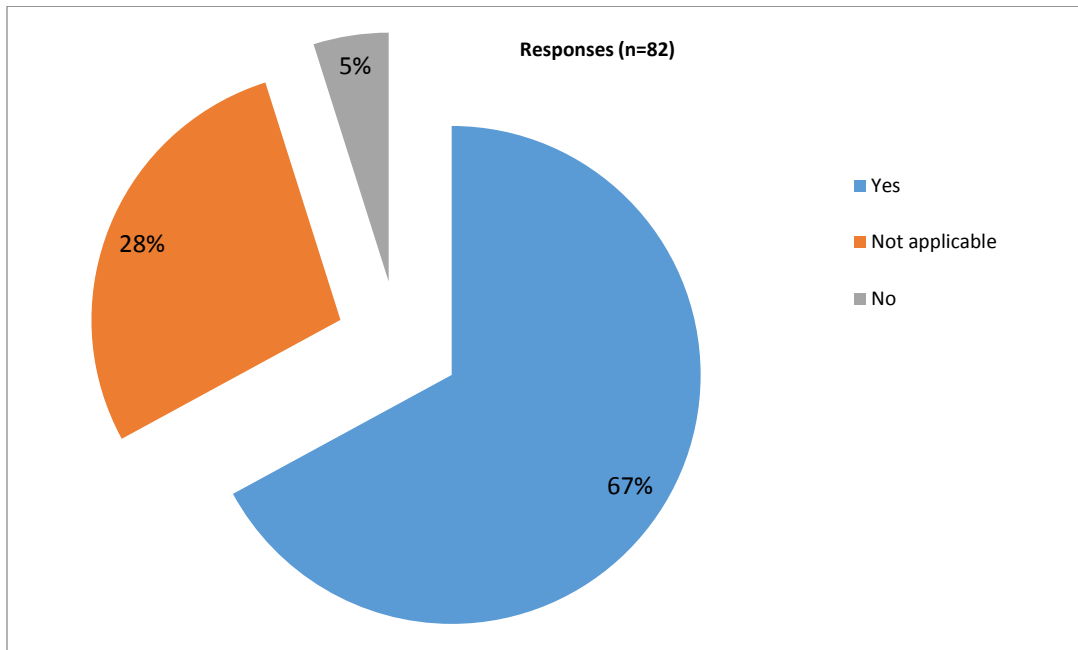


Figure 4. 8: The level of confidence in the programme of the respondents who have utilised EWP at TLM

From figure 4.8, it is evident that the majority of respondents (67%) who have utilised the programme services do have confidence in EWP at TLM, whereas only 5% of the respondents do not. The researcher is of the view that 28% of the respondents found the question not applicable to them because they had not utilised EWP services. The following motivation was made by those respondents who indicated that they have confidence in the EWP.

Responses	Number of responses
I was assisted when I had personal problems	3
Assisted with health issues	3
EWPs help us with sports/Encourage us to be involved in sports	3
Always available to listen and assist	2
Felt better/relieved after attending EWP services	2
EWPs help/encourage us to participate in recreational activities	2
Officials keep issues discussed confidential and are very patient	2
Received the help/information I wanted	1
EWP officials are friendly and always willing to provide help	1
Assisted with financial problems	1
All employees are given a chance to participate	1
EWP officers have knowledge of their work	1
Unspecified	33
Grand total	55

Table 4. 7: Respondents’ motivation for confidence in EWP at TLM

Table 4.7 indicates the relevance of adopting a broad brush approach when implementing EWPs for the programme to be able to assist employees, and to prevent and resolve challenges that can negatively impact on their job performance. The responses mentioned by the respondents clearly distinguish between the different EWP dimensions and this emphasises the advantages of implementing an integrated programme. Integration promotes high utilisation of the programme when the programme is designed to positively respond to all employees’ problems in one place of contact (Attridge, Herlihy & Maiden. 2005:45; Dickman. 2009:53). Another essential factor that promotes respondents to have confidence in the programme is the trust they have that issues discussed in EWP will be kept confidential. This view is supported by Lawrence et al., (2002:3) who state that employees’ trust in the confidentiality of the service provided is directly related to high programme utilisation.

4.3.3.4 Respondents' views of EWP at TLM

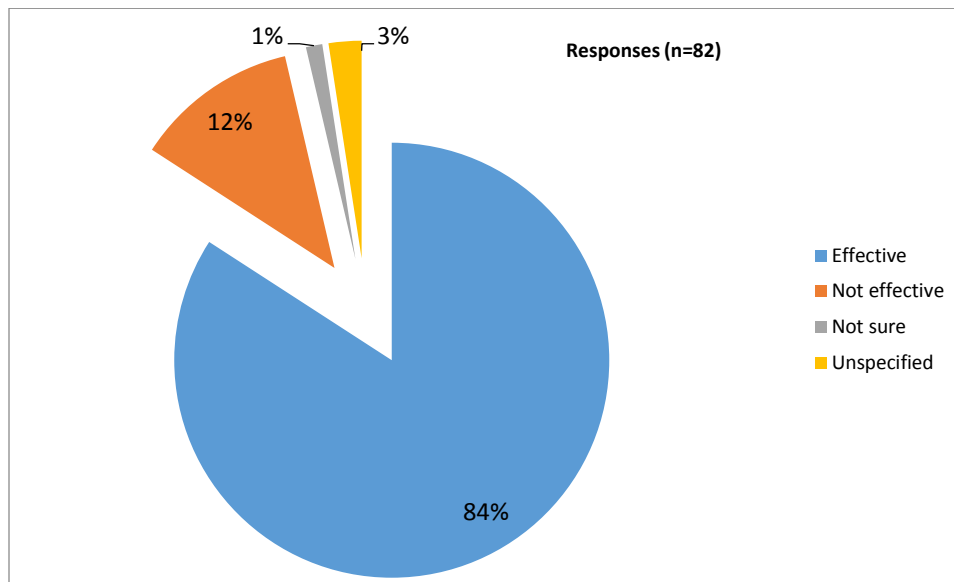


Figure 4. 9: Respondents' views of EWP at TLM

It is evident from figure 4.9 that the majority of respondents (84%) find EWP at TLM to be effective. The researcher is of the view that EWP can only be viewed as effective when the programme beneficiaries perceive the programme to be satisfactorily addressing their needs. It is therefore essential for the work organisation to conduct organisational profiling to ensure that the EWP implemented addresses the work organisation and employees' needs (Nyati, 2013:47; the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015:4). This is in line with the programme theory which emphasises the importance of thorough planning before the initial commencement of the programme in order to achieve the intended programme results (Sharpe, 2011:72). The research findings also indicate that 12% of the respondents view EWP at TLM as not effective. This finding correlates with figure 4.4 whereby 9.76% of respondents are not aware of EWP at TLM.

4.3.3.5 Employees' needs for EWP services at TLM.

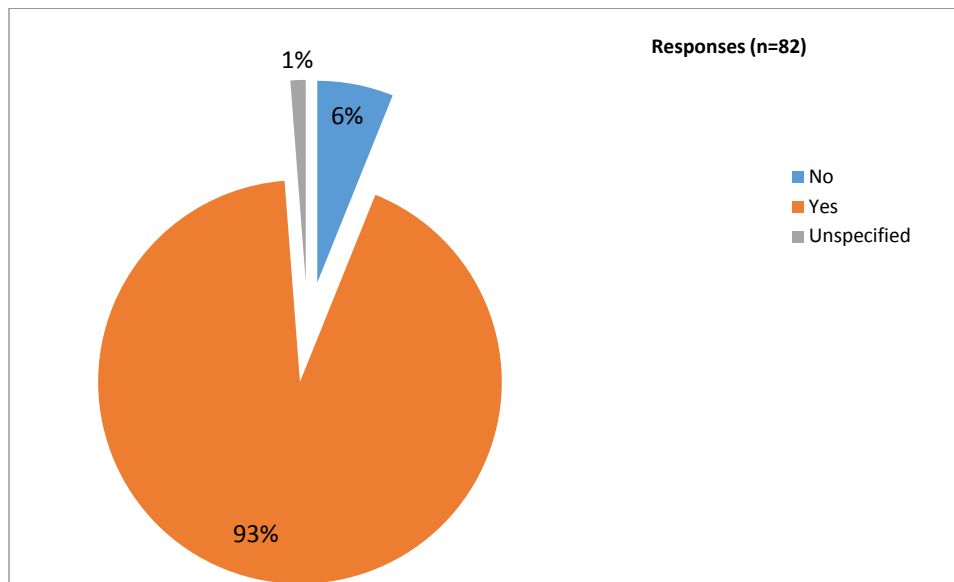


Figure 4. 10: Respondents' views on the need of EWP services at TLM

Figure 4.10 illustrates that the majority of respondents (93%) indicated that the employees need EWP services within the municipality, while 6% of the respondents did not view EWP services to be necessary for employees at the municipality. It is evident that the majority of respondents perceive EWP as a beneficial option to assist employees to deal with problems which affect their job performance and functioning. These findings are in line with Figure 4.7, whereby the majority of respondents expressed favour in the future use of the programme.

- Summary Section C

The data in Section C revealed the perceptions of the respondents regarding the implementation of the integrated EWP at TLM. The extent to which the programme activities were utilised was also illustrated in this section. Such data was helpful to determine whether the target programme beneficiaries had been reached and which services were mostly utilised over the other EWP services. According to Rogers, (2008:33) implementing EWPs based on a prior developed programme theory is a useful way of bringing together existing evidence about a programme and clarifying where there is agreement or disagreement about how the programme is understood to work, as well

as where there are gaps in the evidence. Based on this notion the researcher is of the view that the findings in Section C were able to determine whether the respondents perceive EWP to have produced its intended results, in order to make informed decisions about the desirability of this programme and to identify changes to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness.

4.3.4 Section D: Evaluation of the integrated EWP at TLM.

The following section focused on evaluating the perceived value of EWP at TLM by the employees, in terms of the programme’s implementation, interventions and the respondents’ experiences of EWP.

4.3.4.1 Implementation of EWP dimensions at TLM

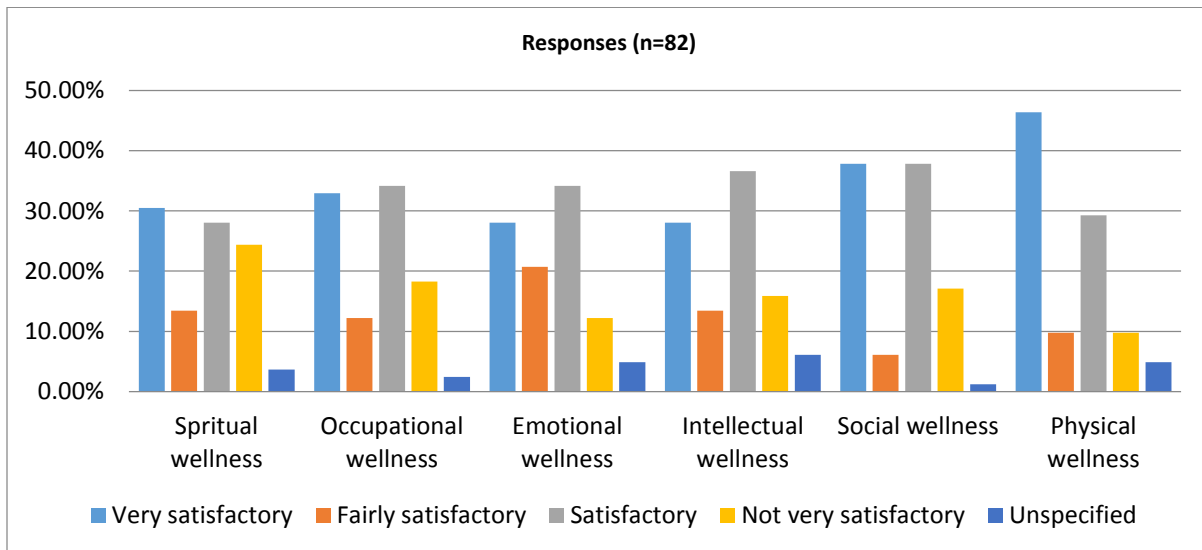


Figure 4. 11: Illustrating implementation of EWP dimensions at TLM

Figure 4.11 shows that 30.49% of the respondents rate the implementation of spiritual wellness as very satisfactorily. 34.15% of respondents rate the implementation of the Occupational wellness dimension as satisfactory. The respondents rate the implementation of the Emotional wellness dimension as very satisfactory (28.05%) to satisfactory (34.15%). The findings of the research also demonstrate that the respondents rates the extent of the implementation of the Intellectual wellness dimension as satisfactory (36.59%). The implementation of the Social wellness dimension is rated as equally very satisfactory and satisfactory both at 37.80%. Furthermore, 46.34% of

respondents view the implementation of Physical wellness dimension as very satisfactorily. The findings demonstrated above correlate with the quarterly reports of EWP at TLM as discussed in Table 2.1 in chapter two and in the statement made by Makungo (2016), who indicates that the employees' utilisation of physical wellness dimension services is higher than the utilisation of all the other wellness dimensions with the emotional wellness dimension services as the least utilised.

4.3.4.2 Presentation of EWP at TLM

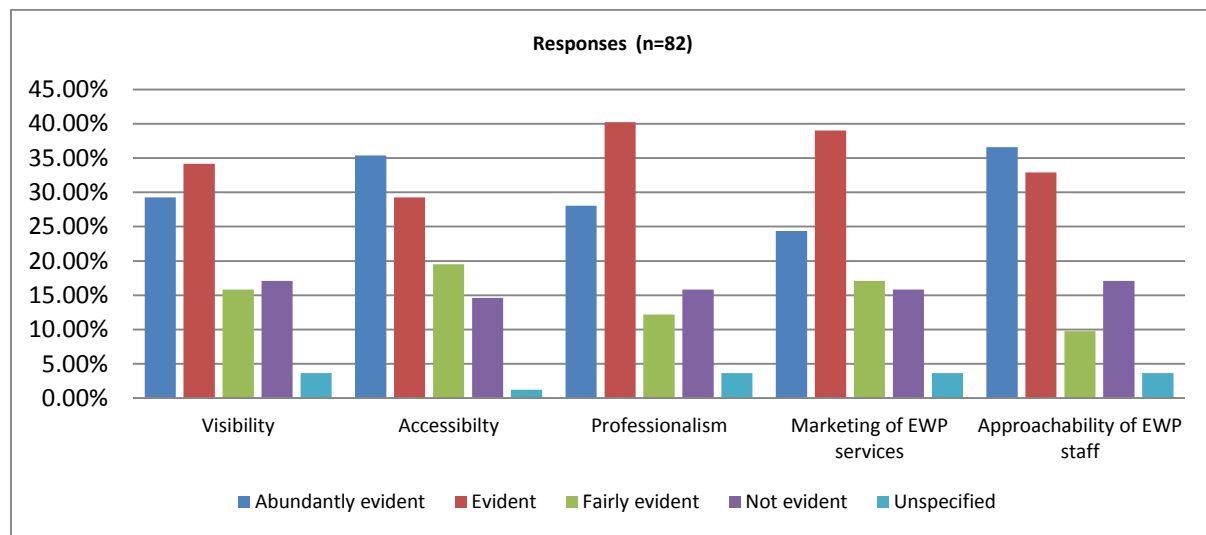


Figure 4. 12: Illustration of how EWP at TLM presents itself

Figure 4.12 reveals that the respondents (34.15%) regard EWP at TLM as being evidently visible, while 35.37% of respondents perceive EWP services at TLM as being abundantly evident when it comes to accessibility. The results are in line with the level of high knowledge of EWP office location within the municipality as reflected in figure 4.6. The data makes it clear that the majority of respondents (40.24%) perceived EWP services as being professional. The findings correlate with the data in figure 4.7, whereby, 78% of respondents indicated that they would make use EWP services should they encounter problems as they perceive the programme as being professional. The data illustrates that 39.02% of the respondents regarded the marketing of EWP as being evident. The data shows that the majority of respondents rate the extent of EWP staff approachability as being abundantly evident. The researcher is of the view that it is essential for EWP staff to be approachable to promote programme utilisation. In addition the EWP staff is bound

to be approachable as a way to create an enabling environment providing equitable support to all employees and their immediate family members through EWP (Thulamela Municipality, 2015a:2).

4.3.4.3 Consideration of EWP interventions by TLM when implementing organisational changes.

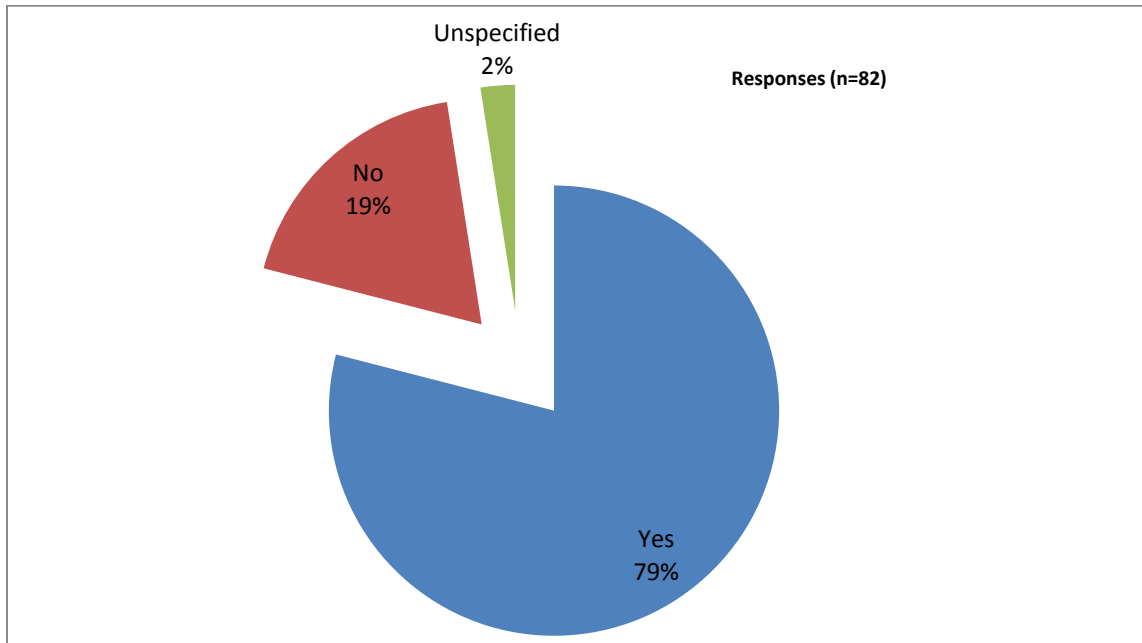


Figure 4. 13: Consideration of EWP interventions when implementing organisational changes

Figure 4.13 illustrates that the majority of respondents (79%) indicated that EWP interventions are taken into consideration by TLM when implementing organisational changes. According to Bessinger (2006:9) one of the major roles of EWP in work organisations is “to assist employees to cope with change and guiding employees through transitional phases to regain feelings of job security and sense of belonging to the organisation”. The researcher concedes this notion, with the view that EWP can assist the work organisation in ensuring organisational changes transition effectively through utilising the programme to communicate the organisational changes to the employees before they are implemented.

4.3.4.4 Involvement of EWP when implementing organisational change at TLM.

Responses	Number	Percentage
EWP should be part of management meetings	34	41,46%
Organisational changes should be implemented after thorough consultation with EWP	19	23,17%
EWP should be utilised to communicate organisational changes to employees	17	20,73%
EWP should be part of organisational change management processes	10	12,20%
Unspecified	2	2,44%
Grand total	82	100,00%

Table 4. 8: Indicating the most important way of involving EWP in organisational change at TLM.

The data in Table 4.9 illustrates that the majority of respondents (41.46%) find it essential for EWP to be part of management meetings, whilst 23.17% of respondents recommend that organisational changes should be implemented after consultation with EWP. These findings indicate that the respondents have identified the potential of involving EWP in the process of implementing organisational changes. The Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015:2) acknowledges that consultation with the work organisation assists in proactively addressing inherent trends resulting from personal and work related issues.

4.3.4.5 Improvement of EWP at TLM.

Responses	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Members of senior management need to be more visible during EWP activities	23	28,05%
More marketing sessions for EWP services	22	26,83%
Training Supervisors in their roles in EWP should be provided	20	24,39%
Counselling should continue being provided by internal EWP professionals rather than contracting external providers	16	19,51%
Unspecified	1	1,22%
Grand Total	82	100,00%

Table 4. 9: Respondents' suggestions to improve EWP at TLM

The data shows that the majority of respondents (28.05%) indicated that members of senior management must be more visible during the EWP activities. Carrington (2014:25)

supports this suggestion, alluding to the fact that when managers/leaders support and partake in workplace wellness programmes, the employees become highly motivated to participate in EWP activities. Active involvement of senior management in workplace wellness programmes is crucial because without visible management support, employees tend to be less committed to utilise programme services. 26.83% of the respondents recommend that EWP conduct more marketing sessions. This correlates with the findings in Table 4.4 whereby only 20.73% of the respondents had heard about EWP through attending the unit sessions. It is essential to note that when the marketing strategy is ineffective it might lead to poor service utilisation. 24.39% of respondents suggest training of supervisors in their roles in EWP as a priority to improve utilisation of EWP at TLM. The researcher concedes this notion while looking at the findings on Table 4.4 which show that only 13.41% of respondents had heard about EWP from supervisors/managers. These results are concerning as they reflect that the majority of supervisors/managers at TLM are not knowledgeable about their role in the programme. 19.51% of the respondents indicated the continuation of counselling services being provided internally as their priority to improve EWP. This group is therefore in support of the advantages of the in-house model alluded to in chapter two.

- Summary Section D

The findings in Section D illustrate that EWP services are perceived and experienced as being valuable by the respondents, in terms of implementation, interventions and presentation. The findings in this section also confirm low utilisation of the emotional wellness dimension services within the municipality. Rogers (2008:33) believes that assessing the programme logic model developed prior to the commencement of the programme assists in identifying sources of the problem and determining sources for interventions. The researcher is of the view that the findings in this section and the suggestions made for improvement of the integrated EWP model at TLM by the respondents will assist in improving the EWP theory to bring about the desired outcomes. In addition Sharpe (2011:72) states that assessing a programme theory assists to determine why a programme is succeeding or failing and if and where programme improvement should be focused.

4.4 SUMMARY

The study was aimed at exploring the perceptions of employees regarding the implementation of the integrated EWP model at TLM. In this chapter the researcher presented data collected from the respondents by means of a questionnaire. The data collected for this study was largely presented in figures and tabular form, followed by a discussion and interpretation of the data.

The conclusions on the research findings and recommendations will be presented in chapter five.

CHAPTER FIVE

KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes the research report and will serve as the final evaluation of the research process and results. In this chapter key findings, conclusions and recommendations will be discussed. Thereafter the researcher will indicate whether the goal and objectives of the study have been achieved.

5.2 KEY FINDINGS

The following key findings can be formulated:

- The level of knowledge of the employees regarding the EWP is high (see Table 4.4), but it does not tally with the awareness of EWP cell phone numbers (see Figure 4.5). It is abundantly evident that the majority of employees became aware of the programme services through EWP unit presentations and awareness sessions.
- The majority of TLM employees make more use of the physical wellness dimension which includes recreational activities (see Table 4.5), than all the other wellness dimensions.
- 78% of the employees (see Table 4.7) are in favour for future use of EWP should there be a need for it.
- 67% of respondents (See Figure 4.8) who have utilised EWP services have confidence in the programme implemented at TLM. The majority of employees (See Figure 4.9) view EWP at TLM to be effective and 93% of the employees agree that they need EWP services.
- The majority of employees are generally satisfied with the implementation of the six EWP dimensions, namely: Physical wellness, Social wellness, Occupational wellness, Spiritual wellness and Emotional wellness (see Figure 4.11).
- The majority of the employees have observed EWP interventions as being considered by TLM when implementing organisational changes and 41.46% (see

Table 4.8) of employees suggest that the EWP unit should be part of management meetings.

- 28.05% of employees (see Table 4.9) recommend that members of senior management must be more visible during the EWP activities, whilst 26.83% are of the view that the EWP unit should conduct more marketing sessions to improve programme utilisation.
- 24.39% of employees suggest training of supervisors in their roles in EWP as a priority to improve utilisation of EWP at TLM.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the key findings and after careful consideration, the following conclusions have been made:

5.3.1 Conclusions on Demographics

The researcher concludes that TLM comprises of more males than females. As indicated in figure 4.2 the municipality comprises of only African employees. The most popular African languages were Tshivenda and Xitsonga (see Figure 4.3). The majority of the workforce have post-matric qualifications (see Figure 4.4) with the relevant work experience.

5.3.2 Conclusions on Knowledge about EWP

The EWP unit presentations and awareness sessions are effective. It is however, reflected that the input by supervisors/managers as a source of information about EWP is significantly lower than that of colleagues, who are more resourceful about the programme services. Awareness of EWP is an essential predictor of programme utilisation and willingness to utilise its services. There is a need for all employees to be informed about EWP within TLM.

5.3.3 Conclusions on the Perceptions regarding implementation of integrated EWP

Employees perceive EWP as a programme providing broad-brush services but, they only highly utilise the physical wellness dimension which includes recreational activities (see

Table 4.5), and not all the other wellness dimensions. The minority of employees who are not willing to make use of EWP services when the needs arise provided the lack of programme knowledge and concern for the EWP unit's ability to maintain confidentiality as barriers that would prevent them from utilising the programme services (see Table 4.6). The majority of respondents who have utilised the programme services have confidence in the EWP implemented at TLM. The level of respondents' trust of EWP staff in maintaining confidentiality is high. The majority of employees view EWP at TLM to be effective and this correlates with the high percentage of respondents who find EWP services necessary for employees at the municipality.

5.3.4 Conclusions on Evaluation of the integrated EWP at TLM

There were some discrepancies regarding the rating of implementation of EWP dimensions. Thus some respondents would rate only one aspect on the scale. For instance, the question would be about how the respondent views the EWP at TLM and the response will be "not effective", but the same person often rates the implementation of the programme as satisfying. These discrepancies were found with only a few responses and as such did not have much impact on the findings.

The majority of employees are generally satisfied with the implementation of the six EWP dimensions, namely: Physical wellness, Social wellness, Occupational wellness, Spiritual wellness and Emotional wellness (see Figure 4.11). The employees have experienced EWP staff as being professional, accessible and approachable. The majority of the employees find the level of EWP visibility and marketing of programme services as 'evidently visible' (see Figure 4.12). It is also noteworthy that the majority of employees' observations show that the municipality considers the EWP interventions when implementing organisational changes (see Figure 4.13). The majority of employees from the four strata, namely: middle management, line managers, support section employees and general employees suggest that the EWP unit be elevated to become strategically positioned and part of management meetings (see Table 4.8).

To improve EWP at TLM, the majority of employees suggest more visibility of senior management during EWP activities, more marketing sessions of EWP services and

training of supervisors in their roles in the EWP. These interventions could be employed to improve implementation and service utilisation of an integrated EWP and TLM (see Table 4.9). Comparing the utilisation rate of confidential counselling services (see Table 4.5) and the rating of emotional wellness dimension implementation (See Figure 4.11), it becomes quite interesting to note a significant percentage of employees recommending that counselling should continue being provided internally rather than through contracting an external service provider (see Table 4.9).

Based on the above conclusions, it is clear that utilisation of some of EWP dimension services and activities are less utilised by the employees. This was the finding regardless of the employees' general positive perceptions towards the integrated EWP at TLM.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations emerging from the study are presented in three sections. Firstly recommendations are made to the EWP unit and secondly to TLM management in order to guide the municipality in the programme design and implementation of its own integrated EWP as directed by the above-mentioned conclusions. Lastly, some recommendations for future research are made.

5.4.1 Recommendations to the EWP Unit at TLM

The following recommendations will be forwarded to the EWP unit to guide TLM in programming and implementation of the integrated EWP at TLM:

- The selection of EWP interventions should be based on identified needs and aligned to the organisation's strategy.
- An extensive marketing strategy has to be developed and implemented. More marketing sessions should be conducted; posters, flyers and emails indicating EWP unit contact details, office location and EWP services should be distributed and be strategically placed in areas that will be accessed by all employees.
- When marketing EWP to employees, the EWP unit needs to take into account the different levels of education of employees and to ensure that they are all catered for.

- Confidentiality is the cornerstone for workplace wellness programmes, therefore more training and awareness sessions must be organised where employees will be assured of confidentiality. The EWP policy statement should also assure confidentiality and should be accessible to all employees.
- The integrated EWP should focus on preventative interventions altering high risk behaviours and promoting healthy lifestyles, whilst collaborating all the EWP dimensions including the emotional wellness dimension. The emotional wellness dimension is less utilised as it is perceived to be a reactive component of EWP for referral and treatment of employees with problems affecting their functioning and productivity.
- To improve employees' level of confidence in the programme, the unit must inform employees on how to access the programme, the EWP duties and functions, staff work experience as well as their qualifications.
- Management and supervisors should be trained continuously on their role in the EWP. This will assist in equipping them with knowledge about the programme and on how to improve referrals of employees to EWP.

5.4.2 Recommendations to the management of TLM

The following recommendations will be forwarded to management to guide TLM in the designing and implementation of integrated EWP:

- The EWP unit should be established in line with the SALGA EWP strategic framework for municipalities, in order to have an integrated approach through proper implementation of the six EWP dimensions. Through the broad-brush approach, more emphasis is put on education and preventative services as well as early identification of employees' health and personal challenges, therefore, creating greater opportunity for early intervention and positive outcomes in terms of productivity.
- Senior managers must support the EWP unit, through active participation in the EWP activities. Management should consider the EWP as a programme that when properly designed, implemented and utilised will assist the employer to attain the municipal strategic goal.

- TLM must involve the EWP when implementing the organisational change management process.

5.4.3 Recommendations for future research

It is recommended that a follow-up survey be conducted to measure the success or inadequacies of the programme. The research could go to the extent of establishing, for instance, the employees' reasons for lower preference in utilising the psychosocial component of the emotional wellness dimension, as this was not specifically dealt with in this study.

5.5 RESEARCH GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the study was to explore and describe the perceptions of employees regarding the implementation of the integrated EWP model at TLM. The goal was achieved through realisation of the four objectives which are reviewed below:

Objective 1: To conceptualise the integrated EWP as a workplace programme

This objective was addressed in Chapter Two, through an in-depth literature review which focused on a brief historical background of EAP, WLB and WP. The chapter also focused on the integration of EAP, WLB and WP which led to the development of EWPs. A discussion on the design, implementation and utilisation of EWP at Thulamela Local Municipality was also included in this chapter. In addition the components to ensure an effective EWP and legislations which underpin the programme in TLM were also discussed.

Objective 2: To determine the employees' knowledge and awareness of the EWP at TLM

The second objective was accomplished in Chapter Three, whereby the respondents were afforded an opportunity during data collection to indicate their level of knowledge and awareness and also their existing means of obtaining information about the EWP at TLM. This data was essential to enable TLM to improve marketing strategies to enhance knowledge and awareness of the programme for increased service utilisation. The research findings in Chapter Four established that the majority of employees (90.24%) at

TLM have knowledge and are aware of the existence of the EWP in the municipality, as obtained through different means of information sharing/communication.

Objective 3: To ascertain the employees' perceptions about the possible overlapping of services between programmes

The objective was achieved in Chapter Four, where the research findings to ascertain the perceived value of EWP at TLM indicate that employees are satisfied with the adoption of the broad brush approach based on the integrated EWP being implemented.

Objective 4: To formulate recommendations relevant to an integrated EWP to ensure successful functioning of such programmes

The final objective was achieved in Chapter Five. Recommendations were formulated for integrated Employee Wellness Programme implementers, for management and for future research to improve and ensure successful functioning of such programmes. This objective was also achieved through a discussion on how to expand the research in future in order to achieve more exploratory findings.

5.6 CONCLUDING SUMMARY

The goal of the study was to explore and describe the employees' perceptions regarding the integrated Employee Wellness Programme (EWP) at Thulamela Local Municipality (TLM). According to the research findings, it is evident that the research question that guided this study was answered and all the objectives were achieved. The employees at TLM perceive integrated EWP as a beneficial option to deal with personal and work related issues which affect their functioning and productivity in the workplace and they will utilise the programme in future. This implies that the employees understand the significance of the EWP to improve their health and wellness at the work organisation. However, the emotional wellness dimension of EWP is not being utilised optimally by the employees, due to a lack of programme knowledge, mistrust and various threats to confidentiality regarding the employees' problems. Even though most of the employees who have utilised the EWP have confidence in the programme, in general, the awareness of the different EWP services and their functioning should be improved by implementing extensive marketing for the EWP at TLM.

In conclusion, this study has contributed to the body of knowledge for organisations implementing the integrated EWP internally and for future research studies on the concept of an Integrated EWP in South African organisations, especially in the local government sector.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:
REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Social Work and Criminology



24/07/2017

Our Ref: Prof L S Terblanche
Tel. 420-3292
Fax. 0866287488
Email: lourie.terblanche@up.ac.za

Ref. Malange T.C 16269633
Tel. 0788023479
E-mail: tendanimalange22@gmail.com

The Municipal Manager
Thulamela Local Municipality
Private Bag X 5066
Thohoyandou
0950

Dear Sir/Madam

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO PERFORM EMPIRICAL RESEARCH
MALANGE T.C, STUDENT NUMBER 16269633.**

I am a registered student for the following programme at the Department of Social Work,
University of Pretoria: **Master of Social Work (EAP)**.

I am required to write a **mini-dissertation**, resulting from a research project, under the
supervision of Professor L.S Terblanche. The research will only proceed once a
departmental Research Panel and the Faculty Ethics Committee had approved the proposal

Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Departement Maatskaplike Werk en Kriminologie
Lefapha la Bomotho
Kgato ya Madira wa Leago la Bosenyi

and data collection instrument(s). The following information from the research proposal is shared with you, although a copy of the **research proposal** will be provided to you if needed:

The envisaged **title** of the study is: **Perceptions of employees regarding the Integrated Employee Wellness Programme at Thulamela Local Municipality.**

The **goal** of the study is: **To explore and describe the perceptions of employees regarding the integrated Employee Wellness Programme at Thulamela Local Municipality**

- The **objectives** of the study are:
 - To theoretically conceptualize Employee Wellness Programme (EWP) as a workplace programme.
 - To explore the knowledge and awareness of employees about Employee Wellness Programme at Thulamela Local Municipality.
 - To determine the perceptions of employees regarding utilisation of the integrated Employee Wellness Programme at Thulamela Local Municipality.
 - To formulate recommendations relevant to an integrated Employee Wellness Programme to ensure successful functioning of such programmes.

The **envisaged target group** of the study is: All the employees that are employed permanently and temporarily by Thulamela Local Municipality. Seventy (70) respondents representing different sections within the Municipality will be selected through stratified random sampling.

I intend to do the empirical part of the study through means of a survey according to a structured questionnaire.

This request may result in the practical assistance from your staff in identifying and obtaining permission from the clients prior to the actual survey.

No **costs** will be incurred by this request.

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Social Work and Criminology
Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Departement Maatskaplike Werk en Kriminologie
Lefapha la Bomotho
Kgorō ya Modiro wa Leano le Dikenyi

Possible benefits for your organization can be summarised as follows:

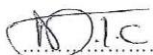
- The proposed study will draw conclusions with strategies that can be implemented to minimise the weaknesses of an internally implemented programme while maximising its strength.

I undertake responsibility to provide you with a copy of the final report – if required.


It would be appreciated if you will consider this request and **grant written permission** on an official letter head of your agency/department/company with the official stamp being added – (if possible) to proceed with the project, at your earliest convenience.

If relevant, also indicate that your agency will act as go-between before the actual data collection will proceed, indicating that permission had been granted and requesting for voluntary participation, where appropriate.

Kind regards



MALANGE T C
STUDENT



PROF L S TERBLANCHE
SUPERVISOR

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Social Work and Criminology
Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Departement Maatskaplike Werk en Kriminologie
Lefapha la Bomotho
Kgoro ya Modiro wa Leago le Botenyi

APPENDIX B:

LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



Private Bag X5066
Thohoyandou
0950
Limpopo Province
Tel: 015 962 7500
Fax: 015 962 4020

Ref : 4/3/4/1
Enquiries : Matloga S.T
Tel : 015 962 7514
Fax : 015 962 4020
Email : matlogast@thulamela.gov.za



To : Malange T.C

From : THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY

Date : 03 APRIL 2018

Subject : REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN
THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY.

1. The above matter refers.
2. Kindly note that permission has been granted with voluntary participation by employees.
3. Practical assistance to access employee's name list will also be provided.
4. Contact Human Resource Section for more information.
5. Hoping that this will reach your favorable consideration


MUNICIPAL MANAGER: MALULEKE H.E



23716

1

THULAMELA
MUNICIPALITY

APPENDIX C:
LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM SAMWU: THULAMELA LOCAL
MUNICIPALITY

SAMWU
LOCAL



THULAMELA

PRIVATE BAG X 5066

THOHOYANDOU

0950

Enq : Secretary of SAMWU
Mulelu P.P

Ext : 7575
071 543 8944

Support to the permission granted for Malange Tendani Constance to access information for research purpose at Thulamela Local Municipality.

Receive revolutionary greetings from South African Municipal Workers Union predominantly known as SAMWU, the above matter bears reference. On behalf of all employees as the only union in the municipality, we wish to allude and support a consent that your student Malange Tendani Constance conduct her research in accordance to our municipality. We also want consent that we will support and be kind to her during the time that she will be conducting her thesis.

With regard to the stratified sampling method which will be utilized in the research, we also consent with assistance of the cooperate department, that she be allowed to access the employees name list.

We hope and believe that you will find our consent to be order.

Yours in service delivery

28-05-2018

Secretary of SAMWU

Mulelu Philelo Philimon

APPENDIX D:
ETHICAL CLEARANCE FROM THE RESEARCH AND ETHICS
COMMITTEE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Research Ethics Committee

22 May 2018

Dear Ms Malange

Project: Perceptions of employees regarding the Integrated Employee Wellness Programme at Thulamela Local Municipality
Researcher: T Malange
Supervisor: Prof L Terblanche
Department: Social Work and Criminology
Reference number: 16269633 (GW20180221HS)

Thank you for your response to the Committee's correspondence of 3 March 2018.

I have pleasure in informing you that the Research Ethics Committee formally **approved** the above study at an *ad hoc* meeting held on 22 May 2018. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should your actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

Prof Maxi Schoeman
Deputy Dean: Postgraduate and Research Ethics
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail: PGHumanities@up.ac.za

cc: Prof L Terblanche (Supervisor)
Prof A Lombard (HoD)

Research Ethics Committee Members: Prof MME Schoeman (Deputy Dean); Prof KL Harris; Dr L Blokland; Dr K Booyens; Dr A-M de Beer; Ms A dos Santos; Dr R Fasselt; Ms KT Govinder; Dr E Johnson; Dr W Kelleher; Mr A Mohamed; Dr C Puttergill; Dr D Reyburn; Dr M Soer; Prof E Taljard; Prof V Thebe; Ms B Tsebe; Ms D Mokalapa

APPENDIX E:
INFORMED CONSENT FORM



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Social Work and Criminology

16/07/2018

Our Ref: Prof L S Terblanche
Tel: (012) 420-3292
E-mail: lourie.terblanche@up.ac.za

Participant's Name:
Date:

Principal Investigator: Malange T.C
Name: Tendani Constance
Institution: University of Pretoria
Address: tendanimalange22@gmail.com

Informed Consent

1. **Title of Study:** Perceptions of employees regarding the integrated Employee Wellness Programme at Thulamela Local Municipality.
2. **Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this study is to explore and describe the perceptions of employees regarding the integrated Employee Wellness Programme model at Thulamela Local Municipality.
3. **Procedures:** The completion of the questionnaire will take approximately one to two hours. All data collection interviews will be scheduled according to the convenience of the respondent.
4. **Risks and Discomforts:** There are no known emotional risks or discomforts associated with this project, although fatigue may be experienced and/or stress when participating in the project.
5. **Benefits:** There are no known direct benefits for participating in this study. However, the results of the study may help researchers to gain an understanding of the employees' perceptions regarding an integrated Employee Wellness Programme and to draw conclusions with strategies that can be implemented to minimise the weaknesses of an internally implemented programme while maximizing its strength.
6. **Participant's Rights:** Any respondent may withdraw from participating in the study at any time.
7. **Financial Compensation:** There will be no financial compensation offered for participating in the project.
8. **Confidentiality:** No identifying information will be reflected in any part of the written report. The collected data will be stored safely for 15 years at the University of Pretoria. The records will be accessed only by the Principal Investigator and authorized members of the research team at the University of Pretoria.
9. **The results will be kept confidential and only released if requested by the respondent.** The results of this study may be published in professional journals or presented at professional conferences, but no records and/or identifying details will be revealed unless required by law.
10. **Any questions or concerns, can be taken up with the researcher, Malange Tendani Constance at (078) 802 3479 at any time during the day.**

I understand my rights as a researcher subject, and I voluntarily consent to participation in this study, I understand what the study is about and how and why it is being done. I will receive a signed copy of this consent form. I am also aware that all raw data generated through this study will be stored at the University of Pretoria for a period of 15 years for archival and possible future research.

Room 15, Level 10, Humanities Building
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Tel +27 (0)12 420 3292
Email lourie.terblanche@up.ac.za
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Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Departement Maatskaplike Werk en Kriminologie
Lefapha la Bomotho
Kgoro ya Modiro wa Leago le Bosenyi

Subject's Signature

DATE

Signature of Primary Investigator

APPENDIX F:
LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE TO RESPONDENTS

Address: P.O.Box 608

Sinthumule

0921

Cell: 078 802 3479

E-mail: tendanimalange22@gmail.com

TO ALL RESPONDENTS

Dear sir/madam

I am registered for the MSW (EAP) degree at the University of Pretoria. The title of my study is "Perceptions of employees regarding the Integrated Employee Wellness Programme at Thulamela Local Municipality". The purpose of my study is to explore and describe the perceptions of employees regarding the implementation of the integrated EWP model at TLM.

Your responses are valuable. Completion of the questionnaire will take + - 45 minutes. The research will assist the Municipality to have better understanding of the perceptions of employees regarding the implementation of the integrated EWP model at TLM, the strength and limitations of the programme as well as possible recommendations to improve the programme.

Thank you for your participation

Malange Tendani Constance

Researcher

Questionnaire: Perceptions of employees regarding the Integrated Employee Wellness Programme at Thulamela Local Municipality.

For Office use.

Respondent number

V1

--	--

Instructions:

- Please answer all the questions as honestly and as openly as possible.

Please do not write your name on the questionnaire so that the answers you supply remain anonymous. Please indicate your answers by drawing a circle around a number in a box or by writing in the space provided.

- Should you require any clarity when completing the questionnaire please contact Ms Malange Tendani at 078 802 3479

Section A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. What is your gender?

Male	1
Female	2

V2

--

2. What is your race?

African	1
Colored	2
Indian	3
White	4

V3

--

3. What is your age?

--

V4

--

4. What is your home language?

Afrikaans	1
English	2
Setswana	3
Isindebele	4
Sepedi	5
Siswati	6
Sesotho	7
Tshivenda	8
Xhosa	9
Xitsonga	10
Isizulu	11
Other(specify)	

V5

--

5. What is your highest educational level?

Below grade 11	1
Matriculation	2
Certificate	3
Diploma	4
Degree	5
Post graduate degree	6

V6

--

6. Are you disabled?

Yes	1
No	2

V7

--

7. For how long have you been an employee at TLM?

--

V8

--

8. What is your current position?

Intern	1
EPWP	2
General worker	3
Support section	4
Line management	5
Middle management	6
Senior management	7

V9

--

SECTION B: KNOWLEDGE ABOUT EWP

9. How did you hear about EWP at TLM?

I do not know of such programme (EWP)	1
I heard about it from supervisor/ manager	2
I heard about it from colleague	3
Through a poster or brochure	4
I attended presentations by EWP Unit	5
Through outreach/ or promotion session by the EWP unit	6
Other (specify)	

V10

--

10. Do you know the EWP telephone/cellphone numbers?

Yes	1
No	2

V11

--

11. Do you know where to find the EWP offices in the municipality?

Yes	1
No	2

V12

SECTION C: PERCEPTIONS REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTEGRATED EWP MODEL

12. Which of the following activities of EWP at TLM have you attended?

Professional and confidential counselling	1
Health risk assessment	2
Critical incident and trauma support	3
HIV/AIDS and chronic management education	4
Recreation activities	5
Other (please specify)	

V13

13. If you had any problem would you utilise EWP services provided at TLM?

Yes	1
No	2

V14

If No, please motivate

.....

.....

.....

.....

14. If you have used EWP at TLM please indicate whether you have confidence in the programme?

Yes	1
No	2
Not applicable	3

V15

Please motivate your answer

.....

.....

.....

.....

15. How do you view the EWP programme at TLM?

Effective	1
Not effective	2
Other (please specify)	

V16

16. Do employees at TLM need EWP services?

Yes	
No	

V17

Please motivate your answer

.....

.....

.....

.....

SECTION D: EVALUATION OF THE INTEGRATED
EWP AT TLM

17. Rate the extent to which the EWP at TLM implements the EWP Dimensions mentioned below? Please use the scale provided where 1= not very satisfactory. 2= fairly satisfactory. 3= satisfactory. 4= very satisfactory.

	1	2	3	4
Spiritual wellness				
Occupational wellness				
Emotional wellness				
Intellectual wellness				
Social wellness				
Physical wellness				

V18

18. Please rate the extent to which you think EWP at TLM presents itself? Please use the scale provided where 1=not evident, 2=fairly evident, 3 evident and 4= abundantly evident.

How EWP at TLM presents itself	1	2	3	4
Visibility				
Accessibility				
Professionalism				
Marketing of EWP services				
Approachability of EWP staff				

V19

19. Does TLM take into consideration the EWP interventions when it implements organisational changes?

Yes	1
No	2

V20

20. In what single most important way do you think TLM could involve the EWP when implementing organisational changes?

EWP should be part of organisational change management processes	1
EWP should be part of management meetings	2
Organisational changes should be implemented after thorough consultation with the EWP	3
EWP should be utilised to communicate organisational changes to employees	4

V21

21. Please indicate which of the following suggestions can improve the integrated EWP model?

Counselling should continue being provided by internal EWP professional rather than contracting external service provider	1
Members of senior management need to be more visible during EWP activities	2
Training supervisors on their role in EWP should be provided	3
More marketing sessions for EWP services	4

V22

On completion, please put the questionnaire in the box provided for the researcher to collect.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Malange Tendani (Researcher)