

**THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE ON PRODUCTIVITY IN  
THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

**BY**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Salome Mabileke More, hereby declare that I understand what plagiarism is and I am aware of the University of Pretoria's policy in this regard.

I declare that this mini-dissertation is my own original work. Where secondary material is used, this has been carefully acknowledged and referenced in accordance with the University of Pretoria's requirements.

I have not used work previously produced by another student or any other person to hand in as my own.

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## ABSTRACT

The title of this study is the influence of organizational climate on productivity in the National Department of Health of South Africa. The goal of this research study was to explore the influence of organizational climate on productivity in the National Department of Health.

In order to accomplish the goal of the research study, three objectives were developed as follows:

- Undertake a thorough literature study to establish the link between organizational climate and productivity;
- Explore the influence of organizational climate on the productivity of the employees of the National Department of Health through an empirical study; and
- Draw conclusions and formulate recommendations to the National Department of Health to enhance productivity and steps to change the organizational climate.

The research question was as follows: What is the influence of organizational climate on productivity in the National Department of Health?

The study utilized a quantitative research design with a self-administered questionnaire as a tool of data collection from the employees of the National Department of Health who are placed in Pretoria. The analysis of data was based on 95 questionnaires from a sample of 130, i.e., a response rate of 73%. The questionnaire had mostly closed-ended questions where respondents were required to assess organizational climate dimensions.

The findings indicate that organizational climate influences productivity in a negative manner, with the organizational climate dimensions of communication and training as major influential factors. Other organizational climate dimensions assessed are conflict, initiative and creativity, quality, playfulness and humour, employee welfare, and supervisory support.

Further research could be undertaken on the influence of training, especially with regards to employee input and involvement on productivity to comprehend the value that these two climate dimensions have in enhancing organizational effectiveness and performance.

### **KEY CONCEPTS**

- Organizational climate
- Productivity
- Influence

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## CHAPTER ONE

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Organizations are faced with the challenge of continuously improving their services and products to ensure sustainability of employees. Improvement of services and products requires innovation and creativity from employees. Although organizations should be able to create an atmosphere that employees perceive as conducive and caring towards them, they should also look at factors that hinders innovation, creativity and productivity, and decreases performance. Research undertaken by the Institute for Organizational Performance (2005) with respondents from Europe, Canada, Asia, Latin America and Africa, revealed that there is a strong link between organizational climate and productivity. Investigating the influence of organizational climate on productivity is seen as imperative, as any organization would like to ensure that it is productive and its input produces outcomes that lead to the attainment of its goals. The researcher is of the opinion that the creation of a positive and a supportive climate should become a part of the strategy of an organization to enhance productivity.

Through the exit interviews that she held with employees who resigned from the National Department of Health, the researcher observed that the majority of them had negative feelings and attitudes that formed part of the organizational climate towards the National Department of Health. Their opinions were that even if they were given a counter offer they would still leave the Department.

Organizational climate is imperative, as it has been linked with factors that affect organizational psychological processes that have a direct influence on performance outcomes for individuals, teams and the organization (Isaksen & Tidd, 2006:310). Patterson, Warr and West (2004:2), however, claimed that research into organizational climate and performance yielded varying results, but they also asserted that there were some organizational climate

dimensions that were associated with performance. These authors attributed these varying results to the use of different performance variations in the temporal sequence of measurement and the fact that different kinds of organizations were examined by different researchers. Despite the varying results in the studies of organizational climate and productivity, Patterson et al. (2004:12) found that five aspects of organizational climate were significantly correlated with subsequent productivity, which are:

- concern for employee welfare;
- skills development;
- reflexivity;
- innovation and flexibility; and
- performance feedback.

In the early eighties, Hernandez and Kaluzny (1982:52) asserted that organizational climate is believed to be a determinant of organizational performance, and that “supportive climates should allow employees to exhibit more productive behaviour that leads to satisfaction.” Glisson (2000:197) takes it further by stating that positive climates are those in which workers perceive that their work environment poses no threat to their personal self-image or career, and provides a return on their investment of personal image. The researcher thus believes that employees working in a positive organizational climate that is non-threatening to them are more likely to be productive than those working in a negative organizational climate.

Ngake (2009) affirmed that there is a link between organizational climate and productivity, because if employees’ perception on the manner in which they are managed is negative, it will probably lead to poor morale that, in turn, may lead to lowered productivity. Ngake referred to a diversity audit that was conducted in the National Department of Health in 2007, which concluded that employees felt that they are poorly managed. He continued to say that unhappy employees just work for the sake of working and are not productive. He also indicated that most challenges in the Department of Health are brought about by lack of people management skills.

Kgang (2009) is of the opinion that there is a definite correlation between organizational climate and productivity. She indicated that if employees' perceptions are negative and depicts unfairness in management practices, grievances are going to escalate. She further indicated that if management practices are viewed negatively, morale will be affected and productivity will be low. She indicated that there are negative perceptions by some of the staff in Home Affairs regarding recognition of performance, as they feel that managers reward staff based on favouritism rather than performance, hence there is apathy in most of the units and this affects productivity. She said that if the climate is negative and not supportive, productivity declines.

Kritzinger (2009) claimed that, in general, there is a link between climate, culture and productivity. She further alleged that if there is a climate of harmony and understanding of each other's cultural background, productivity would rise. She indicated that productivity and morale of employees are closely related, that is, if morale is low, productivity is affected. She said that even though she views the climate of the National Department of Health as supportive towards employees; productivity needs to be improved and this proposed research is a worthwhile project to pursue. The research will assist in giving managers dimensions that they should improve on in order to create a positive climate for productivity.

Modise (2009) stated that organizational climate does have an influence on productivity. She further alleged that if climate is not supportive, productivity would drop. Modise went further to say that issues that affect productivity should be viewed at two levels – an individual and organizational level. She said that employees come to work with their own problems and challenges, and organizations also have problems that impact on productivity. Modise (2009) indicated that a risk assessment project was undertaken in the North West province in 2006. The risk assessment concentrated on two variables, individual and organizational problems, as they recognized that the organizational problems can also impact on productivity. They looked at variables that impact on productivity on an individual/personal level and

variables caused by the organization. Dimensions of the organizational climate (perception of employees and feelings on management practices and policies) featured prominently in the responses that they received, such as employees reporting that they felt unsupported and not recognized as assets, that they suffered from imposed decision making and an atmosphere that does not allow people to be creative, that communication is not clear and that no feedback is given on performance. Modise (2009) concluded that a negative climate is one of the problems that emanates from the organization and it correlates with productivity.

All role players consulted confirmed that there is a link between organizational climate and productivity. They collectively supported the proposed research as a project whose findings and recommendations can be applied in practice. The Department of Health as an organization should thus create a climate that is perceived to be caring and that promotes innovation, creativity and productivity.

Through this study, knowledge related to organizational climate and its influence on productivity may increase, as more focus is placed on individuals as opposed to the organizational wellness in the National Department of Health. The study will assist the management of the National Department of Health to gain more insight into the influence of organizational climate on productivity and as to whether the environment, in particular the policies and practices of the Department, create a positive or negative climate. The researcher wanted to explore as to whether organizational climate influences productivity in the Department of Health, by looking at dimensions of climate that are linked to productivity.

## **1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION**

The basis of a research study is a research problem. Babbie and Mouton (2006:73) state that “all research commences with the identification and clear formulation of a research problem.” Fouché and De Vos (2005a:89) agree that the research problem is the crux of the research process when they state that

before research can be conducted, there must be a clear definition of the research problem. Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006:19-20), as well as Fouché and De Vos (2005a:91-96), identify a variety of research problems of which those relevant to the researcher are personal interest and practical concern.

The researcher, as a professional in the field of Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP), is tasked with the responsibility of improving, enhancing and restoring productivity in the workplace. Understanding and managing issues related to productivity are thus of practical concern to the researcher. Organizational climate has been linked to productivity; hence, in improving productivity, organizational climate has to be taken into consideration.

Schneider, Brief and Guzzo (1996:8) assert that the climate of the organization is inferred by its members. They further allege that the inferences organizational members make about climate are based on policies, practices and routines that they are subjected to, as well as on the kinds of behaviours that they expect, and that they are rewarded and supported for.

A diversity audit was carried out at the National Department of Health in 2007 and although the results were not published, the focus groups held indicated a negative opinion about the Department's management. Some of the findings were that there generally is low staff morale, high levels of conflict between staff and management as opposed to conflict between teams, and that employees do not feel valued, but rather that their efforts are not recognized. Eighty percent of the grievances recorded in the Department from January 2009 to November 2009 are related to unfair management practices. The researcher consequently believes that this study will be able to precisely point out areas or dimensions that the management should improve on in order to create a positive organizational climate and to enhance productivity.

The formulation of the problem was thus based on the premise that climate within the National Department of Health is negatively influencing productivity. The researcher wanted to explore the organizational climate, that is, the

perceptions on policies and management practices, attitudes and feelings about the work environment of the employees of the National Department of Health and its influence on productivity.

### **1.3 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.3.1 Goal of the Study**

The goal of the study was to explore the influence of organizational climate on productivity in the National Department of Health.

#### **1.3.2 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were to:

- undertake a thorough literature study to establish the link between organizational climate and productivity;
- explore the influence of organizational climate on the productivity of the employees of the National Department of Health through an empirical study; and
- draw conclusions and formulate recommendations to the National Department of Health to enhance productivity and steps to change the organizational climate.

### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION**

According to Fouché and De Vos (2005b:100), the careful conceptualisation and phrasing of the research question is imperative, as the entire research process will be focused on answering the research question. A research question was used in this study, as insufficient information regarding the influence of organizational climate on productivity in the National Department of Health was available.

The research question for this study was formulated as follows: What is the influence of organizational climate on productivity in the National Department of Health?

## **1.5 RESEARCH APPROACH**

Research methodology implemented in this study will be discussed thoroughly in chapter three. The researcher suffices at this stage at a concise mentioning thereof.

The research approach for this study is quantitative in nature, as the researcher wanted to measure her data with numbers and analyse it.

## **1.6 TYPE OF RESEARCH**

The type of research for the study was applied research, as it seeks to address productivity issues in the National Department of Health brought about by organizational climate.

## **1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS**

### **1.7.1 Research Design**

The quantitative descriptive (survey) design is applicable for this study, as a questionnaire was utilised as the data collection method.

### **1.7.2 Research Population, Sample and Sampling Method**

The population for this study consisted of the 1042 employees permanently employed by the National Department of Health in Pretoria, South Africa in 2010. The researcher studied a representative sample of 130 employees of the population. The researcher utilized stratified simple random sampling to ensure that there is representation in terms of designation or post level.

### **1.7.3 Data Collection**

The researcher constructed a self-administered questionnaire for data collection (See appendix C).

#### **1.7.4 Data Analysis**

The data gathered were presented graphically using pie charts, histograms as well as numeric formats such as tables.

### **1.8 FEASIBILITY OF THE STUDY**

The feasibility of the study can pinpoint possible unforeseen problems that may arise during the investigation. In the case of the researcher's study, the feasibility study involved various components, all of which will now be discussed.

- **Access of Respondents**

The researcher obtained permission from the National Department of Health to undertake this study and thus had access to employees in the National Department of Health (See appendix B).

- **Financial Implications**

Some of the financial implications of the study, like photocopying and typing, would be incurred by the National Department of Health. The researcher would be responsible for editing fees.

- **Time**

The researcher is entitled to 20 working days of study leave, which was utilized when conducting the study.

### **1.9 ETHICAL ASPECTS**

Neuman (2006:129) maintains that ethical issues are concerns, dilemmas and conflicts that arise from the proper way to conduct research. Strydom (2005a:57) defines ethics as:

A set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or a group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students.

Both authors (Neuman, 2006:129; Strydom, 2005a:57) agree that ethics guide the researcher on what is right and what is wrong in the process of the investigation. Several authors (Cohen, Manion & Morrision, 2000:57-65; Neuman, 2006:129-143; Strydom, 2005a:57-67) have identified various research ethics which the researcher is of opinion are applicable to the study. These will now be discussed.

- **Informed Consent**

Cohen et al. (2000:51) state that informed consent arises from the respondents' right to freedom and self-determination. They also state that informed consent protects the respondents, as they have a right to refuse to participate or withdraw during the study.

The researcher gave adequate information on the goal of the investigation, procedures that would be followed during the investigation, possible advantages and disadvantages, or dangers to which respondents could be exposed, as well the credibility of the researcher to potential subjects. The researcher also gave accurate and sufficient information to all respondents so that they fully understood what the study was about and the process of the study. The researcher ensured that participation was voluntary by informing them that they could withdraw from participating in the study at any time. All the information above appeared in the written consent letter that the respondents signed(See appendix A).

- **Deception of Respondents**

Loewenberg and Dolgoff, as quoted in Strydom (2005a:60), define the deception of respondents as deliberately misrepresenting facts in order to make another person believe what is not true, violating the respect to which every person is entitled.

The researcher gave accurate and complete information regarding the purpose and process of the study in the letter of informed consent, so that no information was withheld or deception occurred.

- **Violation of Privacy, Confidentiality and Anonymity**

Strydom (2005a:61) mentions that privacy implies the element of personal privacy, while confidentiality indicates the handling of information in a confidential manner.

The researcher ensured that the privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were protected by not requiring respondents to fill in their names or any contact detail that would be easy to identify them on questionnaires. Although the questionnaire was hand delivered, a box was placed at a central point in the Human Resources unit for respondents to drop the completed questionnaire. Data was presented in such a way that respondents cannot be identified in any manner. Confidentiality of their responses in the questionnaire was ensured.

- **Release of Publication of Findings**

Strydom (2005a:65) stipulates that the findings of the study must be introduced to the reading public in written form, otherwise even a particularly scientific investigation will mean very little and will not be viewed as research.

The researcher ensured that “a final written report that is accurate, objective, clear, unambiguous and contains all essential information” (Strydom, 2005a:66), was released to the University of Pretoria, the National Department of Health, respondents, and the public.

- **Actions and Competence of the Researcher**

Strydom (2005a:63) indicates that researchers are ethically obliged to ensure that they are competent and adequately skilled to undertake the proposed investigation.

The researcher has over 20 years of experience in the field of social work and the researcher will use the guidance of her supervisor in the research process. The researcher had also successfully completed the module on research methodology at the University of Pretoria.

## 1.10 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

- **Organizational Climate**

Bottyan (2004:5) describes organizational climate as “collective current impressions, expectations and feelings of members of the work unit”. Isaksen and Tidd (2006:307) agree that organizational climate has to do with how members of the organization feel about it, but add that the feelings should have a recurring pattern and that they also include the behaviour and attitudes of employees.

Based on these definitions, the researcher defines organizational climate as collective, recurring perceptions, attitudes, behaviour and feelings about the work environment and the organization.

- **Productivity**

The Canada Pension Plan Disability Adjudication Framework Glossary (2004) states that productivity relates to the person’s ability to produce the standard amount of services, products, or outcomes as described in a job description. Heap (1992:7) and Rogers (1998:5) define productivity as the ratio of output to input for a specific situation.

The researcher defines productivity as the ability to work according to the specified standard utilizing minimal input to get maximum output.

- **Influence**

Influence is defined by What is influence, 2011 as “the ability to alter or sway an individual’s or a group’s thoughts, beliefs or actions”. *The Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* (2008:740) defines influence as “the power to have an effect on people or things”. The researcher therefore defines influence as the power one has to direct a person’s thoughts beliefs or actions.

## 1.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of the study are as follows:

- The working environment and climate of employees in the Johannesburg or Cape Town offices of the Department of Health may be different from those who are in the main offices in Pretoria, hence the results of the study cannot be generalised to the whole population.
- The questionnaire needs to be improved, as some responses were contradictory. An example of this was in the assessment of quality, where respondents indicated that the Department is associated with quality, quality is taken seriously and there are clear standards of quality, however, the employees do not take quality seriously. The researcher believes that improvement should be on the extent to which policies are implemented like quality standards to obtain data that will point out accurately the conditions and minimize contradictions.
- Question 7, Section A of the questionnaire might have been confusing with regards to the options of “diploma/degree” and “postgraduate”. This could have had an influence on the responses.
- There is an overlap in terms of levels between the messengers, cleaners and entry level administration staff being on the same level, i.e., level 4. However, since the questionnaire did not ask employees about their designation/title, but rather about their levels, the researcher is satisfied that there is no confusion or inconsistency in terms of the data collected. It seems the inconsistency was caused during the sampling process by an omission that there is entry level administration staff on level 4. It would have been better in this case to use designations in the questionnaires as sampling was stratified using designations.
- Organizational climate has been a focus of managerial literature for more than half a century. However, all the resources were from an international perspective as locally there is limited information on this topic.

## **1.12 CONTENTS OF THE RESEARCH REPORT**

Strydom (2005b:251-253) identifies the sections of a research report as the introduction, literature review, research methodology, findings and discussion, summary, conclusion and recommendations.

The research report will be divided as follows:

- Chapter 1: General introduction and orientation.
- Chapter 2: Literature review on the link between organizational climate and productivity.
- Chapter 3: Research methodology, data interpretation and analysis.
- Chapter 4: Conclusions and recommendations.

## **1.13 SUMMARY**

The context of the research study was discussed in this chapter. The chapter presented the rationale for the study, formulation of a research problem, goals and objectives of the study, description of the research approach, type of research, research design, limitations of the study and relevant ethical aspects for the study.

Chapter two will focus on organizational climate and its influence on productivity. A discussion will follow on a model for measurement of organizational climate dimensions (Quinn in Patterson, West, Shackleton, Dawson, Lawthorn, Maitlis, Robinson & Wallace, 2005).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AND PRODUCTIVITY**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the first chapter, the researcher introduced the study by discussing its context, focusing on formulating the research problem, research question, goal and objectives. This chapter of the study will provide in-depth knowledge on the concept of organizational climate and its influence on productivity. Perceptions and views of different authors will be used to provide a theoretical background on organizational climate, culture, differences and similarities between culture and climate and the impact of organizational culture on productivity.

#### **2.2 THE CONCEPT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE**

Organizational climate has been a focus of managerial literature for more than half a century (Schneider et al., 1996:9; Kuenzi & Schmike, 2009:635). Lewin, Lippit and White are considered to have played a prominent role in developing the term 'climate' in the late nineteen thirties through their research that linked climate and type of leadership (Ashkanasy, Wilderom & Peterson, 2000:2-3; Schneider, Bowen, Ehrhart & Holcombe, 2000:22; Schneider et al., 1996:9). Other researchers, like Morse and Reimer (1956), Likert (1961), and Katz and Kahn (1966) (in Ashkanasy et al., 2000:23), continued to study climate and produced scholarly work that emphasized human context of work in improving performance and organizational effectiveness focusing on productivity and human outcomes.

Likert (1961) (in Ashkanasy et al., 2000:3), provided a starting point to capture organizational climate through the Likert scale for measuring attitudes. Likert captured organizational climates so as to improve organizations by working with senior managers to monitor the climate.

Patterson et al. (2005:380) describe organizational climate as shared perceptions of the organizational events, practices and procedures. These authors maintain that psychological climate refers to individual perceptions of organizational attributes, such as policies, practices and procedures, while organizational climate refers to these attributes when they are shared by a sufficient large number of people in an organization. Gray (2004:189) summarizes organizational climate simply as “what it feels like to work here”.

The researcher thus defines organizational climate as current shared perceptions of organizational practices, policies and procedures.

Schneider et al. (1996:8) claim that the climate of an organization is inferred by its members based around the following factors:

- How the organization goes about its daily business;
- What goals the organization pursues in terms of quantity, cost containment and market share.

They further maintain that inferences on climate are based on policies, procedures and routines that employees are subjected to and kinds of behaviours that are expected, supported and rewarded. Gould-Williams (2007:1630-1631) agrees that organizational climate is inferred by its members when she maintains that organizational climate has been defined as “a relatively the enduring quality of the internal environment of an organization that:

- is experienced by its members;
- influences behaviour; and
- can be described in terms of values of a particular set of characteristics (attitudes) of the organization”.

### **2.3 ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE DIMENSIONS**

Organizational climate dimensions approaches are based on two facets, namely, the global multifaceted/multi-dimensional and the facet specific climate. Patterson et al.(2005:381) maintain that, initially, an assumption was made that organizational climate could be characterized by a limited number

of dimensions, but over the years, climate dimensions identified as targets of assessments proliferated leading to confusion and slow theoretical progress. Kuenzi and Schmike (2009:703) agree when they assert that scholars disagree about whether organizational climate should be conceptualized as uni-dimensional or multi-dimensional, and if it is multi-dimensional, how many dimensions exist and how those are differentiated.

### 2.3.1 Multi-Dimensional Climate

Patterson et al. (2005:381) summarize dimensions of organizational climate by different authors that give an indication as to how new climate dimensions were added over the years. The multi-dimensional climate dimensions development can be illustrated in the following table:

**Table 1: Multi-Dimensional Climate Dimensions**

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Climate Dimension</b>
Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler and Weick	1970	Individual autonomy Degree of structure imposed on situation Reward orientation Consideration warmth and support
Lawler, Hall and Oldham	1974	Service quality
Gavin and Howe	1975	Communication flow
Drexler	1977	Open-mindedness
Payne and Mansfield	1978	Managerial trust and consideration Risk orientation
Schneider, Parkington and Buxton	1980	Equity
James and Sells	1981	Role stress and lack of harmony
James	1982	Equity
James and James	1989	Job challenge and
James and McIntyre	1996	Autonomy Leadership facilitation and support Work group cooperation, friendliness and warmth

The multi-dimensional climate can thus be illustrated as follows:

- **Challenge and Involvement**

Bottyan (2004:11) claims that participation, consensus and giving feedback, are vital in maintaining motivation towards the achievement of higher goals in an organization. Gray (2004:193) agrees when he claims that the Gallup survey done in 2001 found that engaged employees are loyal and productive and are less likely to leave the organization. Isaksen and Tidd (2006:330) supports the statement above that people who are engaged in an organization are motivated to achieve when they claim that when people are challenged and involved in their organizations, they will be intrinsically motivated and committed to making contributions to make the organization succeed. They further claim that people who are not engaged have feelings of alienation and indifference. When the score for this dimension is low, it indicates apathy about work, general lack of interest in professional development or frustration about the future of the organization (Isaksen &Tidd, 2006:330).

According to Isaksen and Tidd (2006:330), leaders who focus on work challenge and expertise rather than formal authority result in climates that are more likely to be assessed by members as being innovative and high performing. They do, however, advise that a balance must be maintained between creating a climate in which subordinates feel supported and empowered with the need to provide goals, and to influence the direction and agenda of an organization. Hodgetts and Hegar (2008:558) emphasize the benefit of engaged employees when they assert that “engaged employees are not only more productive, they are more positive, profitable, safer, create stronger customer relations and stay longer in the company”. Engaged employees are said to be able to drive innovation and move the organization forward.

According to Hodgetts and Hegar (2008:558), studies conducted by the Gallup survey revealed that organizations that want to promote engaged employees need to pay attention to role clarity, resource availability, talent utilization, recognition, communication, bonding and development.

Bottyan (2004:11), and Isaksen and Tidd (2006:331) agree that performance feedback is important. The authors claim that this feedback will provide useful information for the subordinate to improve or adopt different approaches in achieving goals.

Isaksen and Tidd (2006:331) further indicate that a study that was conducted in seven countries in over 1000 organizations found that organizations that had formal employee involvement reported performance gain of 15% to 20%. Rothschild (2000:196) asserts that numerous studies suggest that people want to have some measure of say in the circumstances of their work, to have discretion or autonomy in how they do their work and to receive recognition.

Denison(2001:355), on the other hand, links involvement with a feeling of accomplishment rather than recognition when he maintains that when there is involvement in an organization, people at all levels feel that they have some input into decisions that will affect their work and that their work is directly connected to the goals of the organization.

- **Idea Time and Creativity**

According to Isaksen and Tidd (2006:331), idea time is the amount of time spent on elaborating on new ideas. People who work under pressure are significantly less likely to be creative. A manager should support new ideas by providing time and resources to generate and test new ideas. Creativity of all employees responds positively to support by supervisors and co-workers, especially those with low self-efficacy, for example, those who do not believe that they have the ability to produce productive, creative outcomes (Isaksen & Tidd, 2006:335). Rothschild (2000:197) asserts that creativity requires the following:

- A commitment to the organization purposes,
- Collaboration with others who may have different but relevant knowledge or perspectives to add,
- A reasonable autonomous environment where one can try different things; and

- A feeling of investment in and over work processes and the ultimate product.

Troy, Szymanski and Varadarajan (2001:95) conducted research on generating new product ideas focusing on the role of market information and organizational characteristics and open mindedness. Openness of communication was found to be strengthening the effect of the amount of market information on the number of new product ideas generated by a work group. They maintain that organizational climate variables could influence the relationship between the amount of information and new product ideas generated.

- **Conflict**

Isaksen and Tidd (2006:337) claim that conflict in an organization refers to the presence of personal, interpersonal or emotional tensions. Conflict is a negative dimension. However, it cannot be avoided, as all organizations have some level of tension. When the level of conflict is high, the working environment is characterized by warfare whereby groups and individuals dislike and hate each other, information hoarding occurs, open aggression and people lie or exaggerate about their needs. During a high level of conflict, groups and individuals gossip, back-bite and also set traps for each other. When the level of conflict is low, people behave in a mature manner, they have psychological insight, they exercise more control over their impulses and emotions (Isaksen & Tidd, 2006:337).

- **Risk Taking**

According to Isaksen and Tidd (2006:338), in a high risk taking climate, bold, new initiatives can be taken even when the outcomes are unknown. In a risk avoiding climate, there is a hesitant mentality and people try to be on a safe side, however they complain about boring low-energy jobs and are frustrated by a long tedious process to get ideas into action. Isaksen and Tidd (2006:338) further maintain that when the score for risk taking is high, people

become confused as there will be too many ideas floating around but few will be sanctioned.

Recent studies conducted on organizational innovation and performance confirmed the need for delicate balance between risks and stability (Isaksen & Tidd, 2006:338). According to Isaksen and Tidd (2006:338), techniques to analyze and evaluate risks are important, but the support from the organizational climate is more important than the tools and method used.

- **Trust and Openness**

According to Gray (2004:91), people are more likely to allow to be influenced by those they trust, and assessment of trust is based on the predictability of another person's behaviour. Gray (2004:91), as well as Isaksen and Tidd (2006:341), agree that trust is an emotional issue. However, Gray(2004:91) also indicates that trust can be stripped of its emotional content.

Isaksen and Tidd (2006:341) state that trust and openness provide an emotional safety in relationships. They continue to state that when there is a level of trust, everyone puts forward ideas and opinions without fear of failure and reprisals and in situations where there is a low level of trust, people will hoard resources. Furthermore, trust can motivate employee to contribute, commit and cooperate by facilitating knowledge and resource sharing and joint problem-solving, however if trust is too high in an organization, relationships may be too strong that resources at work are used for personal issues.

A high level of trust may lead to lack of questioning each other that will in turn lead to errors and less productive outcomes. On the contrary, Ning, Jin and Mingxuan (2007:624) view an environment with a high level of trust as a foundation for harmonious employment relationships. They maintain that researchers have noticed that when employees have trust in top management, their organizational commitment and organizational identity

improve, which in turn causes employees to work harder and spent more time at work.

Isaksen and Tidd (2006:341) state that the frequency of communication within an organization influences trust and that a higher frequency of communication generally leads to a higher level of trust. They also state that trust is associated with role autonomy. Ning et al. (2007:624-625) assert that a highly trusting work environment can enable employees to communicate ideas and share experiences more efficiently. Gray (2004:197) claims that a climate of trust, respect, tolerance and satisfying work are clearly associated with successful achievement of organizational aims.

- **Freedom/Autonomy**

According to Rothschild (2000:196), numerous studies suggest the following:

People want very much to have some measure of say in the circumstances of their work; to have some discretion or autonomy in how they do their work and receive some reasonable share in the value that they add to their products.

Isaksen and Tidd's (2006:341) view on autonomy is similar to that of Rothschild above, as it is evident in their statement that says that a climate with much freedom gives autonomy to people to define their work, exercise discretion, and take initiative to acquire information and to make plans and decisions about their work. Isaksen and Tidd (2006:334) further state that in a climate with little freedom, employees working within strict guidelines and rules, will demonstrate little initiative and will carry out their tasks with no room to redefine their roles.

- **Debate**

Isaksen and Tidd (2006:343) regard debate as a climate dimension. They indicate that in a climate where there is debate, employees are keen to put forward their ideas and in situations where debate is missing, they follow

authoritarian patterns without questioning. When the score for debate is too low, constant moaning and complaining about the situation occurs, people do not look at how they can improve the situation. When the score is too high, there will be more talk than implementation and managers should facilitate discussions and affirm commonly held values (Isaksen & Tidd, 2006:341).

- **Playfulness and Humour**

Isaksen and Tidd (2006:344) state that a playfulness and humour dimension represents spontaneity and ease that is displayed in the workplace. Hodgetts and Hegar (2008:258) agree when they state that one of the conditions given by people to managers to improve productivity is to create a spontaneous, fun, collaborative social environment in which innovation is recognized. A relaxed atmosphere, good-natured jokes and laughter characterize an organization that is high in dimension of playfulness. On the opposite an organization that lacks playfulness is characterized by a stiff, gloomy, serious and grave atmosphere.

### **2.3.2 Uni-dimensional or Specific Facet Climate**

Schneider et al. (2000:26) propose that a research climate has to have a focus; it has to be a climate for something which moved away from multifaceted or global analysis of climate to a more specific approach. A specific climate may be a climate for safety and well-being, or a climate for service. Schneider et al.(2000:26) argue that organizational climate in its generic form has many facets which leads to predictive problems. Kuenzi and Schmike (2009:637), on the other hand, maintain that the focus on facet-specific climates have increased understanding of work climates and their influence on employee and organizational outcomes. However, facet-specific climates poses challenges in terms of definitions, theory and method which tend to concentrate on service, ethics, justice and safety thereby fragmenting knowledge about understanding of work climates.

The researcher argues that assessment of uni-dimensional climate can be useful if organizations would like to specifically change a particular perception

that affects its performance, for example in public hospitals, wherein management assesses a climate of caring towards patients by health professionals.

## **2.4 A MODEL FOR MEASUREMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE DIMENSIONS**

Patterson et al. (2005:381) advise that global, or multi-dimensional, and domain-specific or facet-specific approaches to organizational climate should be taken as valid basis for investigation of environment perception and which approach to take should depend largely on the interest of the investigation. A global approach is viewed as advantageous as it provides a snapshot of the organizational functioning.

Patterson et al. (2005:384) propose a model to deal with the dilemma of what dimensions to include in a measure of organizational climate. They propose one meta-theoretical model, developed by Quinn and his colleagues for almost two decades, which is the competing values model. This model provides a framework of values that underlie organizational climate. The model proposes that organizational effectiveness criteria in literature can best be understood when organized along fundamental dimensions which are flexibility versus control and internal versus external control.

According to Patterson et al. (2005:384) the model is derived from four major schools of study of organizational effectiveness, which are discussed in Table 2.

**Table 2: The Four Major Schools of Organizational Effectiveness**

<p><b>Human relations approach</b> (internal focus and flexibility in environment). Emphasis is on well-being, growth and commitment.</p>	<p><b>Internal process approach</b> (internal focus and tight control). Emphasis is on formalization and internal control of the system in order for resources to be used efficiently.</p>
<p><b>Open systems approach</b> (external focus and flexible relationship with the environment). Emphasis is on interaction and adaptation of the organization in its environment. Managers seeking resources and innovation in response to environmental demands.</p>	<p><b>Rational goal approach</b> (external focus with tight control within the organization). Emphasis on productivity and goal attainment</p>

Patterson et al. (2005:385) further maintain that a combination of these approaches/domains will give a detailed description of climate measure applicable to a wide range of organizations which they termed competing values model.

#### **2.4.1 Competing Values Model and Climate Dimensions**

According to Patterson et al. (2005:385), the competing values model is constituted as the human relations model, the internal process model, the open systems model and the rational goal model and can be discussed in the following sections.

- **Human Relations Model**

The Human Relations Model has, according to Patterson et al. (2005:385-386), internal focus and flexible orientations. It has norms and values associated with belonging, trust and cohesion that are achieved through training and human resources development. The identified climate dimensions are:

- Employee welfare – the extent to which an organization values and cares for its employee;
- Autonomy – designing jobs in ways that give employees wide scope to enact with participation, employees have considerable influence on decision making communication and free sharing of information throughout the organization;
- Training – emphasis on training, a concern with developing employee skills;
- Integration – the extent of interdepartmental trust and cooperation; and
- Supervisory support – the extent to which the employees experience support and understanding from immediate supervisors.

- **The internal Process Model**

The Internal Process Model is, according to Patterson et al. (2005:386), based on internal focus and control orientation. Emphasis is based on stability and formal rules are adhered to. The climate dimensions listed are:

- Formalization – concern with formal rules and procedures; and
- Tradition – the extent to which established ways of doing thing are valued.

- **Open System Model**

The Open System Model is, according to Patterson et al.(2005:386), based on external focus and flexible orientation. Emphasis is on readiness, change and innovation. The climate dimensions are:

- Flexibility – change orientated;
- Innovation – the extend of encouragement and support for new ideas and innovative approaches;
- Outward focus – the extent to which an organization is responsive to customer needs and market in general; and
- Reflexivity – adaptation to wider environment through a concern on reviewing and reflecting on goals, strategies and work processes.

- **The Rational Goal Model**

The Rational Goal Model emphasizes, according to Patterson et al.(2005:386), the attainment of objectives where productivity, efficiency, goal attainment and performance feedback are valued. The climate dimensions are:

- Clarity of organizational goals – a concern with clearly defining goals of the organization;
- Effort – how hard people in organizations work towards achieving of goals;
- Efficiency – the degree of importance placed on employee efficiency and productivity;
- Quality – emphasis on quality procedures;
- Pressure – the extent to which pressure is placed on employees to meet targets; and
- Performance feedback – the measurement and feedback on job performance.

A model for assessment of organizational climate should be taken into consideration when organizations want to have a holistic view of the organizational functioning. The assessment using Patterson et al.'s (2005:381) models, will point out major issues that need to be changed when an organization is not certain about a specific climate dimension that requires attention to improve organizational effectiveness.

## **2.5 CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

Glisson and James (2002:769), and Isaksen and Tidd (2006:309) agree that climate has its roots in psychology whereas culture falls within the domain of anthropology. According to Glisson and James (2002:767), the concepts of culture and climate have been studied for decades in business and industrial organizations, and they have been accepted as important in understanding organizational functioning. Authors (Glisson & James, 2002:767; Patterson et al., 2005:380; Isaksen & Tidd, 2006:380) agree that although climate and

culture are different concepts, they have been used interchangeably by researchers, writers and practitioners.

Patterson et al. (2005:381) define organizational culture as a set of shared values and norms held by employees that guide their interactions with peers, management and clients. On the other hand, climate is said to be more behaviourally inclined in that specific facet climates like climate for creativity, innovation, safety and service may be found in the workplace. Patterson et al. (2005:381) maintain that these climates represent employees' perception of the organizational policies, practices and procedures and subsequent patterns of interactions and behaviours that support creativity, innovation, safety and service in the organization.

Sparrow (2001:89) indicates that:

Climate and culture assessment describe ways in which individuals make sense of their organization and provide the context for organizational behaviour, allowing researchers, practitioners, or consultants to describe, explain, or even predict why some behaviours are more effective than others for a particular organization.

The implication here is that culture can also predict productivity. Schneider et al. (1996:9) state that climate and culture are interconnected, for example, employees' value and beliefs (culture) influence their perceptions of organizational policies, practices and procedures (climate).

### **2.5.1 Similarities and Differences of Climate and Culture**

Climate and culture have similarities and differences. Patterson et al. (2005:380) assert that the similarities of the concepts of climate and culture stems from the fact that both describe employees' experiences of their organization. The differences are as follows:

- **Influence on Behaviour and Attitudes**

Denison (1996:647) asserts that culture and climate literature address a common phenomenon, which is the creation and influence of social contexts

in organizations. Glisson (2000:195) argues that the concepts of climate and culture have both generated interest in the power of organizations to influence and affect the behaviour, attitudes and health of employees.

- **Description**

Climate and culture can be distinguished by their descriptions. Glisson and James (2002:769) define climate as the “property of an individual and culture as the property of an organization” and maintain that climate has been described as the way people perceive their work environment and culture as the way things are done in an organization. Gray (2004:189) agrees with the description above of the concepts of climate and culture when he asserts that “if organizational culture can be summarized however inadequate, as the way we do things around here, organizational climate is shorthand for what it feels like to work here”.

- **Approaches of measurement**

Climate and culture can be differentiated by the approaches used to measure them. Glisson and James (2002:769), as well as Peterson et al. (2005:381), agree that climate utilizes quantitative based questionnaires whereas culture utilizes mostly qualitative measures. Patterson et al. (2005:381) assert that climate measures can be applied across several organizations while culture focuses on a single organization.

- **Focus of Analysis**

In an analysis of culture, the entire organization is considered as a unit of analysis, unlike in a climate analysis, which focuses on individuals and their shared perceptions of groups or divisions (Isaksen & Tidd, 2006:308).

- **Visibility**

Schneider et al. (1996:11), and Isaksen and Tidd (2006:309), agree that climate is distinct from culture because it is more observable at surface level and more amenable to change and improvement whereas culture is at a deeper level and the beliefs and values are not directly visible.

## **2.6 THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE ON PRODUCTIVITY**

Heap (1992:7) states that organizations that are profit-driven measure their productivity through their profits and quality programmes while organizations that are not profit driven like public organizations; their productivity can be measured through their effectiveness. Rogers (1998:5) indicates that rising productivity implies that either more output is produced with the same amount of inputs, or that less input is required to produce the same level of output.

According to Heap (1992:9), productivity is the best measure of the results of management policies and decisions and that productivity measures the efforts of the management team to improve profitability or organizational effectiveness. Effectiveness is “an ability of an enterprise to meet the goals it has set for itself” (Heap, 1992:9). In their research about validating the organizational climate measure linking managerial practices, productivity and innovation, Patterson et al. (2005:398) found that organizational climate is a valid measure of productivity as it can predict it.

Heap (1992:39) indicates that traditionally performance has been associated with efficiency and has been used as a low-level indicator to assess how hard a person or machine has been working, whereas Rogers (1998:5) differs when he asserts that the concept of productivity is linked to efficiency and rising efficiency will mean rising productivity. Heap (1992:39) states that performance measures are related to productivity measures in that they relate an output to input used to achieve the output and therefore, performance relates to quantitative assessment of work level. The researcher concurs with

the view that productivity will measure the effectiveness of an organization in meeting the goals it has set for itself.

It has been demonstrated above by Heap that management has a task of improving organizational effectiveness through productivity. According to Gray (2004:189), recent studies have shown a link between the way people are managed as an important factor in climate and the bottom-line, performance of an organization. Gray (2004:189) further states that the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development did an overview of more than 30 studies carried out in United Kingdom and the United States during the 1990s. No room was left for doubt that there is a positive, cumulative relationship between people management and business performance, for example, the more effective the practice the better the result. The Institute for Organizational Performance's Research (2005) revealed that key relationship factors predicted more than half of the difference between low and high performance. The research also revealed that there is a strong link between how people feel and how they perform. Trust was found to be significant and training and development tailored to the group's satisfaction was also effective in predicting productivity.

Isaksen and Tidd (2006:351) maintain that the most important thing a manager/ leader of an organization can do to obtain productive results is to create the climate and working atmosphere. Leaders/managers within an organization create climates whether deliberate or not. Leadership behaviour's influence on climate is said to be potent and more significant than other factors. The following figure indicates a relationship between leadership, climate and productivity.

**Figure 1: Leadership, Climate and Productivity** (adapted from Isaksen & Tidd, 2006:352).



Leadership creates a climate that ensures productivity (Isaksen & Tidd, 2006:351). Patterson et al. (2004:12) state that eight aspects of organizational climate significantly correlated with subsequent productivity, which are:

- Concern for employee welfare – the extent to which an organization values and cares for its employee;
- Supervisory support – the extent to which the employees experience support and understanding from immediate supervisors;
- Quality – emphasis on quality procedures;
- Effort – how hard people in organizations work towards achieving of goals;
- Formalization – concern with formal rules and procedures;
- Skill development – emphasis on training, a concern with developing employee skills;
- Innovation and flexibility – the extend of encouragement and support for new ideas and innovative approaches; and
- Performance feedback – the measurement and feedback on job performance.

## **2.7 LEADERSHIP/MANAGEMENT PRACTICES, CLIMATE AND PRODUCTIVITY**

Vardi (2001:327) maintain that when people's expectations for receiving support for their performance are perceived to be met, they feel good about organizational climate and effectively perform their tasks. The research he conducted on the effects of organizational and ethical climates on misconduct at work revealed that climate has negative and positive effects on members' intention to behave on the job and the implication for the management is that they should be aware of the differential impact of climate dimension on employee attitude and behaviour. Certain climates are said to encourage patterns of misbehaviour like perceptions of unfair reward system. According to Vardi (2001:327), positive climates are characterized by two main features, for example, the degree to which an organization provides emotional comfort

and support. These climate dimensions have been found to have a positive impact on work attitudes and productivity.

According to Wiley and Brooks(2000:177), linkage research by Wiley in 1996, which summarized 20 studies conducted, suggest that the more present certain organizational or leadership practices are in a given environment, the more energized and productive the workforce, the greater the satisfaction of customers and the stronger the long-term business performance of an organization.

Wiley and Brooks(2000:181) also conducted case studies in banking services, retail and computer cooperation and integrated the results with that of previous published research and linked them with how employees describe a successful work environment. They established practical implications for organizational leadership for the quest to develop work climates and environments most proactive of customer satisfaction and long term success. The implications are focused on strengthening leadership practice to ensure productivity and success of an organization. The implications, according to Wiley and Brooks (2000:189-190), will now be discussed.

- **Strong Orientation towards Customer Service**

Organizations should create and nurture a strong orientation towards customer serving customers as well and a strong emphasis on creating and delivering a high quality product and service. Clear messages regarding this value should be communicated through standards and guidelines. Management should demonstrate on a daily basis through their decision making the importance of this value.

- **Input and Involvement of Employees**

High value should be put on input and involvement of frontline supervisors and employees. Engaging employees and executive managers in dialogue and soliciting and using employees' ideas will ensure that this value is emphasized. Organization should train employees properly in order to perform

duties and should also emphasize training of new employees. Organizational leadership must encourage formally or informally continuous development of employees' skill and knowledge of products and services.

- **Communicating Vision**

Leadership must create and communicate a compelling vision for the future of the organization in such a way that employees understand the direction the organization is taking and how individual roles fit into the organizational success. Proactive communication is essential and will build confidence in the leadership of the organization. According to Wiley and Brooks (2000:189), if leadership adheres to these practices, they will achieve greater success and employees will be intrinsically satisfied with their work and will have pride in it. Staff turnover will be reduced as employees will have confidence in the organization's future.

Reduced staff turnover will contribute to the success of the organization, as more highly tenured and experienced employees will add to the success. Hubbard (2004:14) concurs with this view when he asserts that an organization that has satisfied employees will find that it has low voluntary turnover and highly productive workforce. Hubbard (2004:14) further indicates that there is little doubt that satisfied employees are going to be better workers for example; their productivity will be higher than of those who are dissatisfied.

## **2.8 SUMMARY**

Chapter two provided in-depth knowledge on the concept of organizational climate and its influence on productivity. Perceptions and views of different authors were utilized to provide a theoretical background on organizational climate, culture, differences and similarities between culture and climate and the influence of organizational climate on productivity.

Chapter three will explain the research design and methodology that was used in the study and the statistical analysis and interpretation of the data.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The researcher discussed the context of research in chapter one and focused in chapter two on an in-depth literature study of the concept organizational climate and its influence on productivity. In this chapter, the researcher will focus on the research methodology used, analysis of data gathered from the empirical survey conducted at the National Department of Health, and the interpretation thereof.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH**

Punch (2005:45) regards the research approach as a fundamental issue as it will guide a researcher's method of data collection. Payne and Payne (2005:181) assert that it is conventional to divide social research into two types, namely quantitative and qualitative. Babbie (2005:23) explains that the distinction between quantitative and qualitative data in social research is essentially the distinction between numerical and non-numerical data.

The research approach for this study is quantitative in nature as the researcher wanted to measure her data with numbers and analyse it statistically (Fouché & Delport, 2005:73). According to Bless et al. (2006:184), quantitative research is "research conducted using a range of methods which use measurement to record and investigate aspects of social reality". Fouché and Delport (2005:73) refer to Creswell's definition which states that:

Quantitative research can be defined as an inquiry into social or human problems, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analysed with statistical procedures in order to determine whether the predictive generalisations of the theory holds true.

As the researcher wanted to explore the influence of organizational climate on productivity in the workplace, the factual nature of the quantitative approach

seems to be appropriate as numbers (statistical procedures) have the advantage of being exact (Bless et al., 2006:44).

### **3.3 TYPE OF RESEARCH**

A research study can be basic or applied, depending on the end result of the study. Basic research seeks empirical observation that can be used to formulate or refine theory while applied research is a scientific planning of induced change in a troublesome situation (Fouché & De Vos, 2005b:105).

Authors (Bless et al., 2006:45; Fouché & De Vos, 2005b:105) agree that the main focus of applied research is solving problems in practice. The type of research for the study is applied research, as it seeks to address productivity issues in the National Department of Health brought about by organizational climate. Applied research is seen as appropriate for the proposed study as the knowledge gained will be applied in resolving issues related to organizational climate and productivity.

### **3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS**

#### **3.4.1 Research Design**

Neuman (2000:121-155) makes a distinction between qualitative and quantitative research designs. Bless et al. (2006:71) elaborate further that a research design in a quantitative approach is “a specification of the most adequate operations to be performed”.

For the purpose of this study the researcher focussed on the quantitative research design, of which Fouché and De Vos (2005c:138-141) distinguish four categories, namely the pre-experimental, quantitative descriptive design (survey), quasi-experimental design and true experimental design. The quantitative descriptive (survey) design is applicable for this study and requires a questionnaire as data collection method.

The researcher utilized the survey design as she wanted to “present a picture of the specific details of a situation” (Fouché & De Vos, 2005b:106), exploring the influence of organizational climate on productivity. Babbie (2007:224) asserts that in a typical survey, the researcher selects a sample of respondents and administers a questionnaire. He further asserts that the survey may be used for descriptive, exploratory and explanatory purposes (Babbie, 2007:224). The author continues that surveys are “excellent vehicles for measuring attitudes and orientations in a large population”(Babbie, 2007:224). For the purpose of this study a quantitative approach is viewed as appropriate in the exploration of the influence of organizational climate on productivity.

### **3.4.2 Research Population, Sample and Sampling Method**

Powers et al., as quoted by Strydom (2005c:193), define a population as “a set of entities in which all the measurements of interest to the researcher are presented”. The population for this study will consisted of the 1042 employees permanently employed by the National Department of Health in Pretoria, South African 2010. Employees employed for the Internship Programme and casual employees were excluded, as some of the policies in the National Department of Health (NDOH) are not applicable to them.

Cohen et al. (2000:92) assert that sampling is as important as the methodology and the instrumentation in research as it is important in determining the quality of the study. It is not possible to study the whole population due to time constraints and costs involved (Jackson, 2008:92) and the researcher therefore studied a representative sample of the population.

Neuman (2006:219) defines a representative sample as a “small collection of units from a much larger collection or population; such that a researcher can study the smaller group and produce accurate generalizations about the larger group”. Jackson (2008:97) and Neuman (2006) are in agreement that for the results to be meaningful, individuals who take the survey should be representative of the population under investigation.

The sample size for the study was 130 respondents, according to the guidelines for sampling by Stoker, quoted by Strydom (2005c:196). This is a 12.5% sample which was sufficient for controlling sampling error and questionnaires incorrectly completed (Neuman, 2006:225). The sample was representative of all age groups, gender, race and post levels.

There are two main methods of sampling, namely probability and non-probability sampling. Neuman (2006:220) explains that in quantitative research, probability sampling is used. In probability sampling, each subject has an equal likelihood to be selected to be part of the sample (Babbie & Mouton, 2006:169). The researcher utilized probability sampling, ensuring that every employee had an equal chance of being selected to be part of the sample.

Strydom (2005c:200) indicates that the best-known kinds of probability sampling are simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified random sampling, cluster sampling and panel sampling. To ensure that there was no under-representation in terms of designation or post level, the researcher utilized stratified random sampling. Employees were separated into groups, or strata, according to their post levels, which consists of senior management level 13-16, middle management level 11-12, assistant managers level 9-10, administration support staff level 5-8 and cleaners and messengers support staff level 1-4 (Rea & Parker, 2005:166).

The researcher decided to make use of systematic sampling within each strata, as the percentage sample needed was very small (12%). The sample was selected from the employee list as at December 2010. The selection was done as follows:

- Number of senior managers were 102 and total sample was 12, every eighth name was selected;
- Number middle managers were 145 and the total sample was 18, every eighth name was selected;

- Number assistant managers were 189 and the total sample was 24, every eighth name was selected;
- Number administration support staff were 526 and the total sample was 66, every eighth name was selected;
- Number support staff cleaners and messengers were 80 and the total sample was 10, every eighth name was selected.

The total number of the sample therefore was 130 respondents.

### **3.4.3 Data Collection**

A questionnaire is a tool that is designed to elicit information from respondents (Babbie, 2007:246; Czaja & Blair, 2005:18). According to authors Babbie (2007:245), and Rea and Parker (2005:31), questionnaires have been found to be widely utilized in survey designs.

Hence, the researcher utilized a questionnaire as a data collection instrument. The researcher constructed a self-administered questionnaire using principles and guidelines indicated by Delport (2005:170,171) and Rea and Parker (2005:54-60), with the majority of questions being closed-ended to ensure that questions “can be answered within the same framework and responses can consequently be compared better with one another” (Delport, 2005:175). It also made the processing of answers easier (Babbie, 2007:246; Rea & Parker, 2005:54). Furthermore, the researcher avoided constructing a lengthy questionnaire, as indicated by the authors above. However, the necessary information had to be collected. The researcher utilized the principle of economy, as stated by Delport (2005:170), namely that the respondents had to give as much information as possible in the briefest possible time. This also ensured that the respondents did not become bored with a long questionnaire and leave it half completed.

The questionnaires were hand-delivered and a box was placed at a central point in the Human Resources unit for the respondents to drop the completed questionnaires after seven days. This ensured a raised response rate

(Delpont, 2005:168). The respondents were the employees of the National Department of Health, stationed in the Pretoria offices. The completed questionnaires will be in safekeeping for a period of 15 years at the Department of Social Work and Criminology at the University of Pretoria. The questionnaires were accompanied by a covering letter(See Appendix C).

The questionnaire was pilot tested with two employees of the National Department of Health who are stationed at the Johannesburg office and whom did not form part of the main study. There were no problems identified during pilot testing.

#### **3.4.4 Data Analysis**

Kruger, De Vos, Fouché and Venter (2005:218) maintain that “analysis means categorizing, ordering, manipulating and summarising of data to obtain answers to research questions”. When making an analysis, quantitative data is converted to an intelligible and interpretable form so that the relations of research problems can be studied, tested and conclusions drawn.

A coding system was utilized in order to convert data items into numerical codes. This was prepared with the assistance of the Statistician in the National Department of Health in Pretoria. Data was summarized and presented in graph format and tables using a software statistical programme for social sciences. Frequency distribution was used to determine the number of respondents who gave a certain answer (Punch, 2005:111). The data reduction factor analysis method will be employed to cluster responses together that indicate a negative or positive climate.

The questionnaire was completed by 95 respondents out of 130, which, according to Babbie and Mouton (2006:261), indicates a very good response rate of 73%.

### 3.5 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Hence the research findings are presented as Section A Biographical Information, Section B Assessment of Climate Dimensions, and Section C Management Practices and Productivity.

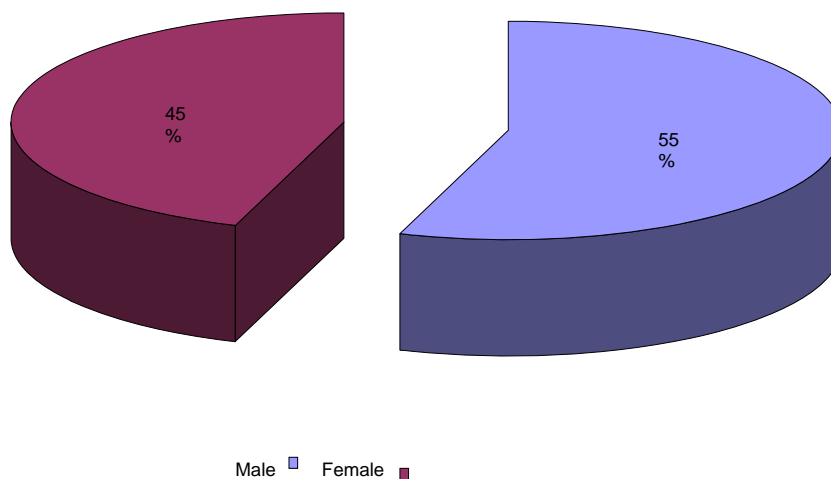
#### SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

- Gender Distribution

**Table 3: Gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
Male	52	55.32	55.32
Female	42	44.68	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>100</b>	

**Figure 2: Gender**



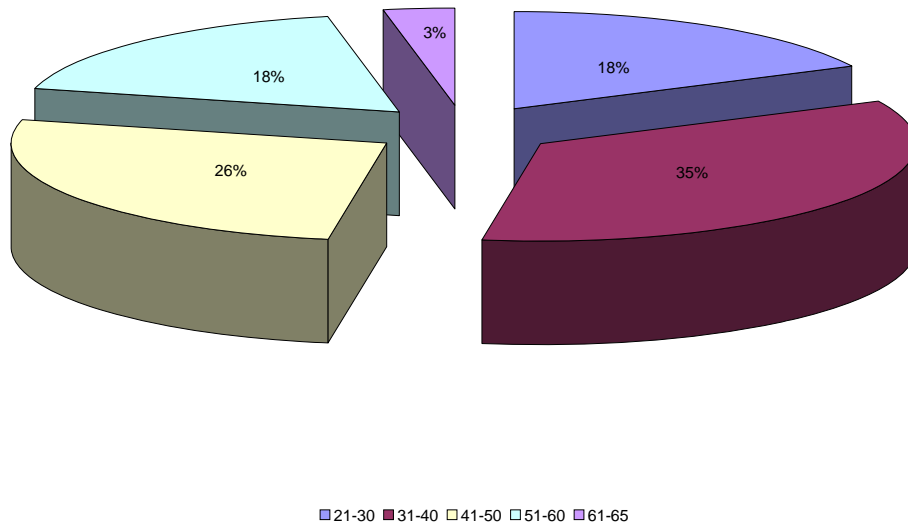
The above table and figure illustrate that a small majority of respondents are male. One respondent did not indicate gender.

- **Age Distribution**

**Table 4: Age Groups**

Age Group	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
21-30	17	17.89	17.89
31-40	33	34.74	52.63
41-50	25	26.32	78.95
51-60	17	17.89	96.84
61-65	3	3.16	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>100</b>	

**Figure 3: Age Groups**



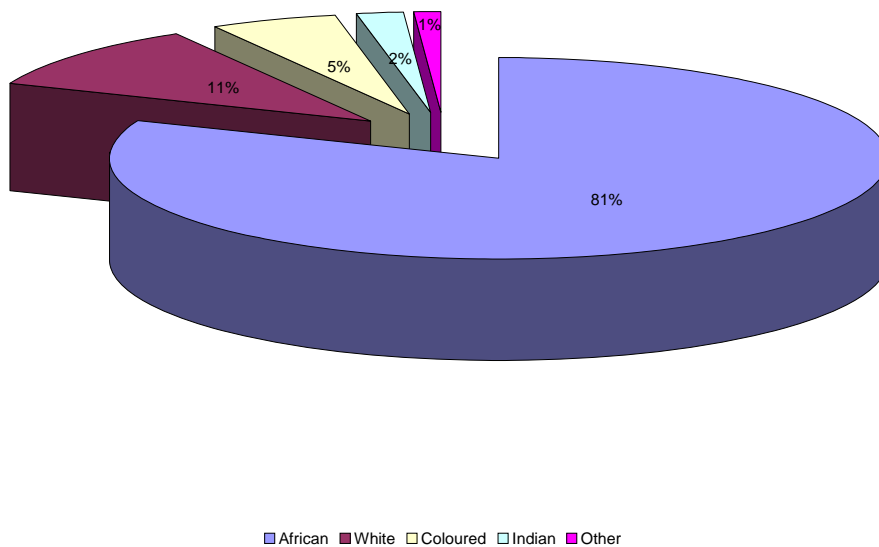
According to Table 4 and Figure 3, the age groups are evenly spread and in combination the tendency is towards 53% employees below 40 years and 47% between the ages of 41 to 65 years. The workforce of NDOH seems well-represented by all age groups.

- **Distribution of Respondents by Race**

**Table 5: Race**

Race	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
African	77	81.1	81.1
White	10	10.5	91.6
Coloured	5	5.3	96.8
Indian	2	2.1	98.9
Other	1	1.1	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Figure 4: Race**



The figure and table above illustrate that the majority of respondents (77) are Africans with 81%. The race distribution represents all race groups and is in line with the country's race distribution whereby Africans are in majority. This also implies that the NDOH has reached its equity targets. "Other", represents other race groups such as Chinese.

- **Distribution of Respondents by Years of Service**

**Table 6: Work Experience**

Work experience	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
0 -1 years	3	3.2	3.2
2 - 5 years	30	31.6	34.7
6 - 10 years	21	22.1	56.8
11 - 15 years	17	17.9	74.7
16 - 20 years	8	8.4	83.2
Longer than 20 years	16	16.8	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Figure 5: Work Experience**

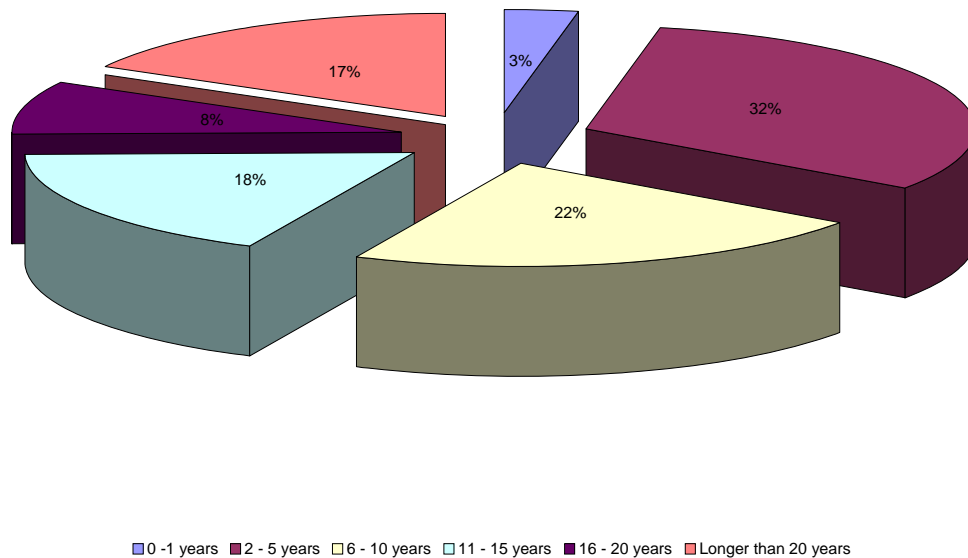


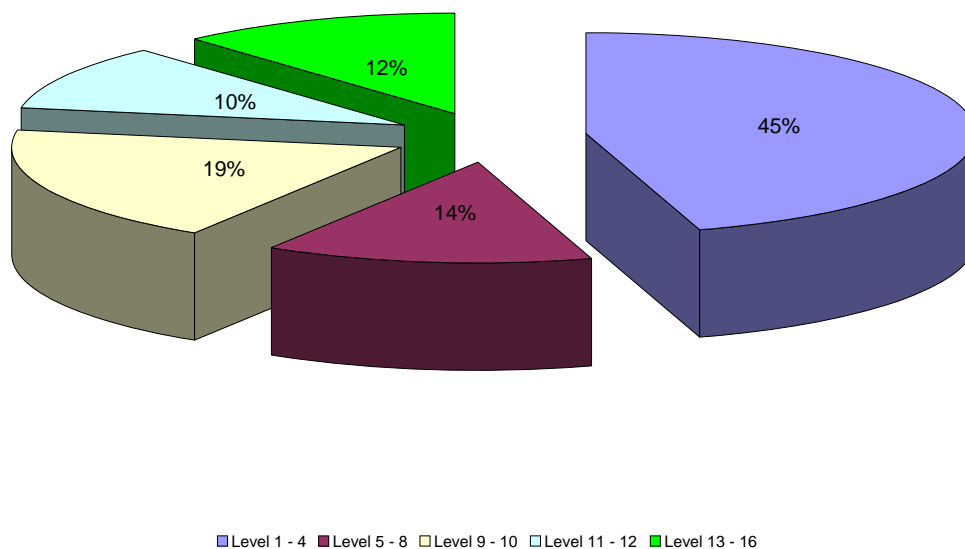
Table 6 and Figure 5 demonstrate that the majority of respondents (57%) have work experience up to ten years and 43%, 11 and beyond 20 years of work experience. The finding above indicates that employees with 10 or less work experience are more likely to stay with the NDOH than those with 11 or more experience which may negatively affect productivity as most employees are less experienced.

- **Level of Seniority**

**Table 7: Level of Seniority**

Level	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
Level 1 – 4 (Support staff: cleaners, messengers and entry level administration clerks on level 4)	43	45.3	45.3
Level 5 – 8 (Administration support staff)	13	13.7	58.9
Level 9 – 10 (Assistant managers)	18	18.9	77.9
Level 11 – 12 (Middle management)	10	10.5	88.4
Level 13 – 16 (Senior management)	11	11.6	100.0
Total	<b>95</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Figure 6: Level of Seniority**



The majority of respondents are administration staff, cleaners and messengers(1-8) as some cleaners and messengers with over 20 years of experience are on the same level with entry level administration staff which is level 4. This indicates a limitation of the study as there is an overlap in terms of levels between the messengers, cleaners and entry level administration staff being on the same level, i.e., level 4. However, since the questionnaire did not ask employees about their designation/title but asked them about their levels which the researcher is satisfied there is no confusion or inconsistency

in terms of data collected. It seems the inconsistency was caused by an omission that there is entry-level administration staff on level 4 during the sampling process. It would have been better in this case to use designations in the questionnaires as sampling was stratified using designations. The finding also indicates that most employees doing administration work are on level 4.

- **Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status**

**Table 8: Marital status**

Status	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
Single	43	45.3	45.3
Married	13	13.7	58.9
Divorced	18	18.9	77.9
Widowed	10	10.5	88.4
Cohabiting	11	11.6	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Figure7: Marital Status**

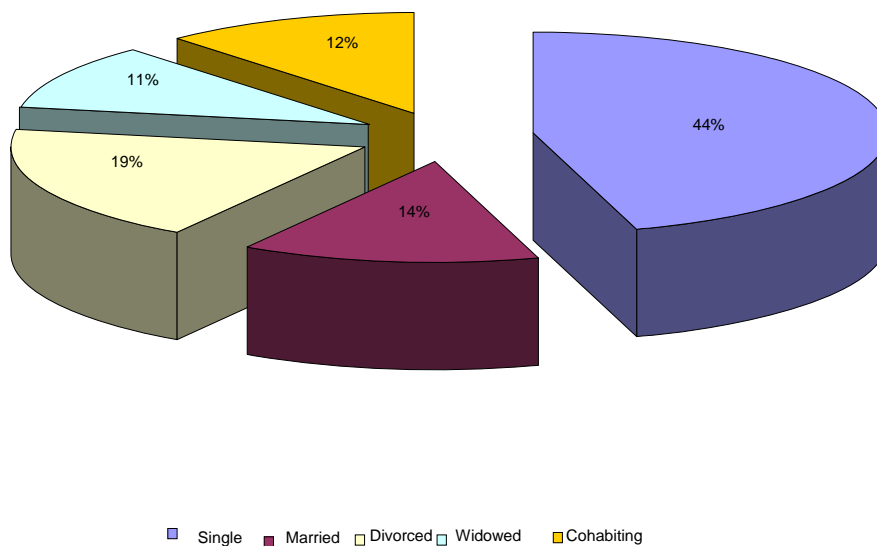


Table 8 and Figure 7 indicate that the majority (75%) of respondents (71) are either single (45%), divorced (19%) or widowed (11%) whereas only 25% of

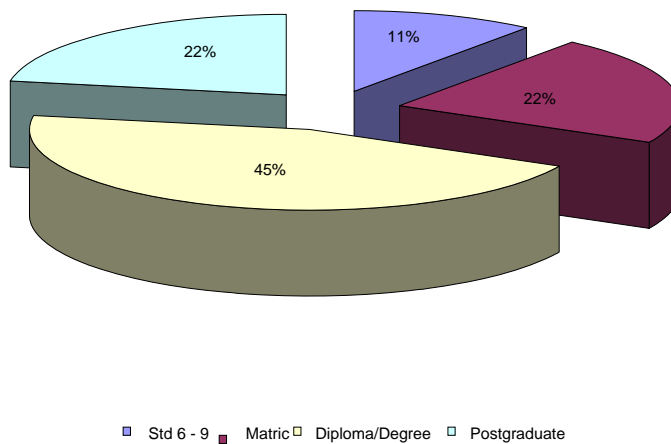
respondents are in a relationship. This may be an indication that employees in the NDOH find it difficult to handle their careers and responsibility of raising a family at the same time.

- **Highest Educational Qualification**

**Table 9: Highest Qualification**

Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
Std 6 – 9	10	10.5	10.5
Matric	21	22.1	32.6
Diploma/Degree	43	45.3	77.9
Postgraduate	21	22.1	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Figure 8: Highest Educational Qualification**



Forty five percent of respondents (43) have a diploma/degree, while 21 respondents (22%) have matric and 11% have standard six to nine. In table 8, 21 respondents (22%) indicate that they have a postgraduate degree. The findings are consistent as most of the respondents are administration staff and support staff (59%) of which the minimum qualification for administration staff is matric while for support staff is abet (adult basic education training). The

finding also implies that a small number of employees doing administration work have a degree or diploma.

## SECTION B: ASSESSMENT OF CLIMATE DIMENSIONS

Climate dimensions were categorised as communication, trust and openness, conflict, initiative and creativity, quality, playfulness and humour, reflexivity, employee welfare, training, supervisory support and commitment. Following is the analysis and interpretation of climate dimensions. The respondents were requested to rate the statements using the criteria, strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree.

- **Communication**

Seven statements were used to assess the climate dimension communication.

**Table 10: Communication**

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N
1	5(5%)	31(33%)	47(49%)	12(13%)	95(100%)
2	4(4%)	20 (21%)	49 (52%)	22 (23%)	95(100%)
3	4 (4%)	24 (25%)	55 (58%)	12 (13%)	95(100%)
4	2 (2%)	43 (45%)	40 (42%)	10 (11%)	95(100%)
5	5 (5%)	28 (29%)	48 (51%)	14 (15%)	95(100%)
6	1 (1%)	29 (31%)	53 (56%)	12 (13)	95(100%)
7	4 (4%)	25 (26%)	56 (59%)	10 (11%)	95(100%)

Table 10 shows the majority of the respondents(62%) reported that their managers do not consult nor engage employees before making decisions that affect their work. Gray (2004:193) found in the Gallup survey done in 2001 that engaged employees are loyal and productive and are less likely to leave the organization. Isaksen and Tidd (2006:330) claim that people who are not engaged have feelings of alienation and indifference. Based on the views of the respondents and literature there might be some feelings of alienation or indifference which may lead to low loyalty and productivity.

The majority of the respondents (75%) indicated that they do not get regular feedback on their performance. Bottyan (2004:11), and Isaksen and Tidd

(2006:331) claim that performance feedback will provide useful information for the subordinate to improve or adopt different approaches in achieving goals. It seems that lack of regular feedback on performance in the National Department of Health may negatively affect achievement of goals thus leading to low productivity.

A majority of respondents (71%) concur that there is no open communication as they disagreed with the statement that everyone is aware of what is going on in the department. Isaksen and Tidd (2006:341) say that openness provides an emotional safety in relationships and everyone puts forward ideas and opinions without fear of failure and reprisals. The researcher is of opinion that employees in the National Department of Health are afraid to voice their opinions as openness that provides emotional safety in relationships is lacking and this affects productivity as employees who are skilled and knowledgeable will not propose better ideas and approaches to assist the Department to reach its goals.

Most of the respondents (53%) indicate that they do not have a say in how their work needs to be done. This result can be linked with the result of the first statement that management do not have discussions with them before making decisions that affect their work. This view from the respondents seems to be in line with Rothschild's (2000:196) statement that numerous studies suggest that people want to have some measure of say in the circumstances of their work, to have discretion or autonomy in how they do their work and to receive recognition. It seems that based on the views of respondents and literature, lack of discretion, autonomy and input on how work is done by employees, may negatively affect productivity in the NDOH.

Most of the respondents (66%) indicate that there is no cooperation and sharing of information in the Department. Patterson et al. (2005:385) identify "free sharing of information throughout the organization" as part of autonomy as one climate dimension in the Human relations model. Although this statement does not indicate that cooperation and sharing of information is

between managers or peers, it might indicate that there is no cooperation and sharing of information which may negatively affects productivity.

The majority of respondents (53%) indicate that there is no open and frequent communication. Isaksen and Tidd (2006:341) state that the frequency of communication within an organization influences trust and in general higher frequency of communication raises a higher level of trust. Based on the views of the respondents and literature it seems that there is lack of trust which may influence productivity negatively.

The majority of the respondents (70%) are afraid to put forward their views. According to Isaksen and Tidd (2006:338) there is a hesitancy mentality and people try to be on the safe side in a high risk taking climate. It seems that productivity may be negatively affected by fear of giving input that could improve working methods thus improving productivity.

- **Trust and Openness**

Seven statements were used to assess the climate dimension trust and openness.

**Table 11: Trust and Openness**

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N
1	4(4%)	35(37%)	42(45%)	13(14%)	94(100%)
2	4(4%)	44(46%)	44(46%)	3(3%)	95(100)
3	6(6%)	50(53%)	35(37%)	4(4%)	95(100)
4	15(16%)	61(64%)	15(16%)	4(4%)	95(100%)
5	7(7%)	61(64%)	24(25%)	3(3%)	95(100%)
6	23(24%)	59(63%)	12(13%)	0(0%)	94(100%)
7	9(9%)	38(40%)	47(50%)	1(1%)	95(100%)

Table 11 indicates that the majority of respondents (59%)disagree that management trusts employees. The finding points that there is a low level of trust which is disadvantageous for the Department as Isaksen and Tidd

(2006:341) regard trust as advantageous for an organization when they state that trust can motivate employee to contribute, commit and cooperate by facilitating knowledge and resource sharing and joint problem-solving. This finding indicates that employees are not committed, cooperative and motivated to contribute due to the low level of trust which may lead to lowered productivity.

An insignificant majority of respondents (51%) agree that employees are not questioned about their activities. The finding is that there is some level of trust, however it is contrary to the previous one which indicated that management do not trust employees. This indicates that there is a low level of trust which may affect productivity.

Most of the respondents (59%) indicate that employees work within strict rules. Isaksen and Tidd (2006:334) state that in a climate with little freedom, where employees work within strict guidelines and rules, will demonstrate little initiative and will carry out their tasks with no room to redefine their roles. It seems that employees in the NDOH work under strict rules which hinder initiative thus may affect their productivity negatively.

The majority of respondents (80%) agree that management requires that employees should get approval before embarking on any activity. This is consistent with government regulation that management must give approval before projects or activities can be implemented. It has been demonstrated in the previous finding that little freedom and strict guidelines may affect productivity negatively. Obtaining approval for every activity indicates little freedom which also may affect productivity negatively.

A majority of the respondents (71%) agree that employees are not allowed to deviate from the rules even if it assists them to do their work. If the statement of Isaksen and Tidd (2006:341) is taken into consideration that a climate with much freedom gives autonomy to people to define their work, exercise discretion, and take initiative to acquire information and to make plans and decisions about their work, this finding then demonstrates that employees in

the NDOH do not have autonomy to redefine their work and exercise their discretion so as to improve effectiveness.

The majority of employees (85%) are in agreement that following procedure is very important in the Department. This finding is consistent with the previous finding above that employees are not allowed to deviate from rules thus hampering productivity as when employees have better ways of carrying out their work that could increase productivity, they will not be able to use them due to the climate that does not allow them to do so.

Table 10 indicates that there is an even distribution concerning management's interest in the outcome and procedures in the Department. This finding could indicate that as much as procedures are important so as to be in line with government procedures as demonstrated by previous findings in this climate dimension, outcomes are equally important as they indicate achievement of goals to management.

- **Conflict**

Five statements were used to assess the climate dimension conflict.

**Table 12: Conflict**

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N
1	9(9%)	50(53%)	33(35%)	3(3%)	95(100)
2	6(6%)	47(50%)	35(37%)	7(7%)	95(100%)
3	6(6%)	46(49%)	37(39%)	5(5%)	94(99%)
4	18(19%)	44(46%)	31(33%)	2(2%)	95(100%)
5	12(13%)	56(59%)	21(22%)	6(6%)	95(100%)

Table 12 indicates that there is tension amongst employees in the Department as 62% of respondents agree with this statement. Isaksen and Tidd (2006:337) claim that conflict is a negative dimension and cannot be avoided as all organizations have some level of tension. Although the statement does not measure whether conflict is high or low, the finding indicates that tension is present and may affect working relationships and hence lead to poor performance.

A small majority of the respondents (56%) agree that employees enjoy good relations with each other. As the previous finding indicated that there is tension in the workplace and it is contrary to this finding that employees enjoy good relations amongst themselves, it can be assumed that employees get along with each other but the tension is created by the relationship between employees and management. This indicates that tension between management and employees may affect productivity negatively in the NDOH.

The majority of employees (55%) agree that employees have an ability to control their emotions and solve their problems. This finding is in agreement with the view of Isaksen and Tidd (2006:337) who indicate that when the level of conflict is low, people behave in a mature manner, they have psychological insight and they exercise more control over their impulses and emotions. Based on respondents' views and literature, it seems that employees in the NDOH behave in a mature manner and there is low conflict amongst them which affects productivity positively.

The majority of respondents (65%) agree that employees are not allowed to question management decisions. This finding is consistent with two previous findings on communication where respondents reported that their managers do not engaged them before making decisions that affect their work and that they do not have a say in how their work is done. It seems that productivity is affected negatively within the NDOH where there is lack of consultation and no input from employees about their work.

The majority of respondents (72%) agree that employees have complaints about their work environment, but do nothing about it. This finding is in line with the view of Isaksen and Tidd (2006:343) who argue that when the score for debate is too low, constant moaning and complaining about the situation occurs, and people do not look at how they can improve the situation. This finding indicates that productivity may be affected negatively in the NDOH as employees constantly complain about their work but do not do anything to improve the situation.

- **Initiative and Creativity**

Seven statements were used to assess the climate dimension initiative and creativity.

**Table 13: Initiative and Creativity**

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N
1	6(6%)	34(36%)	41(43%)	14(15%)	95(100%)
2	7(7%)	40(42%)	42(44%)	6(6%)	95(100%)
3	6(6%)	36(38%)	48(51%)	5(5%)	95(100%)
4	4(4%)	18(19%)	63(66%)	10(11%)	95(100%)
5	6(6%)	55(58%)	31(33%)	3(3%)	95(100%)
6	3(3%)	40(42%)	45(47%)	7(7%)	95(100%)
7	13(14%)	42(44%)	35(37%)	5(5%)	95(100%)

Table 13 indicates that the majority of respondents (58%) disagree that creativity is supported by management. According to Isaksen and Tidd (2006:331), people who work under pressure are significantly less likely to be creative and a manager should support new ideas by providing time and resources to generate and test new ideas. Based on literature and views of respondents it seems that employees in the NDOH are not given an opportunity to be creative and also work under pressure which may affect their productivity.

A slight majority of respondents (51%) disagree that employees are encouraged to work together in order to find new, innovative ways of doing things. Rothschild (2000:197) asserts that creativity requires the collaboration with others who may have different but relevant knowledge or perspectives to add. With the research of Troy et al. (2001:95), they found that openness of communication was found to be strengthening the effect of the amount of market information on the number of new product ideas generated by a work group. It seems that employees do not collaborate in finding innovative ways of doing things which affect productivity as lack of collaboration could lead to high costs in service delivery.

The majority of respondents (56%) disagree that employees are always working towards new ways of solving problems in the Department.

Most respondents (74%) indicated that employees are not allowed to indicate projects if the outcomes are unknown. Isaksen and Tidd (2006:341) maintain that creativity of all employees responds positively to support by supervisors and co-workers. This finding indicates that employees in the NDOH are not innovative and do not take any risks as they are not supported by management. This may affect productivity negatively.

The majority of respondents (64%) agree that employees can take initiative to acquire new information. This statement does not however make it clear as to what type of information nor indicate as to whether the information can be utilised to improve productivity or if it can be utilised to improve the working environment.

Fifty five percent (55%) of respondents disagree that employees are allowed to use their discretion with regard to their work. Rothschild (2000:196) maintains that a climate with freedom gives people autonomy to redefine their work, exercise discretion, take initiative to acquire new information and to make plans and decisions about their work. The finding presented here is that respondents do not enjoy a climate of freedom which gives them autonomy to decide about their work. The finding is consistent with views by Isaksen and Tidd (2006:334) that little freedom means that employees work within strict guidelines and roles which results in little initiative which in turn may affect productivity negatively as employees may feel that they do not have any control over their work.

Most respondents 58% agreed that employees are keen to put their ideas forward, while 42% disagreed. This indicates that even when employees in the NDOH are keen to put their ideas forward, if they work within strict rules and guidelines, they will have little initiative, as demonstrated above, including forwarding those ideas to management.

- **Quality**

Four statements were used to assess the climate dimension quality.

**Table 14: Quality**

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	29(31%)	43(45%)	19(20%)	4(4%)	95(100%)
2	2(2%)	28(29%)	52(55%)	13(14%)	95(100%)
3	15(16%)	44(46%)	32(34%)	4(4%)	95(100%)
4	10(11%)	53(56%)	29(31%)	3(3%)	95(100%)

The majority of respondents (76%) agree that quality is important in the Department (question 1) and (65%) also indicate that employees take quality seriously (question 2). According to Patterson et al. (2005:380) the rational goal model of organizational climate has as one of its dimensions quality which emphasizes quality procedures. This model focuses on attainment of objectives, productivity, efficiency, goal attainment and performance feedback. Quality is associated with attainment of objectives and productivity among other aspects. It can therefore be assumed that where quality is emphasized, employees are more likely to be productive. The finding however does not indicate that quality procedure is implemented but indicates that quality is viewed as important.

The majority of employees (62%) agree that the Department is associated with high quality services (question 3) and (63%) agree that there are clear standards of high quality services (question4). Productivity has been associated with quality which seems to be present in the NDOH.

- **Playfulness and Humour**

Five statements were used to assess the climate dimension playfulness and humour.

**Table 15: Playfulness and Humour**

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	5(5%)	53(56%)	27(28%)	10(11%)	95(100)
2	4(4%)	45(48%)	42(45%)	3(3%)	94(99%)
3	10(11%)	30(32%)	53(56%)	2(2%)	95(100%)
4	4(4%)	54(57%)	34(36%)	3(3%)	95(100%)
5	11(12%)	37(39%)	40(42%)	7(7%)	95(100%)

Most respondents (61%) agree that employees are able to laugh out loud in the work place, (52%) indicates that the atmosphere in the Department is relaxed and that (58%) agree that humour forms part of the work environment. The finding is related to Hodgetts and Hegar (2008:258) assertion that for managers to improve productivity, they have to create a spontaneous fun and collaborative social environment in which innovation is recognized.

Although 58% of the respondents disagree that people in the Department are very serious, (51%) agree that it is only work and no play. The finding here is that there is presence of humour in the NDOH which affects productivity positively.

- **Reflexivity**

Three statements were used to assess the climate dimension reflexivity.

**Table 16: Reflexivity**

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	8(8%)	53(56%)	29(31%)	5(5%)	95(100%)
2	9(9%)	51(54%)	29(31%)	6(6%)	95(100%)
3	6(6%)	35(37%)	43(45%)	11(12%)	95(100%)

Most respondents (64%) agree that the Department reviews and changes its objectives when circumstances change (question 1) (60%), they agree that

ways of working are changed to improve performance (question 2). It seems that employees' objectives are changed when circumstances change which can be positive, however, lack of communication and engagement can lead to misinterpretation of changes which may affect productivity negatively.

Most respondents (57%) however, disagree with the statement that management seeks employees' ideas. Hodgetts and Hegar (2008:558) emphasize the benefit of engaged employees when they assert that "engaged employees are not only more productive, they are more positive, profitable, safer, create stronger customer relations and stay longer in the company." Based on views of respondents and literature it seems that employees in the NDOH are not engaged hence they may be less productive.

- **Employee Welfare**

Four statements were used to assess the climate dimension employee welfare.

**Table 17: Employee Welfare**

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	7(7%)	35(37%)	43(45%)	10(11%)	95(100%)
2	4(4%)	42(44%)	38(40%)	11(12%)	95(100%)
3	12(13%)	48(51%)	31(33%)	4(4%)	95(100%)
4	9(9%)	38(40%)	39(41%)	9(9%)	95(100%)

Table 17 indicates that the majority of respondents disagree that the Department cares about its employees (56%), that needs and interest of employees are taken into consideration(52%), that the Department is only interested in employees' work performance(64%) and that there is support when an employee has a problem (51%). If the opinion of Vardi (2001:327) is taken into consideration where it is indicated that positive climates are characterized by two main features namely the degree to which an organization provides emotional comfort and support, it seems that employee welfare is not taken into consideration in the Department. It seems that the NDOH's climate is negative as emotional comfort and support is lacking which may affect productivity negatively.

- **Training**

Three statements were used to assess the climate dimension training.

**Table 18: Training**

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	12(13%)	40(42%)	33(35%)	10(11%)	95(100%)
2	7(7%)	25(26%)	53(56%)	10(11%)	95(100%)
3	6(6%)	32(34%)	39(41%)	18(19%)	95(100%)

Although the majority of respondents (66%) indicate that employees are not properly trained to do their work (question 2), (56%) agree that management encourages employees to develop their skills and knowledge. The lack of a development plan for every employee has been indicated by (60%) of the respondents. Patterson et al. (2004:12) found that the aspect of training/skills development as part of the eight aspects of organizational climate, significantly correlated with productivity. It implies that if employees are trained or skills developed it will lead to productivity. Here, however respondents indicated that they are not properly trained which implies that the training climate dimension is low, that may subsequently lead to low productivity.

- **Supervisory Support**

Five statements were used to assess the climate dimension supervisory support.

**Table 19: Supervisory Support**

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	6(6%)	33(35%)	41(43%)	15(16%)	95(100%)
2	3(3%)	49(52%)	35(37%)	8(8%)	95(100%)
3	6(6%)	44(46%)	35(37%)	10(11%)	95(100%)
4	7(7%)	53(56%)	26(27%)	9(9%)	95(100%)
5	11(12%)	61(64%)	15(16%)	8(8%)	95(100%)

Although Table 19 indicates that most respondents (59%) do not trust their supervisors enough to discuss personal problems with them (question 1), but

they rely on their supervisors for guidance (55%) (question 2), to discuss their grievances with (52%) (question 3) and attend to their work problems (63%) (question 4). The majority of respondents (76%) also agree that when they have a problem at work, they consult their supervisors. Ning et al. (2007:624) view an environment with a high level of trust as a foundation for harmonious employment relationships, which causes employees to work harder and spent more time at work. Supervisory support has been correlated to subsequent productivity in a study that was conducted by Patterson et al. (2004:12).

### Commitment

Three statements were used to assess the climate dimension commitment.

**Table 20: Commitment**

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	6(6%)	33(35%)	48(51%)	8(8%)	95(100%)
2	9(9%)	41(43%)	39(41%)	6(6%)	95(100%)
3	13(14%)	47(49%)	34(36%)	1(1%)	95(100%)

Table 20 indicates that (59%) of respondents affirm the view that employees do not put effort in their work but only do the minimum of what is required (52%). Most respondents (63%) however, agree that employees work hard to achieve their goals. This may point that there is some level of commitment. The climate dimension commitment, does not form part of the eight aspects that were correlated to productivity by Patterson et al. (2004:12), however, effort which assess how hard people in organizations work has been associated with subsequent productivity.

## SECTION C: MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND PRODUCTIVITY

In this section, respondents were required to assess management and leadership practices indicating with a Yes or No, to seven statements related to productivity and management practices. In addition to these statements, two open ended questions were asked in order to illicit answers on:

- How can the Department improve its climate? and
- How can the Department help you to improve your productivity?

Fifty three respondents (56%) indicate that their jobs do meet their expectations, 71 respondents (75%) find their work as challenging and 71 of the respondents (75%) are very competitive. The majority (92) of respondents (97%) also indicate that they do not stay away from work when they have problems. According to Isaksen and Tidd (2006:330) leaders who focus on work challenge and expertise rather than formal authority result in climates that are more likely to be assessed by members as being innovative and performing high. It can be interpreted that those respondents who perceived their work as challenging regard work climate as innovative and performing high.

Forty nine of the respondents (52%) do not have plans of leaving the Department. The finding presented here is that, although a slight majority of respondents indicated that they do not have plans of leaving the Department, a considerable number (46 of the respondents) 48% plans on leaving. Fifty two respondents (55%) indicate that their skills are not utilized to their satisfaction. There may be a link to the responses given by respondents who felt that their skills are not utilized with the response that they plan to leave. Gray (2004:193) states that engaged employees are loyal and productive and are less likely to leave the organization. This finding is consistent with an earlier finding on low level of communication which is more likely to lead to lack of loyalty and low productivity.

Fifty one respondents (54%) attributed success in their jobs to how the Department is treating them. This implies that if respondents perceive that

they are not treated fairly, it will lead to lack of success in their jobs. Gray (2004:189) states that the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development did an overview of more than 30 studies carried out in United Kingdom and the United States during the 1990s. The findings left no room for doubt that there is a positive, cumulative relationship between people management and business performance – the more effective the practice the better the result.

- **CLIMATE IMPROVEMENT**

A number of common themes appeared in the responses of the question on how the Department can improve its climate. Hubbard (2004:14) asserts that an organization that has satisfied employees will find that it has a low voluntary turnover and a highly productive workforce. The following themes can be presented:

- **Communication**

Regarding communication, the following issues were raised: transparency, interaction between management and subordinates, open communication, consultation before decisions are made, sharing of information, communication at all levels, listening and taking employees views seriously, open-door policy and feedback. One respondent suggests a forum for discussion. These suggestions concur with Wiley and Brooks (2000:183), who indicate that a high value should be put on input and involvement of frontline supervisors and employees. Engaging employees and executive managers in dialogue and soliciting and using employees' ideas will ensure that this value is emphasized.

- **Needs and Concerns of Employees**

Respondents asserted that taking needs and concerns of employees into consideration, should involve a caring employer attitude, supporting development of employees, having a succession plan, treating employees with respect, getting rid of racism, implementing continuous wellness programmes, making resources available, parking and canteen facilities.

- **Performance Management**

Comments on performance management varied from fair appraisals, appreciation of work well done, acknowledgement of employers' work, feedback on work completed, to introduction of other incentives rather than monetary ones.

- **Fair Treatment**

Comments that were made included; treating employees fairly and equally, trust and listening to employees, avoiding discrimination and favouritism and clear and consistent measures of discipline.

Some of the themes presented above are consistent with earlier findings on assessment of climate dimensions where respondents indicated that there is a lack of communication and that the NDOH does not care about employees which can be linked with needs and concerns.

- **IMPROVEMENT OF PRODUCTIVITY**

The question asked was how the Department can help you to improve your productivity. The following themes can be highlighted.

- **Training**

Respondents cited training as an aspect that will assist in improving their productivity. The comments ranged from increasing opportunities for training, proper training, increasing funds for skills development, attending short courses and fairness in training. The comments from respondents are in agreement with the view of Wiley and Brooks (2000:188), who state that an organization should train employees properly in order to perform duties.

- **Employees' Concerns, Grievances, Needs and Fair Treatment**

The comments included the following; serious attention to grievances, fair treatment, provision of guidance, treatment of employees like human beings, supervisors to improve on how they treat employees, address concerns of employees, dealing with personal health and social issues separately, apply HR policies consistently and supportive supervisors.

- **Communication**

Communication was also presented as a common theme whereby respondents requested full involvement in decision making, feedback clear indication of roles and responsibilities, listening, sharing of ideas and regular meetings.

The themes presented above are in line with some of the findings in assessment of climate dimensions which indicates that there is consistency in responses.

### **3.6 SUMMARY**

Chapter three focused on the empirical study conducted by describing the research methodology and the analysis and interpretation of results of the study.

Chapter four will focus on the concluding remarks on the study and recommendations.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Organizations are faced with challenges of continuously improving their services and products to ensure the sustainability of employees. Improvement of services and products require innovation and creativity from employees. Although organizations should be able to create an atmosphere that employees perceive as conducive and caring toward them, they should also look at factors that hinder innovation, creativity and productivity, and that decreases performance. The Department of Health should create a climate that is perceived to be caring and that promotes innovation, creativity and productivity. However, exit interviews held and the unpublished results of a diversity audit carried out at the National Department of Health in 2007, gave an indication that the climate might not be conducive for productivity.

In this chapter the researcher will provide a summary of the research process, in order to draw conclusions from the findings of the study and to make recommendations. The researcher used applied research to assess the climate and identify dimensions that influence productivity so as to make recommendations for improvement of organizational climate. The researcher therefore presents the final evaluation of the research process in accordance to conclusions, recommendations and summary.

#### 4.2 CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions were reached on the basis of the empirical study.

There is poor communication and a lack of involvement and engagement between management and the employees in the NDOH.

Management does not trust employees, rules are strict, employees are not allowed to deviate from the rules and employees must get approval before embarking on activities that assist them in their work.

There seems to be conflict between management and employees as employees enjoy good relations amongst.

Creativity and initiative are not supported by management and respondents do not enjoy a climate of freedom which gives them autonomy to decide about their work; that is initiating activities and bringing about creativity in their activities.

Quality is important, it is taken seriously, there are clear standards of quality and the Department is associated with high quality.

Playfulness and humour in the NDOH is experienced as positive.

Employee welfare is not taken seriously which suggest a negative climate. Management encourages employees to develop their skills and knowledge, but employees perceive themselves as not properly trained and they also do not have development plans.

Employees do receive support from their supervisors which in turn leads to productivity they however trust their supervisors with work related problems only.

#### **4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

The National Department of Health can improve its climate by taking the following steps.

- **Improving Communication**

Management of the National Department of Health should improve communication by placing a high value on input and involvement of all employees at all levels. Emphasis should be put on transparency so as to build trust between management and employees. A programme of meeting employees or other mechanisms of interaction and dialogue to solicit and utilize input from employees will assist to build trust.

- **Improve Training**

National Department of Health should train employees properly in order to perform duties and should also emphasize training of new employees. This should be done through a full scale training needs audit or skills development audit should be carried out to give the Department the skills gaps and training needs. In-house training courses should be introduced based on the outcome of the audit to give opportunity to those employees who are not properly trained to do their work. NDOH should not wait for an individual employee to establish his or her training needs but should assist by directing employees to the identified shortage of skills.

- **Build a Relationship of Trust**

Management should implement a mentoring programme that will demonstrate that the NDOH is a caring employer. Mentorship will provide employees with opportunities to identify and view their shortcomings in a non-threatening manner and improve trust within the NDOH. Implementation of this programme will show employees that the department wants them to succeed and recognizes their potential and accomplishments.

- **Strengthening Employee Health and Wellness Services**

An employee health and wellness programme should be strengthened by allocating more resources to ensure that it is readily accessible to all employees.

#### 4.4 SUMMARY

The title of the study is; the influence of organizational climate on productivity in the National Department of Health. This study's endeavour was to answer the question "What is the influence of organizational climate on productivity in the National Department of Health?"

To answer the question, the researcher developed a goal and objectives. The goal was to explore the influence of organizational climate on productivity in the National Department of Health. The following objectives of the study were achieved:

- **Undertake a thorough literature study to establish the link between organizational climate and productivity.**

Chapter two provided in-depth knowledge on the concept of organizational climate and its influence on productivity. Perceptions and views of different authors were utilized to provide a theoretical background on organizational climate, culture, differences and similarities between culture and climate and the influence of organizational climate on productivity.

- **Explore the influence of organizational climate on the productivity of the employees of the National Department of Health through an empirical study.**

In chapter three the researcher assessed organizational climate dimensions and management practices through an empirical study which illustrated that there is a definite influence on productivity despite variance pointing to positive and negative aspects of organizational climate in some responses. Communication and training were found as major influential factors.

- **Draw conclusions and formulate recommendations to the National Department of Health to enhance productivity and steps to change the organizational climate.**

This objective was accomplished through discussion of conclusions and recommendations to the Department on how to improve climate and organizational climate in chapter four.

#### **4.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The researcher suggests that future research should include employees in remote offices so that the findings can be generalized to the National Department of Health at large.

Further research on the influence of engagement and involvement of employees in decision making on productivity is required to afford employees an opportunity to give in-depth responses and the level of engagement and involvement that is desirable to improve productivity. The level of implementation of practices should also be researched to get more understanding of the presence of certain organizational climate dimensions.

Research based on local institutions need to be conducted as most of the literature on organizational climate is from international sources so that local perspective on the influence of organizational climate on productivity can be identified.

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## APPENDIX A: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities  
Department of Social Work & Criminology

30/10/2012

Our Ref: SM MORE 28385307

Tel: (012) 420-4847

E-mail: florinda.taute@up.ac.za

Participant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

### INFORMED CONSENT

The title of the study is as follows: The influence of organizational climate on productivity in the National Department of Health. The purpose of the study is to explore what the influence of organizational climate is on productivity of the employees of the National Department of Health. I will be requested to complete a questionnaire that will be hand-delivered to me. A box will be placed at a central point in the Human Resources Unit on the 13<sup>th</sup> floor Civitas Building for me to drop the completed questionnaire, on or before seven working days after I have received it.

There are no known risks associated with this investigation. There are no financial benefits for me for participating in this study, but my answers and that of my colleagues will be collated and analyzed to assist the National Department of Health to understand the influence of organizational climate on productivity and recommendations will be made on how to improve the working environment. As my involvement in this study is voluntary, I may withdraw from the investigation at any time. It will not be held against me and my questionnaire will be destroyed. Confidentiality will be maintained as my name or contact detail will not be indicated on the questionnaire. All completed questionnaires will be safely stored for 15 years at the Department of Social Work and Criminology according to the policy of the University of Pretoria.

If I have any questions or need more information I can contact the researcher, Salome More at 0828583057.

I know and understand my rights as participant in this study. I participate voluntarily without being coerced. I understand what the research is all about, what it entails and

the rationale for the study. The researcher will give me a signed copy of this consent form.

Participant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B: PERMISSION LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



Private Bag X828, PRETORIA, 12th Floor, House of Trade and Industry 266(HTI) Building, Cnr Prinsloo and Pretorius Street, PRETORIA, 2000, Tel (012) 312 0816 Fax (012) 323 0093  
CAPE TOWN  
P.O.Box 3875, Cape Town, 8000 Room 404 Plain Street, CAPE TOWN, 8000 Tel (021) 461 2040 Fax (021) 461 6864

Dr FM Taute  
University of Pretoria  
PRETORIA  
0001

### **RE: PERMISSION TO ALLOW MS S MORE (STUDENT NUMBER 28385307) TO CONDUCT EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATION CLIMATE ON PRODUCTIVITY IN THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

The Department of Health grants Ms S More who is a student at the University of Pretoria and also an employee permission to perform the above stated research study within the organization. The Department is aware that the University of Pretoria Research Ethics Committee (REC) requires this letter in order to approve the research study. The Department is aware of the REC registration status with the National Research Ethics Council (NHREC).

Permission is conditional to a submission of the following documents before the study commences: approval letter from the Research Ethics Committee and data collection tools. It is also expected that the study findings will be shared with the Department as indicated in the letter.

For any enquiries, kindly contact Ms Mbelle at 012 395 8125. E-mail [mbelln@health.gov.za](mailto:mbelln@health.gov.za)

Kind regards

**MS M. P. MATSOSO**  
**DIRECTOR-GENERAL**  
**DATE:**

## APPENDIX C: LETTER TO ALL RESPONDENTS



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

**Faculty of Humanities  
Department of Social Work & Criminology**

Our Ref: SM MORE 28385307  
Tel: (012) 420-4847  
E-mail: florinda.taute@up.ac.za

### TO ALL RESPONDENTS

Dear sir/madam,

I am registered for the MSW (Employee Assistance Programme) at the University of Pretoria. I am busy with a research study as part of my studies and the title of my study is: The influence of organizational climate on productivity in the National Department of Health. The goal of this study is to explore the impact of organizational climate on productivity of the employees of the Department.

I am asking for 15 minutes of your time to complete this questionnaire. Your answers will be used together with that of other participants to find as to whether the climate of the Department is negative or positive. Recommendations will be made to the Department to improve and create a climate that leads to productivity and to improve working conditions.

Thank you for your participation and time.

---

S. M. More  
Researcher

## APPENDIX D: QUESTIONNAIRE

### Section A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Indicate your answer by marking with an X in the appropriate space.

**1. Gender**

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
------	--------------------------	--------	--------------------------

**2. Age in years**

21-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
31-40	<input type="checkbox"/>
41-50	<input type="checkbox"/>
51-60	<input type="checkbox"/>
61-65	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over 65	<input type="checkbox"/>

**3. Race**

African	<input type="checkbox"/>
White	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coloured	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

**4. What is your work experience in the Department?**

0-1 year	<input type="checkbox"/>
1-5	<input type="checkbox"/>
6-10	<input type="checkbox"/>
11-15	<input type="checkbox"/>
15-20	<input type="checkbox"/>
Longer than 20	<input type="checkbox"/>

**5. What is your level of seniority?**

Level 1-4	
Level 5-8	
Level 9-10	
Level 11-12	
Level 13-16	

**6. Indicate your marital status**

Single	
Married	
Divorced	
Widowed	
Cohabiting	

**7. Highest educational qualifications**

St 6-9	
Matric	
Diploma / degree	
Postgraduate	

## SECTION B: ASSESSMENT OF CLIMATE DIMENSIONS

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by marking the appropriate response with an X.

### 1. Communication

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Management discusses with employees before making decisions that affect their work.				
2.	Employees are given feedback regularly on their performance				
3.	There is open communication: everybody is aware of what is going on in the Department.				
4.	Employees have some say in how their work need to be done				
5.	There is cooperation and sharing of information in the Department				
6.	There is open and frequent communication				
7.	Employees are not afraid to voice their opinions				

### 2. Trust and openness

1.	Management trust employees				
2.	Employees are not questioned about their activities				
3.	Employees work within strict guidelines				
4.	Management is very strict, you must get approval before you embark on any activity				
5.	Employees are not allowed to deviate from the rules even if it assist them to do their work				
6.	Following procedures is very important in the Department.				
7.	Management is only interested in the outcomes not procedures				

### 3. Conflict

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	There is tension amongst employees in the workplace				
2.	Employees enjoy good relations with each other				
3.	Employees are able to control their emotions and solve their problems amicably				
4.	Employees are not allowed to question management decisions				
5.	Employees complain about their work environment but do not do anything about it.				

### 4. Initiative and creativity

1	Management supports creativity and new ideas				
2	Employees are encouraged to work together in order to come up with new, innovative ways of doing things				
3	Employees are always working towards new ways of solving problems in the Department.				
4	Employees are allowed to initiate projects even if the outcomes are unknown				
5	Employees can take initiative to acquire new information				
6.	Employees are allowed to use their discretion with regard to their work.				
7.	Employees are keen to put their ideas forward				

## 5. Quality

1.	Quality is important in the Department.				
2.	Employees do not take quality serious				
3.	The Department is associated with high quality services				
4.	There are clear standards regarding high quality service				

## 6. Playfulness and humour

		<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
1.	People are able to laugh out loud in the work environment				
2.	The atmosphere in the Department is relaxed				
3.	People are very serious in the Department				
4.	Humour forms part of the work environment				
5.	It is only work and no play				

## 7. Reflexivity

1.	The Department's objectives are reviewed and changed when circumstances change.				
2.	Ways of working are changed to improve performance.				
3.	Management seek employees' ideas				

## 8. Employee Welfare

1.	The Department cares about its employees				
2.	The needs and the interest of the employees are taken into consideration				
3.	The Department is only interested in your work performance				
4.	When you have problems (Salome, in general or in the work environment?) there is no support				

## 9. Training

1.	Management encourages employees to develop their skills and knowledge				
2.	Employees are properly trained to do their work				
3.	Supervisors ensure that every employee has a development plan				

## 10. Supervisory support

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	I trust my supervisor enough to discuss personal problems with him/her				
2.	I rely on my supervisor to give me guidance				
3.	When I have a grievance I feel comfortable to discuss it with my supervisor				
4.	My supervisor attends to my work problems				
5.	When I have a problem at work I consult my supervisor				

## 11. Commitment

1.	Employees do not put effort in their work				
2.	Most people only do the minimum of what is required.				
3.	Employees work very hard to achieve their goals.				

## SECTION C MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND PRODUCTIVITY

Please indicate your answer to the following statements with an X in the appropriate space.

		Yes	No
1.	My job meets my expectations		
2.	My job is challenging		
3.	I am highly competitive		
4.	During the last six months I have been thinking of leaving my job		
5.	When I have a problem at work I stay away from work		
6.	Success in my job depends on how the Department is treating me		
7.	My skills and knowledge are utilized to my satisfaction		

12. How can the Department improve its climate?

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13. How can the Department help you improve your productivity?

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Thank you for your time and participation

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S. M. More  
Researcher

## APPENDIX E: LETTER FROM EDITOR

### **Nicolene Rautenbach Freelance Editor and Translator**

Cell. No.: 073 361 1935

Email: nicolenerautenbach@gmail.com

On 14 July 2011, Ms More sent me her mini-dissertation, entitled: THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE ON PRODUCTIVITY IN THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH. This letter serves to confirm that I did indeed receive the document and edited the document. I returned it to Ms More on 16 July 2011.

I am a professional freelance copy-editor and translator, registered at the South African Translation Institute (SATI). For any queries, contact me at the details provided above.

Kind regards,

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Nicolene Rautenbach

BA Languages (*cum laude*)

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