EVALUATION OF AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS: VHEMBE DISTRICT

CHAPTER 1: GENERAL ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) are relatively new in South African workplace services. According to Maiden (1992: 2), EAPs began to emerge in South Africa in the early 1980s. Prior to the introduction of EAPs in the workplace, organizations focused on productivity while the wellbeing of the employees upon which their productivity depends was neglected. To correct this oversight, EAPs have been introduced in many organizations and nowadays, public employers are making investments of resources in Employee Assistance Programmes. These programmes have evolved into comprehensive effort whereas initially such programmes began as an effort to deal with alcohol abuse and its impact on employee performance. The typical EAP deals with any problem which interferes with an employee's productivity at the workplace (Perry and Cayer 1992: 1).

The Department of Public Works in Vhembe District has implemented an EAP since August 2003. This programme has never been subjected to a rigorous evaluation. Consequently, the researcher identified a need to evaluate the EAP services rendered by the programme, specifically focusing on the employees' awareness and knowledge of the EAP, the employees' utilization rate as well as the programme adequacy in addressing the workers' needs and/or problems. The purpose of the evaluation was to determine whether the programme met its desired objectives or not (Dickman, Challenger and Emener, 1988: 24 and Weiss 1998: 25).

1.2. Motivation for the Study

The researcher's interest in EAPs and exposure to the governmental department's wellness services motivated her to investigate how the EAP operates in the Department of Public Works. The researcher was particularly interested in the referral system, accessibility, transparency, and staff utilization of the programme. The researcher was also curious to find out if the employees were aware of the EAP services. Another reason for conducting this study was to evaluate whether the EAP was fulfilling its purposes and objectives adequately, thus providing quality service to the employees.

The Department of Public Works has been implementing an Employee Assistance Programme since 2003. It was therefore in the researcher's interest to assess whether the programme was meeting its objectives or not. The researcher was also motivated by a need to know more about EAP services that are rendered by practitioners and the challenges that service providers encounter when delivering EAP services. A thorough evaluation of EAP service delivery in Vhembe district helped in identifying areas in need of improvement. The findings from this study led to suggestions on alternative ways for accomplishing the stated goals.

1.3. Aim and Objectives of the Study

Aim

The study aimed to evaluate EAP service delivery in the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District. It specifically focused on the employees' awareness of the programme, staff utilization of the programme and programme adequacy.

Objectives

The following objectives were pursued:
- To determine staff awareness and knowledge of the EAP services in Vhembe;
- To explore whether this programme was addressing the needs of employees or not;

- To establish the extent to which the staff utilized the programme; and
- To determine the adequacy of the programme.

1.4. Statement of the Problem

The Department of Public Works in Vhembe district provides EAP services; however, some of the employees from this Department consulted social workers at the Magistrate's office to be assisted with their personal problems. This may suggest that employees' in the Department of Public Works were not aware of the services rendered in their own Department. Misperception and a lack of understanding about EAPs inhibit staff utilization of the programme. The researcher contends that undertaking a programme evaluation can provide much needed direction with regard to current operations and future courses of action, both in general, and for the employee assistance field specifically. Organizations seeking to reduce expenditures on benefits will also find programme evaluation useful.

An EAP evaluation remains a controversial subject. Some professionals in the field view any request for evaluation as an attempt to cast doubt on the legitimacy of an EAP concept and as an excuse to withhold management support unless evaluation results prove acceptable. On the other hand, too many organizations merely accept their EAPs and rarely ask for operational assessment of any kind (Blair 1990).

Periodic evaluation can be used to record programme practices and measure their rate of improvement over time. These kinds of evaluations serve as historical reference points, an approximate current base case, or a means of setting future goals. Without baseline or benchmark data EAP evaluation will only describe current practices without tracking improvements or making comparisons (Jennings and Westfall 1992: 22; Weiss 1998: 321 and Potter 1999: 216).

The researcher was of the opinion that staff awareness and utilization of the programme as well as programme adequacy should be evaluated to determine if employees knew about the EAP and whether they were utilizing these services or not. This is important

because if employees did not know about the EAP(s) this might inhibit utilization of the programme.

EAP evaluation should be an ongoing process, supplemented periodically, by more specific investigations to answer questions about the programme in time. Yamatani (1993: 67) identifies different kinds of evaluation, namely service needs assessment, compliance, legality assessment, programme adequacy, external resource assessment, utilization/penetration rate assessment, and cost effectiveness evaluation. For the purposes of this study, the researcher focused on employees' awareness of the programme, employees' utilization, penetration rate, as well as programme adequacy. This evaluation helped in determining if the EAP in the Department of Public Works was addressing the needs of the employees or not. EAP evaluation helps in answering specific questions with regard to the programme and also assists in the improvement of services. Lack of available evaluative data on the employees' knowledge and utilization of EAP in the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District, may risk the programme to become outdated and under utilized.

1.5 Research Methodology

1.5.1. Research Approach

The study used the quantitative approach in that the researcher wanted to gather information from the respondents through administering a questionnaire. A quantitative approach is defined as an inquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers and analyzed with statistical procedures in order to determine whether the predictive generalizations of the theory hold truth (De Vos 2005: 74). According to Mouton and Marais (1990: 155) the quantitative approach is usually used in the social sciences because it is highly formalized and more explicitly controlled. In terms of the research method is relatively close to the physical sciences.

1.5.2. Research Design

The researcher utilized the evaluative research design since the aim of the study was to assess EAP services. An evaluative design is defined as a variety of procedures for evaluating social programmes.

Potter (1999: 210) is of the opinion that evaluation research focuses on answering specific practical questions about social programmes and their development. These questions normally focus on programme implementation and outcome as well as the services provided. In other words, evaluation research uses social research methodologies to judge and to improve ways in which human service policies and programmes are conducted from their earliest stages of defining and designing programmes to their development and implementation.

1.5.3. Population

The total employee population at the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District was 877. Out of this number,

- 149 employees were at Vhembe district office,
- 63 were at Mutale cost centre,
- 64 were at Loius Trichardt cost centre,
- 68 were at Dzanani cost centre,
- 91 were at Hlanganani cost centre,
- 89 were at Malamulele cost centre, and
- 353 were at Thohoyandou cost centre.

The research focused on all employees at the different ranks.

1.5.4. Sampling Method

The researcher used the systematic random sampling method to select respondents for the study so that each member of the population had an equal chance of being selected. Berg (2004: 35) states that the use of a systematic sample provides a convenient way to draw a

sample from a large identified population when a printed list (sampling frame) of that population is available. In systematic sampling, every *nth* name is selected from the list. The interval between names on the list is usually determined by dividing the number of persons desired in the sample from the entire population. For the purposes of this study, the researcher used 10% of the total population, which was 86 employees. The sample was drawn from all the offices in Vhembe District. The researcher obtained a name list of all employees within the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District from the Human Resource office. The Department of Public Works had 877 workers in Vhembe District and every 10th name on each list was selected in order to acquire the required 10% sample from the total population.

1.5.5. Data collection method

The research approach in this study was quantitative in nature. Creswell (1998: 1) defines a quantitative approach as an inquiry into a social or human problem based on testing a theory composed of variables measured with numbers and analyzed with statistical procedures. Quantitative data collection methods often employ measuring instruments, namely questionnaires, checklists and indexes (De Vos, 2005: 159). For the purposes of this study, the researcher used questionnaires to obtain data. In this instance, questionnaires were used to determine the employee's awareness of the EAP services as well as programme adequacy; the number of employees who had utilized the programme, the types of problems addressed by EAP, the referral system, and employees' satisfaction with the programme.

1.5.6. Method of data analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

1.6. Feasibility of the Study

The feasibility of the study is important with a view to the practical planning of the research project, for example transport, finances and time factors (De Vos 2005: 208). These aspects alerted the researcher of possible unforeseen problems, which would have emerged during the investigation. Thus, by undertaking a careful feasibility study, the researcher was able to ascertain factors about the research such as the accessibility of the respondents. The researcher was therefore of the opinion that the study was feasible. However, resources such as finances and transport were needed to conduct this study. The researcher had time and finances to conduct this study. The researcher was able to access the respondents since the study was conducted in Vhembe District.

1.6.1. Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted with five employees within the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District who were not in the sampling frame in order to determine if the employees would be able to understand and complete the questionnaire. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000: 155) defines a pilot study as a small study conducted prior to a larger piece of research to determine whether the methodology, sampling, instruments and analysis are adequate and appropriate. The purpose of the pilot study was to improve the success and effectiveness of the research instrument. Pilot-testing questionnaire assisted the researcher to clarify and reconstruct a few unclear questions.

1.7. Preliminary Literature Review

Literature on EAP evaluation focuses on a number of strategies such as needs assessment, programme adequacy assessment, legality assessment, employees' awareness of EAP, client satisfaction assessment, external resource assessment and utilization rate. Because this study was on EAP evaluation, the researcher focused on employees' awareness of the programme, employee utilization of the programme and programme adequacy. The researcher is of the opinion that since many EAPs have been initiated, there is a vast need

for evaluating services. De Vos (2002: 381) stated that the assessment or monitoring of programmes is directed at answering three key questions:

- the extent to which the programme is reaching the appropriate target population;
- whether or not its delivery of service is consistent with the programme design specifications; and
- what resources are being or have been expended in the conduct of the programme?

1.7.1 Definition of social programme evaluation

Patton (2002: 10) defines programme evaluation as the systematic collection of information about activities, characteristics and outcomes of the programme to make judgments about the programme, improve its effectiveness and inform decisions about future programming. However, Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman (2004: 16) defines programme evaluation as the use of social research methods to systematically investigate the effectiveness of social intervention programmes in ways that are adapted to their political and organizational environment and are designed to inform social action to improve social conditions. The need for EAP evaluation was therefore obvious since this can help in programme improvement. De Vos (2005: 369) mentions that contemporary concern about the allocation of scarce resources makes it essential to evaluate social interventions.

1.7.2 The rationale for conducting evaluation of EAPs

An EAP is one human resource strategy which may help to combat the now well-recognized human and organizational costs of workplace stress and counseling in organizations. There is an increasing demand for information on the effectiveness of EAP. However, the way in which organizations evaluate their EAP, and what they call success, will be related to their reasons for embarking on it in the first place. In order for an EAP to have a chance to succeed, it should be designed to include specific evaluation plans wherein the progress of the programme will be monitored.

The importance of evaluating an EAP cannot be overestimated. The Employee Assistance Programmes must be evaluated to justify their existence to some external authorities and even if this is not the case, an EAP should be assessed to ascertain the extent to which it is reaching its objectives, and to find ways to improve its performance (Perry and Cayer 1992: 1, Highley and Cooper 1994: 1 and Weiss 1998: 20). The goals of an EAP service should be built in from the beginning, and it is essential for organizations to be able to evaluate whether or not those goals are being met.

Highley and Cooper (1994: 1) further contend that a service audit focuses on a range of variables including age, gender, marital status, educational history, occupation, ethnic origin, and geographic location. This type of data should signal specific needs in the service delivery. In contrast, quality assurance is concerned primarily with the process of delivering counseling and involves setting and monitoring performance standards. Monitoring the quality of the actual counseling and the quality of the service is the key objective.

The researcher holds the same opinion as Highley and Cooper (1994: 4) that many organizations do conduct process evaluations; but on its own, this type of evaluation is not sufficient. EAP relies on the premise that a well- run EAP helps staff in distress and as a consequence helps the organization pay for itself in the long run. However, this assumption should not be made automatically as every organizational context is different. It is essential to evaluate the whole service in order to show that this assumption is indeed valid in the particular organization involved.

In addition to monitoring quality and efficiency (process evaluation) of the EAP in Vhembe District, an outcome evaluation is needed to ensure that the EAP is correctly designed for the organization in which it is operating, and that it is meeting the needs of that organization and its employees. This activity is based on Highley and Cooper's (1994: 4) findings that one of the critical concerns of this constantly growing field is the need for comprehensive programme evaluation to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of EAPs.

1.8. Theoretical Framework

The study was based on an evaluation theory and value driven approach. According to Mark, Henry and Julnes (2000: 9), evaluation in principle has a broad scope. The authors alliteratively identify the big six P's that can be evaluated: programmes, policies, products, personnel, performance, and proposals. The authors further contend that the reasoning underlying evaluation transcends the objects of evaluation. Mark *et al* (2000:9) state that evaluation theory is about why evaluation is carried out, for whom and how? The authors further elaborate on the following different approaches in evaluation:

- Theory driven approach: According to this approach, evaluators should begin by identifying a programme theory that is a model of the mechanisms that link programme activities and outcome and then use this programme theory as a guide to evaluation design.
- Utilization focused evaluation theory: In this approach, the evaluator identifies the intended users and use of an evaluation and then selects inquiry methods to match those uses. Success in this approach is explicitly defined by whether the intended utilization takes place or not. According to De Vos (2005: 385-386), one way of studying programme utilization is to gather detailed descriptive information about what the programme is doing. Utilization evaluation answers the following questions: what do clients in the programme experience, what services are provided to clients and how is the programme organized? Utilization evaluation includes attention to the inputs, activities and processes of the programme. Evaluation helps to inform decision makers about what is going on in the programme and how the programme has developed.

For the purposes of this study, the researcher focused on utilization of the focused evaluation theory. The rationale for using this theory is based on Frost's (1990: 45) findings that essential to successful EAP, is the ability to communicate to employees what services are available through the company's EAP and what steps employees need to take in order to access the services. The author further contended that misperception and lack of understanding about EAPs have been found to inhibit utilization. The

researcher concurs with the author that it is of paramount importance that when one conducts an evaluation of this nature, the following aspects should be taken into consideration: employees' overall knowledge of the EAP, employees' familiarity with how to access the EAP and employees' perceptions of the confidentiality of EAP services since this can either inhibit EAP usage or increase usage of EAP services. Frost (1990: 46) furthermore argues that employees' confusion about what the EAP is and how to use it can be major barriers to utilization.

A value-driven approach will also be relevant in this study since one of the aspects being evaluated is programme adequacy. According to Peters, (1999: 83) a value-driven approach is important to the operation of South African EAPs. An EAP is in essence a generator of value for the customer. Adding value to the operations of the clients and taking the needs of the clients into account when providing services are all necessary to keep the client satisfied. The researcher concurs with Peters (1999: 83) that the way an EAP operates and provides its services should be based on what the clients feel comfortable with to construct an excellent service.

1.8.1. Challenges of the Evaluation theory

According to Christie (2003: 57), the evaluation theory remains limited. There are six reasons why the programme evaluation theory remains a growth area:

- Lack of conceptual consensus: The author is of the opinion that coherent conceptualization is the hallmark of theory building in any discipline, For example programme evaluation means different things to different people. Without precisely defined terms or consensus on the meaning of key concepts, it is difficult to construct the evaluation theory or to validate it.
- Practice focus: The author further states that programme evaluation is a highly pragmatic field and evaluators should concentrate on conducting studies for clients rather than validating the theoretical assumptions underlying various evaluation models.

- Continuing focus on evaluation models and methods: According to Christie (2003: 58), programme evaluation became a national concern in the 1950 and 60s when government first legislated large –scale social programmes. The notion of a funded mandate for accountability created an immediate need to conduct large scale deadline-driven evaluation studies in highly visible political contexts

- Focus on programme theory: Christie (2003: 59) furthermore contends that attention to theory in programme evaluation has focused predominantly on programme theory, the causal link between a programme's activities (that is operational procedures, services and interventions) and its intended outcomes, both short-term and long-term.

- Lack of research support: Christie (2003: 59) is of the opinion that theory building in academic disciplines which necessitate research tends to be centered in institutions of higher education that support such activities. However, academic departments of programme evaluation are rare and funding is limited.

- A relatively young field: The author further posits that because programme evaluation is a relatively new field, it is not yet a well-defined discipline. However, there is evidence which suggests that it is gradually becoming a fully-fleshed profession.

In the study of the evaluation of an EAP, the researcher will test Frost's (1990: 45) findings, namely that evaluation of an EAP can assist personnel in determining whether EAP services have achieved the programme's identified goals by calculating the cost benefit of the programme.

1.9. Definition of Key Concepts

For the purposes of this study, the following concepts have to be understood:

- **EAP** is defined as a worksite based programme designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employees impaired by personal concerns but not limited to health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress, or other personal concerns which may adversely affect employee job performance (EAPA-SA 1999: 5).

- **Evaluation** is the systematic assessment of the operation and/or the outcomes of a programme or policy, compared to a set of explicit or implicit standards, as a means of contributing to the improvement of the programme or policy (Weiss 1998: 4).

- **Utilization rate** is usually calculated as a percentage and typically represents some proportion of the workforce seen for evaluation and short-term counseling by the EAP (Bayer and Barkin 1990: 63).

- **Programme Adequacy** refers to the appropriateness of the EAP service availability and usage as well as penetration rates. These are two major concerns addressed in determining adequacy of EAP services – the extent to which an EAP offers needed services and the extent to which those services are provided to those who need them most (Yamatani 1993: 70).

1.10. Ethical Issues

Ethical issues in research refer to specific guidelines for research activities that help to protect the interests of participants in studies and also delineate professional responsibility for the researcher. The following ethical issues were taken into consideration when conducting this study:

1.10.1. Management consent

It was important for the researcher to request permission from management to conduct the study at the Department of Public Works. A formal written request explaining the nature of the study was submitted to the management of the Department.

1.10.2. Harm to experimental subjects

According to De Vos (2002: 64), respondents can be harmed in a physical and/or emotional manner. It was therefore the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that this would not happen. The respondents should be thoroughly informed beforehand about the

potential impact of the investigation. Such information offers the respondents the opportunity to withdraw from the study if they so wish (De Vos, 2005: 58). The study had no elements of harm to the respondents and no signs of discomfort were observed during the investigation.

1.10.3. Necessity of informed consent

When conducting the study it is important that the respondents are informed about the purpose of the study, procedures to be followed during investigations as well as possible advantages and disadvantages which the respondents may be exposed to so that the respondents may decide to give consent or refuse to participate in a study. The researcher ensured that the respondents were not forced to participate in the study since it was important for the respondents to participate willingly. The workers were briefed about the purpose of the study and that participation in the study was voluntarily. The employees' were also told that they were not going to be compensated for participating in the study and that they had a right to withdraw if they so wished. Neuman (2006: 135) states that after respondents have given permission to participate in a study they need to know what they are being asked to participate in so that they can make an informed decision.

1.10.4. Co-operation with collaborators

The researcher co-operated with the management of Public Works as well as the EAP staff.

1.10.5. Violation of privacy

Neuman (2006: 138) defines privacy as information that is normally not intended for others to observe or analyze. In order to protect the respondents' privacy, no identifying particulars were recorded in the study.

1.10.6. Confidentiality

Confidentiality is important when evaluating services or programmes. The researcher is of the opinion that confidentiality should be maintained at all times when dealing with people in an identifiable agency setting. The researcher agrees with Grinnel (1993: 87) that outside the professional social work context, careless disclosures are unethical and may harm not only the clients but also the indiscreet social worker and by extension, the profession as a whole. The protection of privacy is a basic right guaranteed to all research participants. According to Neuman (2006: 139), the researcher should ensure that the information is not released in a way that permits linking specific individuals to responses and is publicly presented only in aggregate form such as percentages.

1.10.7. Release of publication of findings

The findings of the study must be introduced to the reading public in a written form; otherwise will mean very little and will not be viewed as research (De Vos, 2005: 65). For the purposes of this study, the researcher intended to present the findings to the Management of Public Works. This would be done in a written format and the outcome of the research as well as recommendations will be stated.

For the purposes of this study, an ethical form was completed and submitted to the University of Limpopo's ethical committee.

1.11. Significance of the study

This study was significant in that:

▪ It would contribute to the knowledge of EAP and may be helpful to other practitioners in gaining more information and knowledge about evaluation of EAP services.

▪ It would also help other EAP practitioners to get an overview of EAP services implemented by the Department of Public Works.

- It would also assist in determining staff awareness of the EAP and utilization rate and might help identifying aspects that might inhibit utilization of the programme.

- Based on the findings, the researcher was able to draw up a conclusion as to whether EAP is meeting the needs of its clients or not, and findings from this study would provide useful direction regarding where modifications in EAP needs to be made.

1.12. Limitation of the Study

For the purposes of the project, the researcher focused on employees' knowledge/awareness of EAP, programme adequacy and utilization. The researcher focused on these three variables/aspects. The study was limited because it relied on client self-reporting. Individuals who had used the service could have felt insecure towards responding to questions and those who had not used the programme could have been reluctant to answer the questions.

1.13. Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation was structured as follows:

- **Chapter 1: General orientation to the study**

This chapter introduces the aims of the study, motivation for study, the research problem, the research design and methodology, delimitation of the study, ethical consideration, and the division of the study.

- **Chapter 2: Evaluation of EAPs**

This chapter provides an in-depth discussion of literature pertinent to the study. Particular areas noted are the evaluation of EAP services, the rationale for the EAP in public services, what evaluation is and why it should be done, ingredients of an effective EAP, employees' awareness and utilization of the EAP, benefits of an EAP and programme adequacy.

- **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

This chapter provides an extensive discussion of the research design and methodology utilized in the study. This includes the population (size), sampling, data collection instrument as well as the presentation, analysis and interpretation of empirical findings.

- **Chapter 4: Summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations**

This chapter outlines the summary of the study, the main findings, conclusions drawn from the study, and gives recommendations for practice and future research.

CHAPTER 2: EVALUATION OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher covers the evaluation of EAPs, the components necessary for EAP evaluation, the reasons for conducting programme evaluation, the prerequisites for evaluating EAPs, the process of evaluating the programme, the types of evaluation, the methods of evaluation, and the benefits of programme evaluation. Apart from these aspects, models of EAP service delivery, methods of utilizing an EAP, benefits of utilizing the EAP, basic principles of an EAP, elements necessary for successful EAP operation and challenges to programme evaluation will be presented. Since evaluation is crucial to service delivery, the consequences of a lack or failure to evaluate the programme will also be considered.

2.2. Evaluation of an Employee Assistance Programme

An evaluation of an EAP is crucial to the successful operation of the programme. According to Jones (1987: 99), as the employee assistance field matures, an evaluation of the programme activities or services is needed. The interest in EAP evaluation is growing for a number of reasons. Programmes are becoming more formally established and operated. An evaluation of an EAP can also assist personnel in determining whether the EAP has achieved the programme's identified goals.

The following aspects may be evaluated:

2.2.1. Programme utilization

According to Ligon and Yegidis in Emener, Hutchison and Richard (2003:131) utilization evaluation provides programmes with data concerning who is using what services and to what extent. These authors indicate that addition of staff, outreach

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programmes, and an off-site location has been found to enhance the EAP utilization rate. A utilization evaluation of an EAP helps in determining if the target populations of the programme have been reached and whether different aspects of the EAP are over or underutilized.

Lawrence, Boxer and Tarakeshwar (2002: 3) identify issues that appear to mediate EAP utilization including employees' trust in the confidentiality of services provided, administrative support of the programme, ease of access, positive feedback from previous users of the service, and perceived efficacy of the service. Misperception and lack of understanding about EAPs have been found to inhibit utilization (Frost, 1990: 45; Temple and Honig, 1997:15 as well as Csiernik, 2003: 45).

The researcher is of the opinion that essential to a successful EAP is the ability to communicate to employees what services are available through the company's EAP and what steps employees need to take to access these services. It is, therefore, important that the EAP be marketed in order to enhance employees' utilization of the programme.

A utilization analysis is a very informative and useful evaluative tool. Its usefulness can be shown if utilization rates are compared to some predetermined measure of need. One can then sensibly ask if a programme is being successful in meeting the needs of a particular organization's employees. Coshan (1991: 43) states that the high utilization rate of an EAP can be an indication of the programme's success. However, lower utilization, on the other hand, may cause companies to ask whether the programme is worth the costs.

2.2.2. Characteristics of EAP clients

The demographics of an organization and the characteristics of each client influence EAP utilization. Jones (1987: 108) is of the opinion that an EAP is intended to serve any and all employees and their dependants who are experiencing personal problems. One should therefore anticipate a diverse client population. It is important that an EAP be evaluated to determine whether it caters for all clients. Research indicates that women are more

likely to utilize an EAP than men (Oher, 1993: 59). It is important that employees, their families, and all others eligible for the programme be informed about the organization's EAP and the services it offers and be continually updated on new programme initiatives in order to enhance programme penetration rate (Csiernik, 2003: 21).

2.2.3. Programme penetration

Programme penetration is utilization by a specific group and can refer to the estimated number of troubled employees and family members who used the EAP. Generally, the EAP should be responsive to the entire organizational workforce (Jones 1987: 110). Amaral in Oher (1999: 168) and Emener in Emener, Hutchison and Richard (2003:143) are of the opinion that penetration rate measures the proportion of troubled employees who received EAP services. To calculate a penetration rate, a programme must have the estimate number of troubled employees in the organization available.

Programme penetration helps the organization in understanding how well the programme is reaching its specific troubled employees. Bayer and Barkin (1990: 63) mention that one measure to determine the effectiveness of Employee Assistance Programmes is their penetration rate. A penetration rate is usually calculated as a percentage that represents some proportion of the workforce seen by the EAP. Bayer and Barkin (1990: 63) state that a 5% penetration rate is considered as the minimum acceptable level of utilization for an EAP.

2.2.4. Referral sources

Referrals entail the manner in which employees access the EAP. According to Jones (1987: 111), how clients arrive at the EAP is an important operational question for a number of reasons. First, the EAP should at least have a broad base of support from its employees, supervisors and family members. Where the troubled employees are referred is probably the most important process evaluation question and the answers determine the quality and effectiveness of care which the clients received (Jones 1987: 116).

2.2.5. Employees' awareness of the EAP

The awareness of the EAP influences the utilization and penetration rate of the programme. Because of this, it is important to evaluate factors associated with awareness of the programme. An evaluation of employees' awareness of the programme may cover the following aspects:

2.2.5.1 Visibility of the EAP

The visibility of the EAP implies that the programme should clearly be seen or noticeable by employees. The visibility of the EAP can have a positive impact upon employee awareness which in turn is related to the utilization of an EAP (Frost 1990: 50). Evaluation to determine the visibility of an EAP is, therefore, important. When an EAP utilizes several methods to inform the workforce about its services, the employees' levels of awareness are likely to be high. Beidel in Oher (1999: 91) identify the following strategies to maximize EAP visibility and effectiveness:

- An EAP needs to be marketed to the employees in order to enhance staff awareness and utilization of the programme.
- It is imperative that an EAP identifies its goals for the overall marketing campaign and its objectives for any specific marketing or promotional activity.
- A general informational brochure on the programme might be the strategy of choice to introduce the EAP to the workforce; and
- Another indirect method to promote and enhance visibility of an EAP within an organization is through the evaluation of the programme.

2.2.5.2. Employees' familiarity with an EAP

Employees' familiarity with the EAP implies having a thorough knowledge of what the EAP does. The employees should be aware of where the programme is located and how to access the programme and the services rendered. According to Lawrence, Boxer and

Tarakeshwar (2002: 4) there is a link between employees' familiarity with the EAP and the utilization of the programme. When employees are aware of EAP services they are more likely to utilize the services. Frost (1990: 51) mentions that in order to enhance employees' utilization of an EAP, employees need to be familiar with the services rendered by an EAP. It is thus important that information on EAP be shared amongst the workforce to improve the utilization rate.

2.2.5.3. Employees perceptions of using the EAP

Perception refers to the ability to see, hear or understand things. This part of the evaluation examines the following areas: deciding to use the EAP, being able to speak to someone over the phone to make an appointment, leaving their work area to go to the EAP as well as explaining to co-workers or supervisor where one is going. As such, it is imperative to examine the factors employees perceive would deter them from using the EAP.

2.2.5.4. Employees concerns about confidentiality

Confidentiality means that the information shared during consultation will not be disclosed to anyone without the employee's written consent. Without the client's signed informed consent, no access may be permitted to employees' private and personal information. The protection of confidentiality is important in the success of the EAP. Unless confidentiality is assured, employees may choose not to contact the EAP.

Frost (1990: 52) states that an evaluation of an EAP should examine important issues such as employees' concerns about confidentiality when using the programme. The researcher concurs with the Frost since confidentiality plays an important role in EAP utilization because it might either enhance utilization or inhibit the employees' utilization of the programme. According to Ligon and Yegidis in Emener *et al* (2003: 138), no EAP can expect to be worthwhile unless the individual anonymity of each participant and his/her family is protected.

2.2.6. Service needs assessment

A service needs assessment refers to the evaluation of a number of employees in need of the EAP service. Yamatani (1993: 67) is of the opinion that a major objective of a service needs assessment is to establish the potential number of workers needing various EAP services. There are four components in needs assessment studies: identification of the seriousness of the problems of the workers, specification of selected problems and service needs, assessment of service gaps in the work setting, and development or modification of EAP goals and objectives. The researcher is, therefore, of the opinion that these aspects are important in evaluation since they may help in determining types of problems encountered by employees, whether available programmes and resources are meeting the various needs of the employees and might also help in identifying current gaps in available services.

2.2.7. Compliance/legality assessment

Compliance and legality assessment entail obedience to a rule, agreement or demand. EAP practitioners should comply with the laws and regulations as well as policies regarding EAP operation. Yamatani (1993: 68) further contends that employers and EAP counselors should be informed about potential legal disputes and preventative approaches.

2.2.8. Programme adequacy

The programme adequacy assessment examines the appropriateness of the EAP services, their availability and usage, as well as penetration rates. Yamatani (1993: 70) furthermore remarks that there are two concerns addressed in determining the adequacy of an EAP service system. They are the extent to which an EAP offers the needed services and the extent to which those services are provided to those who need them most. Generally, a higher usage rate of the programme may be an indication that the EAP is successfully meeting the employees' needs.

Perry and Cayer (1992: 8) are of the opinion that the adequacy of performance is a feature that attempts to address the output of a programme relative to the needs that the programme is projected to serve. Thus, it represents an assessment of the ability of the programe to deal with the prevailing problems. In effect, one is estimating the power of the EAP to deliver EAP versus the need for assistance in the organization. The following are the factors associated with the determination of the programme adequacy:

- comprehensiveness of service needs;
- EAP service acceptance by employees as well as the employer; and
- allocation of resources for meeting the employees' needs.

2.2.9. External resources assessment

The assessment of external resources includes an examination of the type of outside agencies and services used, and the extent of usage and client satisfaction with these services (Yamatani 1993: 72). EAPs frequently rely on outside resources for delivering the necessary services to clients. An EAP may contract an outside service provider for reasons such as the unavailability of such services within the programme, clients' case loads, service gaps, and inadequate EAP staff knowledge and skills. This evaluation will help in identifying the types of cases referred to an outside practitioner and their outcomes.

2.2.10. Programme effort

The assessment of programme effort is based on a number of questions regarding the programme initiation, utilization and implementation. Other pertinent information regarding programme effort may include activities devoted to finding resources that could increase the service utilization rate (Yamatani 1993: 73). Perry and Cayer (1994: 9) report that most evaluation reports are so concerned with the specific aspects of the components of an EAP that they tend to lose sight of the totality, context or framework of the evaluation.

A programme effort assessment includes an assessment of the extent to which time and staff resources are devoted to review service objectives and activities, the procurement of follow-up information from programme beneficiaries, and alternative programme strategies used if the programme efforts did not appear sufficient to achieve the service goals and objectives. The programme effort assessment is generally useful for further strengthening of the EAP system by identifying potential areas in need of process improvement. It is also useful for EAPs experiencing programme failure or suffering from lawsuits due to unanticipated outcomes (Yamatani 1993: 74).

2.2.11. Programme effectiveness

Programme effectiveness can be evaluated by measuring the extent of changes associated with programme intervention in the areas identified by the programme goals and objectives. The anticipated changes include two major categories, normally work behaviour (e.g. changes in work attendance, performance and attitude) and reductions in the costs of health insurance and other related benefit (Yamatani 1993: 74).

Balgopal and Patchner (1988: 83) state that performance in the workplace differs from one department to another while organizations' programmes may differ in their effectiveness that is in the extent to which pre-established objectives are attained as a result of the activity. EAPs have received great exposure but little evidence exists about the effectiveness of these programmes. It is, therefore, important that EAPs be evaluated in order to determine their effectiveness.

2.2.12. Benefit equity

The major question to be examined for the assessment of programme equity is: "are all service benefits distributed evenly among the different population groups?" In this instance the major reference factor consists of demographic attributes such as age, gender, race and types of personal problems among EAP service users as well as non users who can benefit from EAP interventions. An EAP may be superior in its effectiveness but it may be considered as discriminatory on the grounds that it has

produced an inequitable distribution of EAP benefits among the different groups of workers (Yamatani 1993: 76). As such, it is important that the EAP caters for the needs of all employees and their families.

2.2.13. Client satisfaction

Client satisfaction is an assessment based on the clients' opinions regarding the extent to which they are satisfied with the EAP service. The clients may be surveyed regarding their satisfaction and dissatisfaction related to the programme goals and objectives, adequacy, effectiveness, and attitude as well as interest. Assessment involves solicitation of opinions of clients regarding the adequacy and quality of services received, and their suggestions regarding programme improvement. An assessment in this area should also include clients opinions regarding the overall strength and weaknesses of the programme as well as areas requiring improvement and modification. Thus, client satisfaction evaluation is more contributory towards programme improvements when the EAP identifies the sources of client dissatisfaction and modifies its operation accordingly (Yamatani 1993: 78 and Ligon and Yegidis in Emener *et al*, 2003: 131).

2.2.14. Cost/benefit assessment

Yamatani (1993: 78) and Ligon and Yegidis in Emener *et al* (2003: 132) are of the opinion that cost/benefit assessment calls for comparisons between the cost of the programme operation and estimated amount of benefits (or savings) it has generated. The total direct costs of the programme can be categorized into two major groups: fixed costs and variable costs. The fixed costs are items that are unlikely to change annually during the EAP operation (for example the administrator's salary, malpractice insurance premiums and overhead costs). The variable costs are costs that more than likely will change according to the change in number of EAP clients as well as other factors.

The total benefits attributable to EAP can be divided into two major categories tangible and intangible benefits. The tangible benefit is represented by measurable positive effects of the EAP that are directly related to its programme objectives: for example, savings

effected by EAP as a result of changes in the work behaviour of the employee or decrease in costs of health insurance and other related benefits. More specifically, the following five major areas are often considered in EAP benefit calculations: work performance, absenteeism, paid health insurance claims, workmen's compensation payments and sickness and accidents payments. The intangible benefits associated with EAP include clients' psychological and attitudinal changes, and impacts upon individuals and groups who are interpersonally associated with clients. Based on the cost and benefit data, the EAP will also be capable of determining a break-even point: a balance between the total cost of operating the EAP and the total benefit generated by the employee served by the EAP.

2.2.15. Programme constraints analysis

A programme constraints analysis is the examination of aspects that limit or restrict the programme's freedom of action such as legal and or financial constraints. According to Yamatani (1993: 79), programme adequacy, compliance/legality, effectiveness and, benefit equity are not only related to the implementation effort but may also be related to various limitations and obstacles that stand in the way of achieving successful outcomes. The organizational constraints (for example, political fragmentation, excessive centralization, poor management/supervision and training, and low morale) and physical constraints (for example, the lack of needed equipment and facilities) may also be responsible for a partially successful or unsuccessful EAP system.

The constraints analysis can be conducted in order to improve EAP cost efficiency, programme effectiveness, client satisfaction, and for the maximization of EAP benefit to employees and to the employer. Programme constraints may be obviated by ensuring that the EAP has all the essential components.

2.2.16. Components necessary for EAP evaluation

Components are essential building blocks of an EAP. In order to evaluate EAPs, it is essential that the components of the programme be identified and reviewed in terms of their real presence for evaluation purposes. The following four fundamental dimensions crucial to any EAP as well as basic to the evaluative process have been identified by Taylor, Holosko, Wayne Smith, and Feit 1988: 71:

- Policy: Policies should reflect a supportive understanding by management, by recognizing its role in employee problem solving;
- Training: Training is essential from the highest level of management to the front-line supervisors;
- Services: Services relate to the availability of resources with which to match the workers, needs; and
- Follow-up: Follow-up provides the opportunity to monitor the employee's progress during the treatment phase and his/her adjustment back into the workplace.

To evaluate an EAP, it is necessary to identify data that will enable the employer to determine how a programme is doing in relation to future decisions about its continuation, modification and improvement.

2.3. A comprehensive evaluation framework

According to Battle (1988: 84), most evaluations of human services are designed to determine whether the programme is affecting any change and to assess the quality of the services provided. However, consistent and routine evaluations should provide information on which to base programme decisions regarding the modification, expansion or even discontinuation of the programme.

Cayer and Perry (1988: 156) allege that evaluation is often conceived as primarily the outcome or summative evaluation designed to determine if a programme meets its goals.

In this instance, one must acknowledge the importance of process or formative evaluation to help understand outcome evaluation. Process evaluation focuses upon how the programme functions not whether goals are met but what is done to attempt to meet them. It is thus important that a comprehensive evaluation framework should contain elements of both process and outcome evaluation. This approach may then be seen as the specification of the foci and purposes of the evaluation. An evaluation framework must identify the standards in terms of which performance will be assessed, define organizational dimensions of the programme, specify the units of analysis, and specify the population from which evaluative information should be collected.

The importance of evaluating an EAP cannot be overestimated. Employee assistance programmes must be evaluated to justify their existence to some external authorities and even if this is not the case, an EAP should be assessed to ascertain the extent to which it is reaching its objectives, and to find ways to improve its performance (Perry and Cayer 1992: 1, Highley and Cooper 1994: 1 and Weiss 1998: 20). The goals of an EAP service should be built in from the beginning, while it is essential for organizations to be able to evaluate whether or not those goals are being met.

According to Mark, Henry and Julnes (2000: 9), evaluation in principle has a broad scope. The authors identified the big six P's that can be evaluated: programmes, policies, products, personnel, performance, and proposals. The authors further contend that the reasoning underlying evaluation transcends the objects of evaluation. Mark *et al* (2000: 9) state that the evaluation theory is about why evaluation is carried out, for whom and how? The authors further elaborate on the different approaches in evaluation:

- The theory driven approach: According to this approach, evaluators should begin by identifying a programme theory that is a model of the mechanisms that link programme activities and outcome and then use this programme theory as the guide to the evaluation design.

- Utilization focused evaluation theory: In this approach the evaluator identifies the intended users and use of an evaluation and then selects inquiry methods to match those uses. Success in this approach is explicitly defined by whether the intended utilization takes place. According to De Vos (2005: 385-386), one way of studying

programme utilization is to gather detailed descriptive information about what the programme is doing. Utilization evaluation answers the following questions: what do clients in the programme experience, what services are provided to clients and how is the programme organized? Utilization evaluation includes attention to inputs, activities and processes of the programme. Evaluation helps to inform decision makers about what is going on in the programme and how the programme has developed.

For the purposes of this study, the researcher will focus on the utilization of the evaluation theory. However, the researcher is in agreement with Frost (1990: 45) that essential to successful EAP is the ability to communicate to employees what services are available through the company's EAP and what steps employees need to take to access the services. The author further contends that misperception and lack of understanding about EAPs have been found to inhibit their utilization. The researcher therefore concurs with Frost that it is of paramount importance that when one conducts an evaluation of this nature, the following aspects should be taken into consideration: the employees' overall knowledge of the EAP, the employees' familiarity with how to access the EAP and the employees' perceptions of the confidentiality of the EAP services since these factors can either inhibit EAP usage or increase usage of EAP services. Frost (1990: 46) furthermore argues that employees confusion about what the EAP is and how to use it can be a major barrier to utilization.

A value-driven approach will also be relevant in this study since one of the aspects being evaluated is programme adequacy. According to Peters (1999: 83, a value-driven approach is important to the operation of South African EAPs. An EAP is in essence a generator of value for the customer. Adding value to the operations of the clients and taking the needs of the clients into account when providing services are necessary to keep the client satisfied. The researcher concurs with Peters (1999: 83) that the way an EAP providers structures, its services and operations should be based on what the clients feel comfortable with to deliver an excellent service.

2.4. Prerequisites for evaluating EAPs

Prerequisites refer to things required as a condition for something to happen or exist. According to Holosko (1988: 60), certain prerequisites must be in place prior to conducting any EAP evaluation. These are construed as essential ingredients for successful evaluations, and all must be systematically addressed to some degree at the beginning of the evaluation process. These prerequisites include:

2.4.1. Organizational and programme commitment

Any EAP, which embarks on an evaluation without having the support of the administration, managers, or key decision-makers in the respective organization and the programme, is seriously remiss. A sincere administrative commitment is crucial to the evaluation's development and conduct. Administrative support from both the host organization's administration and the coordinators of the EAP is the key to influencing and obtaining other levels of support in the organization or programme and as a result, needs to be obtained first. Thus, gaining support for an EAP evaluation is an area in which much reciprocal learning and cooperation between managers of the host organizations, union officials, EAP administrators, and the EAP evaluator needs to be done. This first level of support solidifies the purpose of the evaluation and shapes its subsequent assumptions, design, conduct, and ultimate dissemination.

2.4.2. The reasons for EAP evaluation to be answered before it can be evaluated

It is important to answer *why*, *when* and *how* part of EAP before it can be evaluated. These questions seem harmless, yet if they are not satisfactorily answered prior to conducting the EAP evaluation, a variety of problems may unfold. According to Holosko (1988: 62), the EAP should not be concerned if their answers to the why question conduct evaluation seem obvious. There are different reasons why an EAP should be evaluated. For example, an EAP can be evaluated for programme justification or that evaluation was mandated by the funding source. Regardless of the reasons for conducting the evaluation,

at the onset of the EAP evaluation, the organization and EAP coordinators must agree to answer why they are conducting the evaluation which in turn, directly influences the when and how.

Holosko (1988: 63) states that *when* the evaluation should be conducted is an important issue which EAP evaluators need to be sensitive to. The general preference is the earlier the better, as EAP may inherit the potential for subsequent evaluations into their overall planning and operational frameworks. However, if EAP evaluation is to be conducted after the programme has been operational for some time, certain challenges may be encountered. These types of evaluation may face a host of inevitable problems such as tracking clients or staff who participated in the programme and contending without missing, lost, misplaced or forgotten information which inevitably occurred over time. The researcher, therefore, agrees with Holosko (1988: 63), that such difficulties may be avoided by commencing the evaluation process at the onset of the programme.

Finally, *how* to do evaluation is best resolved by those who are conducting it. More specifically, how clearly implies issues which may be beyond the scope of those not directly involved with the evaluation. However, this model suggests a cooperative approach which allows EAP evaluators to do what they do best, yet at the same time ensuring that they are accountable to the host organization and EAP for planning and conducting the evaluation (Holosko, 1988: 63).

2.4.3. Goals and objectives require specification

According to Holosko (1988: 64), goals and objectives when operationalized in evaluation terms become efficiency and effectiveness criteria which are the lifeblood of any evaluation. Evaluation research assesses programme processes, efficiency and/ or effectiveness.

2.4.4. Information retrievability

Organizations and EAPs have a peculiar relationship about collecting information for the purposes of planning, evaluating and decision-making. This relationship is peculiar for a number of reasons. First, most organizations are *information short* when it comes to programme evaluations, yet they perceive themselves as having an information overload. Second, most EAPs have a disproportionate amount of background information about their employees, and little about what services or activities these employees received. It is, therefore, important that information be accessible and retrievable if any evaluative effort is to occur. Again, the significance of having the evaluation commence early on in the programme planning development stage, ensures that data will be retrievable (Holosko, 1988: 65).

The above-mentioned prerequisites are suggested as guidelines to be used in the planning process, and they should be considered prior to the conduct of any EAP evaluation.

2.5. Reasons for conducting programme evaluation

There are various reasons for conducting programme evaluation. Dickman, Challenger, Emener, and Hutchison (1988: 244) and Emener and Yegidis in Emener et al (2003: 125) mention the following reasons for conducting programme evaluation:

2.5.1 Vindication

Vindication means showing or proving that the programme is valuable. Evaluation can be dedicated to finding out the extent to which the programme is achieving its goals. Information on this score can be used to decide whether the programme should be continued and spread to further locations, or whether investments in it should be cut. Therefore, when evaluating a programme, it is important to collect data (facts) to illustrate and demonstrate that the programme is worthwhile. Justifying a programme's existence and its continuance can be a very important function especially if resources are

scarce or threatened (Dickman *et al*, 1988: 244 and Ligon and Yegidis in Emener *et al*, (2003: 130).

2.5.2 Marketing

Marketing refers to the theory and practice of presenting, advertising and selling things. When evaluating the programme it may be desirable to expand or extend parts of a programme into new areas. However, activities such as this require the convincing of others that the expansion or extension is worthwhile, and programme evaluation can be useful. Policy makers may want to know the consequences of the programme for its clients so that they can decide whether or not to expand it to new sites or to new categories of participants. According to Ligon and Yegidis (2003: 130), as an EAP continues to broaden its services, it is important to be able to market the need for expansion in a persuasive and convincing manner.

2.5.3 Verification

Verification means to make sure that something is true, accurate and justified. Verifying the worth and impact of the programme is important for its survival. This aspect is important because it will enhance the accountability of those rendering the service. Programme improvement requires knowledge and understanding of how a programme works. Ligon and Yegidis (2003: 130), advise that EAPs cannot survive simply on the faith that the service is beneficial. Instead data are needed to support the need for expending resources for EAPs.

2.5.4 Improvement

Improvement refers to a positive change to produce something of a better standard or quality. Ligon and Yegidis (2003: 130), suggest that programme evaluation provides input that is useful in modifying services on an ongoing basis. Dickman *et al* (1988: 244), opine that analyzing facts about the programme cannot only specify strengths and

weaknesses, but also suggest their magnitude and overall impact on programme outcomes (results and effects).

Another reason for conducting EAP evaluation is to determine whether EAPs have fulfilled their purposes and duties properly by providing quality service. A thorough evaluation should identify areas in need of improvement and suggest alternatives for accomplishing stated goals. Weiss (1998: 25), is of the opinion that undertaking evaluation assists in finding out early in the game what is going on so that changes can be made. Evaluation that focuses on programme process can yield data on what is happening during the programme and identify points at which improvement is called for.

2.5.5 Understanding

Programme improvement requires knowledge and understanding of how a programme works and why a programme works. However, programme evaluation activities cannot always fully answer questions such as these, but it can indeed enhance one's understanding of the how and why aspects of the programme. In this instance evaluation is aimed at finding out what is exactly happening in the programme, whether people are using the programme or not (Dickman *et al* 1988: 244; Weiss 1998: 27 as well as Ligon and Yegidis 2003: 130).

2.5.6 Accountability

Accountability implies that when a programme is undertaken, the company should take responsibility in terms of the fiscal and programmatic use of resources. Beyond the genuine commitment to excellence on behalf of programme leaders, programmes are frequently under pressure to demonstrate effectiveness, "results that show a difference of an impact" (Dickman *et al*, 1988: 244; Weiss 1998: 28). Direct funders insist on holding programmes accountable for producing results. According to Rutman (1984: 17) as well as Ligon and Yegidis (2003:131) the accountability perspective of evaluation holds that the worth of the programme must be reported and thereby demonstrated if it is to receive continued legislative, financial and public support. Programme evaluation thus comes to

be viewed as a responsible means of arriving at difficult decisions on the reallocation of resources.

2.5.7 Feedback to practitioners

Weiss (1998: 29), states that evaluation is sometimes expected to give feedback to practitioners as the programme continues. This may help practitioners to improve where necessary. Feedback to practitioners may be done through programme evaluation by ensuring that the research document is made available in the organization's resource centers and universities' libraries. Another mechanism of giving feedback can be through the presentation of research findings and recommendations to practitioners wherein a possible action plan to improve the programme can be developed.

2.6. The Process of Evaluating the Programme

Rutman (1984: 16) identifies the process of evaluating the EAP as follows:

2.6.1. Defining the client

There are inevitably numerous parties having an interest in the evaluation; legislators, client groups, interest groups, and the general public. The first step in planning an evaluation is to determine who the primary client for evaluation is (Rutman 1984: 16).

2.6.2. Determining the purpose of evaluation

The evaluator should be clear about the overt as well as possible covert purposes of the evaluation. According to Rutman (1984: 16), three broad purposes for evaluation are meaningful accountability, improved programme delivery and adding to the knowledge of the social sciences.

2.6.3. Planning the evaluation: evaluability assessment

Programme evaluation requires careful planning to ensure that the study will be relevant and credible. An evaluability assessment is the front-end analysis that can be used to determine the manner and extent to which a programme can be evaluated. The evaluability assessment focuses on the programme structure and examines the following questions:

- Is it implemented in the prescribed manner?
- Are the objectives and effects clearly defined?
- Are they plausible (within reach of the programme)?
- Are the resources allocated to the programme and its various activities adequate?

The answers to these questions indicate the extent to which it would be appropriate to undertake an evaluation of the programme' effectiveness (Rutman 1984: 20, Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman 2004: 157).

2.6.4. Developing an administrative agreement

According to Rutman (1984: 20), there is considerable merit in drawing up a working agreement between the evaluator and manager before launching a study. The development of such an agreement identifies issues in advance, forestalls misunderstandings and enables those that arise to be dealt with more readily.

2.6.5. Conducting programme evaluation

Conducting programme evaluation entails three major tasks: measurement, the use of a particular research designs and data analysis. The first consideration in measurement is deciding on the amount and type of information required to address the evaluation questions. An evaluation can obtain four categories of information: programe, objectives and effects, antecedent conditions, and interventions conditions.

- Programme information should be collected on programme process. The amount of details can vary from simply documenting the type and volume of services provided to specific attributes of the process.

- Objectives and effects: programme evaluation can uncover the effects of a programme and/ or determine the extent to which the programme achieved its objectives or produced particular effects.

- Antecedent conditions: antecedent conditions refer to the context within which the programme operates, the characteristics of the clients served, and the background of the practitioners. Information on the antecedent conditions can help interpret the findings, making possible analysis to establish what clients benefit most and what type of context is most conducive to achieving the programme's objectives.

- Intervening conditions: events or circumstances often arise while the programme is being delivered that have an influence on its performance. For example, the clients of a programme may be receiving services from other agencies. Staff turn-over or changing organizational conditions can affect the ability of the programme to achieve its goals (Rutman 1984: 21).

2.6.6. Utilizing programme evaluation

According to Rutman (1984: 20), the issue of utilization should be addressed in the initial stages of the planning of the study to ensure that it is relevant to decision makers and that they are sufficiently involved in the evaluation process to develop some commitment to using the findings.

2.7. Types of evaluation

The following are the different types of evaluations:

2.7.1. Outcome evaluation

Outcome evaluation is used to determine the programme impact upon the areas of client satisfaction, problem resolution and improved quality of life. This evaluation differs from process evaluation because it examines the effects or outcome of a programme. According to Jones (1987: 104), Posavac and Carey (1989: 12), as well as Ligon and Yegidis (2003: 132), the basic question is: Is the programme effective? The primary focus is typically on the EAP client and the following questions could be addressed:

- Is the client satisfied with the EAP referrals?
- Does the client contact the EAP referrals?
- Does the client's problem improve?
- Is the client satisfied within overall EAP services?

If possible, outcome evaluation should also look at the benefits of EAP to the company. Outcome evaluation assesses the immediate effects of a programme on its participants or recipients. Outcome evaluation has become a central focus of accountability-driven evaluation (Ginsberg 2001: 186; Patton 2002: 151).

2.7.2. Cost-effectiveness evaluation

According to Rossi and Freeman (1989: 455 and De Vos *et al* 2005: 384), the worth of evaluation must be judged by its utility. The authors contend that the cost-effectiveness or better termed as efficiency, deals with how the programme outcomes compare with their costs. In fact, these authors state that whether by formal means or impressionistically, as in most everyday life decisions, one of the important considerations when deciding to expand, continue or terminate social programmes is that of their costs compared to their benefits.

Cost-effectiveness provides a frame of reference for relating costs to programme results. Cost benefits and cost-effectiveness analyses provide information for making decisions on the allocation of resources. The rationale for efficiency evaluation is that decision makers must choose how to allocate scarce resources to put them to optimal use.

2.7.3 Impact evaluation

Impact evaluation is used to measure the expected changes brought about in those employees and organization units taking part in the programme (Ginsberg 2001: 187). Rossi *et al.* (2004: 234), are of the opinion that impact assessment is designed to determine what effects programmes have on their intended outcome and whether there are important unintended effects. According to Owen and Rodgers (1999: 264), impact evaluation is concerned with determining the range and extent of outcomes of a programme, determining whether the programme has been implemented as planned and how implementation has affected the outcomes - providing evidence to funders, senior managers and politicians about the extent to which resources allocated to a programme have been spent wisely and informing decisions about the replication or extension of the programme. Therefore, impact evaluations are concerned with establishing what works and why.

2.7.4. Empowerment evaluation

Fetterman (2001: 1), defines empowerment evaluation as the use of evaluation concepts, techniques and findings to foster improvement and self-determination. Evaluation has become a part of the normal planning and management of the programme, which means institutionalizing and internalizing evaluation.

2.7.5 Process evaluation

According to Ginsberg (2001: 185) and Schutte (2004: 320), process evaluation can be used to identify the specific aspects of service delivery. Process evaluation can employ a

wide range of indicators. Programme coverage can be monitored through records, participants' survey, community survey or utilizers versus drop-outs and ineligibles. Process evaluation has several purposes. First, monitoring programme activities helps organize programme efforts. It helps ensure that all parts of the programme are conducted as planned. It also helps the programme to use the resources where they are needed, for example, not spending most of its money on only one activity or target group. Furthermore, it provides information to help manage the programme and modify activities, leading to midcourse corrections that can enhance the project's outcome.

Second, information in a process evaluation provides accountability that the programme is conducting the activities it promised to do. This can be furnished to programme administration, funding sources, boards of directors, and other stakeholders.

Third, process evaluation can provide information about why the programme worked or did not work. By providing information on what was done and who was reached, programme planners can identify reasons for achieving outcomes or not achieving them. Process evaluation information also can provide information for future improvements and for sharing practical tips with others planning similar programmes.

Fourth, process evaluation can help decide whether or not one is ready to assess the effects of the programme. Lastly, sometimes conditions change so that what was planned is what actually happens. Process evaluation can then help keep track of such changes.

2.7.5.1. Conducting process evaluation

According to Jones (1987: 99), Cayer and Perry (1992: 6), Highley and Cooper (1994: 3), Ginsberg (2001: 186), and Schutte (2004: 318), process evaluation is the research that investigates the process of service delivery. It seeks to address what actually happens in a social programme. Process evaluation focuses on the EAP's everyday work. It focuses on the following aspects:

- Number of clients seen

- Characteristics of people using the EAP

- The promptness with which requests for service are accommodated

- Courtesy

- Utilization and penetration rates across organizational groups and population

- Kinds of problems handled

- Types of referrals

- Marketing strategies of EAP

- How clients arrive at EAP

- The level of and system for follow up services

According to Taylor, Holosko, Smith and Feit (1988: 72), it is important that the evaluation planning process incorporate social research techniques, including variables such as programme use and case outcome, wherever possible. In addition, such planning should include key process questions to use as a basis of exploration with EAP evaluators and coordinators which could lay the groundwork for rigorous evaluations. The authors identify the following three areas for planning the process-type questions:

2.7.5.2. Policies and procedures

- Is there a comprehensive written company policy of the EAP that reflects contemporary views of employee problems and an earnestness of intent to help?

- What resources have been allocated to promote company policies relating to helping employees?

- Are the policies of the EAP nondiscriminatory?

- Are certain employees exempt from certain policies?

- Is there a safeguard for confidentiality for EAP participants?

- Are the policies readily accessible to all employees?

- Are policies reviewed systematically?

- What are the goals and objectives of the EAP?

2.7.5.3. Services

- Is there a clearly written procedure for identification of employee problems and referrals?
- Is the EAP perceived as mandated from top management with the potential for reprisals?
- To what extent are services suggested available?
- What is the relationship between service providers, the EAP and the host organization?
- Are lists of services available to all employees?
- Are service providers located proximally to the organization?
- To what do the potential users of the EAP (supervisors and employees) have an input into the EAP?
- Does the EAP signal out any particular group in the employee population for service?
- How are EAP services provided?
- How is service information collected or organized?
- Are there any other issues related to services which might inhibit the use (for example costs, employees' perception of services, informal stigmatization, and others).

2.7.5.4. Administration of EAP

- Is there a formal orientation for upper management about EAP and company implications?
- Are all supervisors trained in the philosophy and fuctions of company EAPs?
- How extensively are all employees made aware of the philosophy and company functions of the EAP?
- What mechanisms are used to insure worker/client confidentiality?
- Is there a formalized mechanism for EAP coordinators to receive an employee outcome assessment through supervisors' follow-ups?
- What has the EAP utilization rate been since the programme was implemented?

- Does the utilization rate compare with the general statistical evidence about worker/client type?
- Are there any significant changes in such areas as attendance, sick leave and productivity?
- Are adequate statistics about the EAP being gathered at present?

Taylor *et al* (1988: 74), furthermore state that the process questions alone cannot predict the capacity of an EAP evaluation. They may go a long way in avoiding obstacles which may accrue in subsequent EAP evaluation. However, information obtained through process evaluation can be used to improve (or discard) the activity in the future.

2.8. Methods of Evaluation

The different methods of evaluation may be identified as follows:

2.8.1. Formative evaluation

According to Royse (1992: 38) and Ginsberg (2001: 16), formative evaluations are those that provide information on a programme's activities. They tell the evaluator and ultimately the consumer of the evaluation how the progressing is proceeding. Such information is useful for a number of reasons. Ideally, it is provided to help an organization develop and improve a programme. In some cases, it is used as an ongoing assessment of how well a programme complies with a set of standards and similar requirements. Formative evaluations are employed to adjust and enhance interventions. The purpose of the formative evaluation is to provide a smooth running programme. This is done by looking at the management strategies and philosophies, the costs associated with a programme and the kinds of interactions among clients and practitioners. Formative evaluation can be used to determine if a programme has been implemented as planned.

Formative evaluation does not rely upon a specific methodology or set of procedures. Instead, it is distinguished by its continuous description and monitoring of the programme as it develops and its focus on programme improvement. The formative evaluator will be primarily concerned about tracking changes in a programme's implementation, keeping a record of the programme's developmental history, and by giving feedback to the programme staff about bugs, flaws, and successes in the process of programme installation (Royse, 1992: 38).

2.8.2. Summative

Summative evaluations, on the other hand, examine how well a programme has achieved its goals. Such information is useful to funding agencies in determining whether to renew or continue a programme. It is also valuable information for others who want to know about the effectiveness of a specific programme.

2.9. The Benefits of Programme Evaluation

Evaluation has the following benefits for the programme and the organization (Rossi and Freeman 1985: 13; Dickman, Challenger, Emener and Hutchison 1988: 249; House 1993: 52; Emener and Yegidis, 2003: 128):

- Evaluation data enable one to demonstrate empirically what the programme activities were, what outcomes were achieved and at what costs.
- Appropriate utilization of evaluation findings allows one to tune up or modify programme activities to improve and enhance programme outcomes.
- Evaluation data permit planners and administrators to justify continued or enhanced programme funding.
- Organizations seeking ways to reduce expenditures will find programme evaluation useful.
- EAP evaluation can assist an organization with regard to meeting and demonstrating legal fiscal responsibilities. For example, evaluation can document

an organization's efforts to comply with alcohol-free workplace guidelines while providing a resource for those suffering from alcohol related problems.

- Evaluations may also contribute to substantive and methodological social science knowledge.
- Evaluation serves important legitimation, information and control functions for government in advanced capitalist societies. As economies falter and governments lose legitimacy, evaluation has become a tool for informing and legitimizing the unpopular steps government must take, which often mean budget cutting.

Programme evaluation can be a powerful tool for improving the effectiveness of organizations. Finally, evaluation can be done to strengthen the plans for services or their delivery, to raise the outcomes of programmes, or to increase the efficiency of services (Posavac and Carey 1989: 14).

2.10. The Consequences of Lack/Failure to Evaluate

Without continued evaluation, an EAP system could risk becoming a static and outdated intervention programme. Pertinent evaluative questions should be asked of the EAP on a continual basis in order to keep strengthening its service adequacy, effectiveness, benefit equity, and maximizing savings and cost-efficiency (Yamatani, 1993: 81).

In addition, without such empirically-based information, an EAP's image and perceived merit may also be unfairly undervalued. EAPs that fall short of evaluation-based self strengthening and promotion may very well risk inheriting an image as a wasteful "give away welfare programme" only useful for helping to appease unions and individual employees. Under such conditions, an EAP may continue to experience undesirable administrative reorganizations. Without evaluation, it might be difficult for organizations to identify problems that might otherwise remain hidden.

2.11. Models of EAP Service Delivery

EAP services are delivered through a variety of programme models. Part of the diversity comes from the variation in size of the organizations, the availability of internal resources devoted to employee assistance services, and the willingness of the organization to expend its resources. An EAP model should, therefore, be structured to meet the unique needs and demands of the specific organization. The researcher is of the opinion that a suitable model can enhance and contribute to the effectiveness of employee assistance services to employees (Phillips and Older as cited in Dickman *et al*, 1988: 133; Cagney as cited in Oher 1999: 64).

The following are EAP models:

2.11.1. Internal/In-house model

This EAP model provides a comprehensive service delivery. In this regard trained professionals render EAP services. The practitioner is full time in the organization. Like any other model of service delivery, an internal EAP has its benefits:

- The EAP practitioner has access to and effectively understands the working and culture of the organization.
- It is accessible to employees during working hours and this may enhance staff utilization of the programme.
- An EAP model enhances ownership of the programme by employees, that is, they feel "it's our programme".
- It provides on-site problem assessment and, therefore, enhances staff awareness of the programme.
- The internal EAP model allows for closer management of EAP professionals. Clinical supervision and quality assurance functions are routinely performed (Cagney in Oher 1999: 65).

However, this model has the following disadvantages:

According to Cagney in Oher (1999: 64), the major concern about an internal EAP is that it may be perceived as being too closely identified with a particular department and that the confidentiality of employee problems may be difficult to protect. The employees may sometimes fear to utilize such services because they might think that if management becomes aware of their personal problems they can run the risk of losing opportunities (Sonnestuhl and Trice, 1990). Only large organizations can justify full-time staff. There is a possibility of staff burn-out with a one-person programme. Although EAP services are delivered by using different models, research findings suggest that there are greater rates of EAP utilization when the employee assistance professional is internal to the organization and acculturated with the organization's needs rather than when counseling is provided by external clinicians (Csiernik, 2003: 47).

2.11.2. External contracted model

This model of EAP service delivery can be obtained through contracts with an external organization. This is when the employer contracts an external EAP practitioner to render services to the employees. Organizations often view contract services as a quick and efficient way to establish and maintain an EAP (Sonnestuhl and Trice, 1990). Unlike the internal model, employees may be very fond of this model because it can be viewed as ensuring more confidentiality than when the programme is inside.

The major drawback of contracted services is believed to be a lack of experience with the workplace and accountability for those offering the services. Furthermore, there is no on-site counseling capacity, no ownership and some supervisors may be reluctant to deal with outsiders. The externally contracted model can provide twenty-four (24) hour a day service and it is less costly than the in-house model (Oher 1991: 66; Cagney, 1999: 66).

2.11.3. The consortium model

Small companies often use this model of service delivery, which cannot afford extensive EAP services. It enables the organizations to contract jointly with an independent service

provider to share the costs. In this instance the organizations can join forces to contract an EAP provider to deliver quality services to the employees at a lower cost. The organizations utilizing this model, pool their resources together to develop a collaborative programme. The advantages of this model are that it is cost effective, confidentiality is easier to maintain and it reach a vast number of employees in different organizations. The disadvantages of this model are that managers and staff may be reluctant to deal with outsiders and the service providers usually know little about the participating organizations (Masi, 1984: 6).

2.11.4. The union-based model

The primary services offered by this model are referrals, prevention and problem identification. The advantage is credibility with union members and confidentiality. The disadvantage is that the union-based model does not serve non-union employees (Phillips and Older 1988: 138). If a union was involved in establishing the EAP, utilization of the service may increase since union members would be able to refer their members to an EAP (Csiernik, 2003: 48).

2.12. Methods of Utilizing an EAP

There are different ways in which employees can use the EAP such as self-referral, informal referral and supervisor/management referral. According to Blair (1985: 11), the following methods can be used in utilizing an EAP:

2.12.1. Self-referral

Self-referral is the voluntary, self-initiated request for assistance by an individual eligible for EAP services. It is an increasingly common utilization form (Gould and Smith 1988: 47). Self-referral is described as a common characteristic of a successful EAP.

According to Wright in Klarreich, Francek and Moore (1985: 18) and Cagney in Oher (1999: 61), when an employee experiences problems he/she can contact the EAP on his /her own initiative to seek assistance. This is referred to as self-referral as the employee himself/herself presents a problem or requests for a service. In this regard, the EAP practitioner will conduct a preliminary assessment of the employee's problem and then recommend a course of action, which may include a referral to an external resource for treatment. Employees who self-refer are more likely to utilize the EAP services. Cagney in Oher (1999: 61) states that 90% of EAP clients access the EAP through self-referral.

2.12.2. Informal referral

Informal referral is when an employee is advised either by a supervisor, manager, colleague, union representative, or family member, to consult with the EAP. Although a supervisor can also informally encourage an employee to contact the EAP, it remains the prerogative of the individual whether to contact the EAP or not (Blair 1985: 11; Gould and Smith 1988: 48). Informal referral of an employee to EAP may help in enhancing the employee's knowledge of the EAP and services provided and may enhance utilization of the programme.

2.12.3. Formal referral

In this instance, the supervisor or manager refers the employee to the EAP in writing due to lowered job performance or attendance and/or any problem that may cause an employee to be unproductive at work. According to Blair (1985: 11) and Wright (1985: 19), this type of referral constitutes a unique feature of an EAP. The formal supervisory referral is based on a pattern of declining job performance that is observed over a period of time.

Cagney in Oher (1999: 62) states that when an employer has a functional EAP, he/ she do not have to wait for the employees' problems to escalate to a point where fitness for duty deteriorates. Supervisors should intervene at an early stage of dysfunction and refer the employees to EAPs. The supervisor's referral is utilized when a supervisor's normal

attempts to correct the situation, such as reaffirmation of performance expectations, offering job training, changing the work situation, improving communication, and/ or making similar managerial interventions, do not result in improved or the desired performance.

Supervisors are encouraged to stress that the referral to the EAP helps employees get assistance to improve performance. The more managers and supervisors refer employees to the programme the more the penetration rate increases (Schenger and Hayward in Thoreson and Hosokawa 1984: 333). The use of the EAP provides an alternative to discharging valuable trained employees and encourages the return to an effective performance level of employees in whom the employer has invested time and training. Employee utilization of an EAP service is, to a large extent, a function of the success of ongoing workforce education and supervisory training.

2.12.4. Follow-Up

A follow-up has been identified as one of the methods for accessing an EAP. Employees should have access to follow-up services to ensure that they continue to receive the type of counseling or treatment support needed to successfully resolve their problems. Follow-up is a key component of any preventative programme, as it assists in averting a relapse into a crisis situation where an employee's health, wellness or employment may be threatened (Csiernik 2003: 19).

2.13. Benefits of Utilizing the EAP

Dickman and Emener (1988: 123), mention the following benefits of utilizing an EAP:

2.13.1. Benefits to the union

2.13.1.1. Consistency with the union's mission

According to Dickman and Emener (1988: 123) as well as Hutchison and Richard (2003: 59), the primary stated purpose of both the union and the EAP is to help its members. Thus, when a union supports the efforts of an EAP, it is doing what is primarily designed to do helping its members. When a union supports the EAP, there is a greater chance for employees to utilize the services. A union, therefore, has a vital obligation to cooperate and show care for its members.

2.13.1.2. Building of cohesiveness

In most instances, a union's strength and power which come from its members, are contingent upon the members' perceptions of the extent to which the union is caring, the extent to which the union cares about the well-being and wellness of its members. An excellent way for a union to demonstrate its caring for its members is through meaningful involvement in a successful EAP, which is helpful to employees (Dickman *et al* 2003: 59).

2.13.1.3. Real help versus sympathy

To help initiate, plan, support, implement, evaluate, and improve an effective EAP, is an excellent way for a union to say (figuratively): We want to support each member's access to expert assistance. Because of their relationships with their members unions can give understanding and sympathetic offers of assistance, counseling and treatment (Dickman and Emener in Emener et al 2003: 58).

2.13.1.4. Help versus arbitration

Arbitration is the settling of an argument by the decision of a person or group that has been chosen by both sides (Longman Dictionary 1990: 43). Arbitration is expensive, not only to management but to the union as well. Too often the situation emerges as a win-lose situation, and frequently to win or to lose is not a solution for an employee. A management victory in the absence of an enlightened joint programme (EAP) might result in punitive action rather than in urgently needed treatment.

Based on the four benefits for the union, it can be deduced that an EAP can save the company's money, thereby increasing profits. The bottom-line consideration for a union is that higher wages are more easily negotiated from a profitable than a non-profitable company. As such, the unions are compelled to play an active role in the initiation, planning, implementation, evaluation, and refinement of an EAP (Dickman and Emener 1988: 123 as well as Dickman and Emener in Emener *et al* 2003: 58).

2.13.2. Benefits to management

EAP evaluation has benefits to management since it helps management to know if the programme is cost effective and whether it is reaching its objectives or not. The following are the benefits management can derive from utilizing an EAP:

2.13.2.1. Increased cooperation

An EAP involves key personnel in what is frequently called supervisory training. This training focuses on intervention techniques, referral procedures, signs to look for in the troubled employee, as well as review and discussion of company policies and procedures. Importantly, supervisors, management representatives, stewards, and other labour representatives are trained together so that training experiences can facilitate closer co-operation and increase togetherness among the leaders within the environment which is good for the company (Dickman and Emener 1988: 125; Dickman and Emener in Emener *et al.* 2003:59).

2.13.2.2. Enhanced morale

An effective EAP enhances employees' morale at the workplace. A low morale and other related concerns including high absenteeism, high turn-over and apathy are frequently discussed in business and have been meaningfully related to reductions in productivity. Nonetheless, it has been experienced that when union and management work together to help troubled employees and their families through the auspices of an effective EAP, the workers' morale tends to increase and become more positive (Dickman and Emener in Emener *et al.* 2003: 59).

2.13.2.3. More troubled workers are helped

According to Dickman and Emener (1988: 125), a company wants to help their troubled employees for numerous reasons. Identifying troubled employees and convincing them that they need assistance and then helping them, is easier said than done. Nonetheless, when the union and management co-operate within an EAP, the likelihood of a higher penetration rate exists and which may lead a greater likelihood of reaching more troubled workers who need help (Dickman and Emener in Emener *et al.* 2003: 59.

2.13.2.4. Enhanced productivity

An effective EAP assists in enhancing productivity in the workplace. Helping workers towards being more fully functioning individuals will have a positive impact on productivity (Dickman and Emener 1988:126; Dickman and Emener in Emener *et al.* 2003: 59).

2.13.2.5. Increased alternatives and options to problem resolution

 Dickman and Emener (1988: 126) and Emener *et al. (*2003: 59) state that there is an indication that both high level management and union officials alike do not enjoy disciplining a troubled employee who requires disciplinary action or arbitration. An EAP provides an option other than disciplinary action regarding a troubled employee. In this

instance EAP can be regarded as a better, more effective and cheaper alternative to assist troubled employees.

Although reasons such as these, provide a compelling rationale for management to work co-operatively and closely with labour in initiating, planning, implementing, evaluating, and refining the EAP for workers. In effect, management has much to gain and very little to lose.

2.13.3. Benefits to employees

Employees can derive the following benefits from utilizing an EAP:

2.13.3.1. Stigma reduction

When management communicates and demonstrates that to be troubled is to be human, a trusting environment will prevail and employees will tend to feel comfortable to ask and accept assistance. It is not easy for employees to admit that they need help. Cultural stigmas, which suggest that people should be able to solve their own problems without help from others, influence the troubled employees to be reluctant to seek assistance. However, when a supervisor recommends that the employee seeks help from an EAP, an atmosphere that will ultimately be helpful to the troubled employee will be created. Therefore, the more managers and supervisors recommend the EAP to the employees, the more the penetration rate and stigma reduction (Dickman and Emener, 1988:122; Emener *et al.* 2003: 62).

2.13.3.2. Affordable access to help

One of the reasons why employees seek help and assistance early from EAP before their problems get beyond control, is that they can afford to. Affordability in terms of the perceptions of troubled employees also means that they can seek help without immediate fear that it could cost them their jobs, benefits and opportunities for promotion. Second, the utilization of the EAP services is free of charge to employees in some organizations

and thus enhances staff utilization of the programme (Dickman and Emener 1988:130; Emener *et al.*2003: 62).

2.13.3.3. Feeling cared for as a person

According to Dickman and Emener (1988:130) and Emener *et al.* (2003: 62) no-one advocates coddling, especially in the workplace. Sometimes, however, a worker does not like to feel as if he/she is a dispensable tool. When employees have feelings like these, the morale tends to decrease, job satisfaction dwindles and quite often productivity suffers. In an environment where management and the EAP cooperatively, trustingly and mutually work together, employees feel that others care about them as people. This environmental attitude in turn tends to enhance morale, job satisfaction and productivity. That is why it is said that the EAP humanizes the work environment.

2.13.4. Benefits to the EAP

The following are the benefits of utilizing an EAP to the programme itself:

2.13.4.1. Increased probability to success

An active and mutual cooperative involvement of both the union and management with an EAP increases the programme's probability for success. If the managers, supervisors and local union of the organization do not support the EAP and are not willing to be actively involved in its leadership, the chances of an EAP success are limited (Dickman and Emener 1988: 126; Emener *et al.* 2003:60).

2.13.4.2. Increased referrals

Emener and Hutchison in Emener *et al.* (2003: 193) suggest that EAP professionals should conduct an assessment to identify employee or family member problems, develop a plan of action, and refer the individual(s) to an appropriate resource for problem

resolution. Accurate assessment and referrals should result in improved job performance and employee well-being.

A well-run and effective EAP will have a high rate of referrals and penetration rate. An EAP must be postured to respond to the needs of its constituency, the employees and the union must facilitate their demand for it and their use of it (Dickman and Emener 1988: 127; Emener *et al.* 2003: 60).

2.13.4.3. Freedom of movement in the plant and union hall

Dickman and Emener (1988: 127) state that in situations where the EAP enjoys active, mutual, whole-hearted, and supportive involvement of both the union and management, the result is that the EAP official or manager is allowed free movement throughout the plant and access to union meetings. The benefit of full and free visitation greatly enhances the marketing of an EAP and employees' perception of the programme and thus enhances the penetration rate (Emener *et al.* 2003: 60).

2.13.4.4. Joint training sessions

The training sessions usually conducted by employee assistance programme staff are attended by representatives from both labour and management. Not only does this provide opportunities for cooperative interaction on behalf of the union and management representatives, but on behalf of the EAP staff as well (Emener *et, al.* 2003: 60).

2.13.4.5. Early intervention

According to Dickman and Emener in Emener *et al.* (2003: 61), a study was conducted which focused on consumer satisfaction. In addition to finding a high degree of satisfaction with the EAP, most participants reported that they would not have tended to their problem as early as they did had it not been for the existence of and the assistance they received from the EAP.

2.14. Basic Principles of an EAP

The following principles are essential in the operation of an EAP:

2.14.1. Confidentiality

The protection of confidentiality is the criterion that is basic to the success of an EAP regardless of which model is implemented. Unless confidentiality is assured, employees may choose not to contact the EAP (Gould and Smith 1988: 36).

Csiernik (2003: 20) states that the principle of confidentiality requires that no information of a personal nature be shared or discussed without the informed and written consent of the referred worker. The EAP will neither operate effectively, nor for any length of time, without clear guidelines and strong commitment to confidentiality.

Confidentiality is the cornerstone of the EAP. It is, therefore, important that every precaution is taken to ensure confidentiality, since this might also determine the utilization of the programme. Employees will not participate in the programme unless they feel assured that confidentiality will be maintained (Murphy cited in EAPA-Exchange 2000: 22).

A number of factors impact on the principle of confidentiality. They include the location of the office, whether it is an internal or external programme and where an EAP is housed. The location of an EAP office may determine client utilization of the programme. When an EAP is located where employees fear a breach of confidentiality, it might inhibit utilization of the programme. The EAP operates at its optimal level when it is fully integrated with internal organizational activities. It is, therefore, important that an EAP establish a working relationship with a variety of internal departments including human resources, safety, training, organizational development, and employee relations. Close involvement and collaboration improve EAP visibility and increases its ability to make an impact (Emener and Hutchison 2003: 195).

According to Jones (1987: 10) confidentiality is more easily achieved through external programmes than internal ones. A higher utilization of EAP was experienced with external programmes than with internal ones. The major concern about internal programmes is that they may be perceived as being closely identified with particular departments, groups or persons in the organization and that confidentiality of employees' problems may be difficult to protect (Cagney in Oher 1999: 64).

The researcher is, therefore, of the opinion that confidentiality should always be maintained when assisting people with problems in order to enhance service usage and trust in the practitioner. Information should thus not be disclosed to anyone without the employee's written consent. However, it is important to note that confidentiality has limitations. According to Emener and Hatchison (2003: 186), the clients should be informed about their rights regarding the scope and limitations of confidential communication elicited during the assessment, referral and treatment process. The EAP staff should not disclose information without the client's consent except where failure to disclose would result in imminent threat of serious bodily harm to the client or others. Weiss (2003: 63) state that assurance of client confidentiality is associated with a high programme utilization.

2.14.2. Accessibility

Programme aspects that facilitate accessibility relate to employee awareness of the programme, the physical location of the EAP and the referral process adopted (Gould and Smith 1988: 39). Csiernik (2003: 18) mentions that an EAP should facilitate easy access to services providing anonymity where possible while always maintaining confidentiality. Any decision on the part of the employees to seek help must not interfere with their position or employment. An EAP seeks to address problems faced by employees and their families. It is, therefore, important that the service be made available to all individuals who need the service. As such the researcher is of the opinion that an EAP has been defined as a worksite-based programme and suggests that every one working in the organization as well as their family members should have access to the services.

2.14.3. Anonymity

Anonymity refers to the state of being or remaining unknown to most other people. Csiernik (2003: 20) is of the opinion that clients' records kept for EAP statistical reports should never have names attached and statistical reports should always be aggregate in nature so that no person or individual work unit can be recognized. While anonymity is the ultimate goal of the EAP, confidentiality and anonymity are not the same.

Murphy (cited in EAPA-Exchange 2000: 22) suggests that anonymity should be distinguished from confidentiality in that anonymity cannot protect an employee's identity when participating in the EAP. However, it is impossible to prevent co-workers from noticing that a fellow employee is not at work for an extended period of time. Nonetheless, the reasons for the absence are not to be disclosed. It is, therefore, imperative that only service providers have access to the names of service users. This is to ensure that the client develops trust in the EAP practitioner and this will enhance client penetration rate.

2.14.4. Non-discrimination

Participation in the EAP should neither jeopardize an employee's job security, chances of promotion or other related benefits nor should the information shared during consultation be used for any disciplinary process. According to Csiernik (2003: 20), EAP records should never become part of an employee's personnel file as this might inhibit staff utilization of the programme.

2.14.5 Voluntarism

Participation in an EAP should be voluntary without, however denying management and supervisors referrals where necessary. Csiernik (2003: 18) states that employees who seek help voluntarily are the most successful in resolving their difficulties. The researcher supports this viewpoint and is of the opinion that employees should be given an opportunity to consult an EAP voluntarily. However, management may arrange for

employees to be assisted in situations where an employee himself/herself does not realize that he/she has a problem, and then the supervisor can intervene (Bruce 1990: 127).

Formal referrals should be based upon deteriorating job performance as noted by the immediate supervisor and when appropriate discussed with a union steward. Training and educational procedures should be developed that will both enable and motivate individuals to refer themselves to the EAP.

2.14.6. Accountability

According to Gould and Smith (1988: 41), when a programme is undertaken, accountability in terms of the fiscal and programmatic use of resources is crucial. Through careful documentation, programme decisions can be justified and a persuasive case for needed expansion can be presented. It is necessary that objectives be quantifiable. Data should be collected on characteristics of employees served, the rate of utilization, the type of referral, the type of problems presented, the services provided, the hours of most frequent usage and employees' evaluation of services rendered.

The EAP practitioner together with the management should be accountable for the services provided to employees. Csiernik (2003: 19) declares that employees should have access to follow-up services to ensure that they continue to receive the type of services they need to successfully resolve their problems. The author further states that the EAP should result in human and economic savings for both the employer and the employee.

2.15. Elements for Successful EAP Operation

There are certain elements which serve as core ingredients for any successful EAP operation. These include a written policy statement, top management endorsement, union involvement where possible, programme coordination, trained supervisors, confidentiality, insurance coverage, and programme evaluation. These elements are discussed in detail in the following section:

2.15.1. The written policy statement on EAP

Every organization instituting an EAP must have a clear policy statement as to the philosophy and intent of the programme. According to Weiss (2003: 63), the existence of a written policy enhances staff utilization of the programme. The policy statement is a crucial component of an EAP, as it provides the opportunity to stipulate specifics with regard to those aspects that need to be addressed (Balgopal and Patchner 1988: 97; Terblanche 1992: 20).

The researcher is of the opinion that each organization rendering EAP services should have a written policy that specifies the procedure for identification and confrontation of troubled employees. Terblanche (1992: 20) suggests that the development of a policy statement should precede any EAP implementation. The statement can serve as a guide to supervisors and managers regarding constructive handling of employees' personal problems. It also prescribes ways of balancing organizational needs with the need of the individual employee and an EAP itself. In addition, the policy should explain to the employees that the EAP is a mechanism for addressing employees' problems by providing confidential access to counseling services as well as reassuring them that using the programme will not jeopardize their current or future position in the organization.

2.15.2. Top management endorsement and programme placement

Balgopal and Patchner (1988: 97) are of the opinion that management endorsement and active involvement from the highest level of the corporate structure are necessary if an EAP is to be successful. Top management endorsement is crucial for ensuring EAP acceptance and protection. Internal and external programme may require access to the highest levels of management for optimum success (Terblanche 1992: 21).

According to Dickman in Emener *et al*. (2003: 47), top management backing can ensure that the following happen:
- Doors will open to EAP personnel at all other levels of management;
- Adequate financial support to begin the EAP will be made available;

- Enthusiastic support of middle and lower management will model and reflect top management initiative; and
- A beginning to enlist the support of local top management will be maximized.

2.15.3. Union involvement

The involvement of management, supervisors and the total labour force is necessary for the successful functioning of an EAP. The researcher agrees with the author that involvement of the total labour force can help in increasing programme acceptance and efficiency. The formation of an advisory committee that includes labour representatives may enhance the potential for EAP success. Dickman in Emener *et al*. (2003: 47) as well as Terblanche (1992: 21) are of the opinion that the involvement of union members will increase EAP participation to a meaningful degree.

2.15.4. Professional personnel

Dickman in Emener *et al*. (2003: 52) is of the opinion that the EAP practitioner needs to possess expertise in various rehabilitation areas. It is important for organizations to carefully examine professional credentials when establishing an EAP to ensure effective service delivery. Balgopal and Patchner (1988: 98) advise that the EAP coordinator should have knowledge and expertise in many areas, as well as the needed access to competent resources.

The expertise, visibility and availability of staff affect the use of the EAP. To respond to employees' needs and enhance programme utilization, EAP staff must possess broad areas of expertise. The visibility of the staff, as well as their availability in times of emergency, influences the effectiveness of the EAP (Gould and Smith 1988: 40).

2.15.5. EAP awareness

Employees' awareness of the EAP can be achieved by adopting any number of strategies. In some organizations each employee is informed about the EAP and the services it provides at the time of orientation. For some sections of the workforce, visibility contributes to employees' awareness and encourages utilization of the programme.

Balgopal and Patchner (1988: 98) and Dickman in Emener *et al*. (2003: 53) state that for an EAP to be effective, it needs constant marketing at all levels of the organization. An EAP must communicate its availability to employees and their families, if covered, in order to function effectively. It is also important that employees know about the organisation's EAP policies and to understand what the programme can and cannot do for them. This can be done though marketing of the EAP services to ensure that the employees utilize the services.

Csiernik (2003: 21) advises that information updates about the programme need to occur regularly to maintain the spotlight on the programme and ensure its continued support and usage. Unfamiliarity with the policy and scope of the programme efforts could prevent employees from using the EAP. Educational programmes also make employees aware of the organisation's commitment to helping those in need (Sonnestuhl and Trice 1990).

2.15.6. Supervisors' training

Employee assistance practitioners need to train supervisors to be able to identify troubled employees through deteriorating job performance and help to advice them to utilize EAP services (Balgopal and Patchner 1988: 98; Sonnestuhl and Trice 1990; Dickman in Emener *et al.* 2003: 51). It is recommended that training occur at least once per year, and some of the suggested training content is alcoholism awareness, referral procedures, importance of early interventions and enabling behaviour.

Today the supervisor's role in an EAP has become more complex than ever before. Current employees face more pervasive and multifaceted problems. As a result supervisors need to act as professional mentors across a wide range of organizational activities and take a human interest in people who work for them as well. According to Weiss (2003: 68), training supervisors on EAP will enhance staff utilization of the programme since managers and supervisors will help in identifying and referring troubled employees to an EAP.

2.15.7. Confidentiality, ethics and record keeping

Confidentiality plays a major role in determining whether the employees will be able to use EAP services or not. Without assurance of confidentiality, employees will not use an EAP. A properly functioning EAP requires the ability to balance the employees' right to privacy with the management's need to know. Therefore, the concept of confidentiality must be clearly defined in each organizational setting (Nye 1990). Developing an Employee Assistance policy that clearly defines the degree of confidentiality promised by the programme provides organization's EAP professionals with one method of handling the problem of potential liability. It also informs the employees of what to expect and this helps to ensure effective service delivery. According to Dickman and Emener, in Emener *et al*. (2003: 49), confidentiality is the cornerstone of an effective EAP.

Emener and Hutchison (2003: 192) suggest that EAP practitioners should adhere to the code of ethics espoused by their professional organizations and by appropriate licensing and certifying bodies in order to ensure professional behaviour and provide consumer protection. Record keeping is also important in EAP. According to Masi (1992: 8), files should be locked and access should be limited and monitored while identifying information should be kept to a minimum. A record keeping system must be devised to protect the employees' identity.

2.15.8. Financial aspects and insurance coverage

An EAP also needs proper benefits support to operate effectively. Each organization must decide how much responsibility it will assume for the welfare of its employees with respect to the treatment of employees. According to Dickman and Emener, in Emener *et al.* (2003: 51), when an employee knows that going to the EAP may cost him/her something but that it will not ruin them financially, they will be more willing to accept a referral or refer themselves or members of their families. In addition, insurance must be helpful in paying for any in-patient or ongoing out-patient visits the employees' or their family may need. EAPA (1990) states that an inability to utilize the highest quality resources for the particular problems it faces can also constrict an EAP's operations. In accordance with the EAPA standards, an EAP should therefore regularly identify, foster, create, utilize, and evaluate community resources that provide the best quality care at the most reasonable cost. Such monitoring will permit delivery of prime services responsive to the individual needs of both employees and the organization.

2.15.9. Broad-brush approach

The EAP must be able to helpfully respond to a wide variety of employees' problems and needs such as alcohol or drug abuse, personal, family, financial, grief, mental health, medical, and legal issues. This concept is known as the broad-brush approach to industrial counselling. When employees realize that the EAP is open to any problem that the employee or family member has, they will more likely avail themselves of the programme services and thus enhance the penetration rate (Balgopal and Patchner 1988: 98).

2.15.10. Programme evaluation

It is important that an EAP be evaluated for its appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency. This may help in addressing obstacles affecting service delivery to ensure that the EAP addresses the employees' needs (Balgopal and Patchner 1988: 98). Dickman in

Emener *et al.* (2003: 53) states that the company and the EAP office need to know if the programme is working and if it is doing what it purports to do.

Programme evaluation can assist in identifying aspects that hinder employees' utilization as well as the penetration rate and will also assist in determining programme adequacy. Weiss (2003: 61) indicates that among widely recommended features, the existence of a written policy and its broad distribution, adequate staffing levels and the provision of training for supervisors predict high levels of programme utilization.

2.16. Challenges to Programme Evaluation

Evaluation is a controversial and at times a political process, hence, the lack of consensus on the need and merits of evaluation. Despite the differences in the rationale for EAP evaluation, interest in this area has not faded.

Jones (1987: 101) suggests that despite the increased interest in EAP evaluation, some barriers still exist. The author states that EAP is a relatively new field and lacks a history of scientific investigation. Even contemporary programme managers often lack formal training needed to conduct programme evaluation. Another challenge is the diversity of EAP itself. This diversity makes it difficult to generalize from the findings on any programme and to develop standardized evaluation tools and techniques across programme types.

Another challenge of primary importance is the concern for clients' confidentiality. The researcher supports this statement in that clients may be reluctant to respond to some questions due to the fact that they might be concerned about confidentiality. Evaluation research is both time-consuming and expensive. According to Highley and Cooper (1994: 5) as well as Ligon and Yegidis in Emener *et al.* (2003: 131), the relative lack of evaluation is also due to the difficulty which researchers have in gaining access to programmes.

The authors further concur that EAPs are particularly sensitive research sites because programme staff, management, union representatives, and clients are likely to resist the encroachment of outside evaluators. Evaluation of the programme, therefore, requires effort and co-operation among researchers, work organizations and EAP providers. However, without access to the everyday experiences of managers, employees and counselors, evaluation will be fruitless. As a result the researcher cannot develop concepts reflective of reality or useful to practitioners

2.17. EAP in Public Organizations

Perry and Cayer (1992: 1) are of the opinion that public employers are making major investments of resources in EAPs. Government departments are introducing EAPs as means of addressing problems affecting employees. Perry and Cayer (1992: 1) furthermore mention that EAPs cover over two million civilian employees in the federal government in the United States. With this explosion in the programme, it is clear that much money is spent by public jurisdictions on EAP. EAP in public organizations began as an effort to deal with alcohol abuse and its impact on employee performance. However, EAP has evolved into a much more comprehensive effort. This is also known as a mega-brush approach. Now the typical EAP deals with any problem which interferes with employee productivity in the workplace.

The researcher is in agreement with Perry and Cayer (1992: 1) that usual questions for public managers, policy makers and taxpayers are: What are EAPs accomplishing and whether are they worth the resources they expend? Thus, evaluation of an EAP is a significant issue for the public sector. Advocates are promoting EAPs to management on the ground that they can make major contributions to the organization.

An important justification which is often heard is that EAP saves money through reduced absenteeism, reduced employee turnover and the organization as a whole. An EAP in a public organization should be a component of the human resource management effort of the organization. In this way an EAP operation can be used to form the basis for such

functions as revising selection procedures, job redesign, managerial change, and changes in the organization itself. Perry and Cayer (1992: 2) identify three distinguishing features of public organizations:

- First, the public sector EAP is embedded in a complex organization representing considerable structural diversity. This diversity includes a bifurcated authority structure in which attention must be given both to goals and evaluating programmes that stand alone or constitute an organization themselves.
- A second distinguishing feature concerning an EAP in the public sector is simply that it is part of the public sector organizations.
- A third distinguishing characteristic of EAPs operating in the public sector deals with what might broadly be called accountability issues. EAPs routinely provide a variety of services or treatments.

Daly in Emener *et al.* (2003: 271), concurs that public organizations should encourage early self-referral as a means of improving the individual's potential for recovery. Installing a belief that the ultimate goal of the organization and its EAP is rehabilitative rather than punitive, facilitates the successful application of EAP services within one's work force.

2.18. Summary of Findings from Literature

The following is a summary of findings from the literature review:

- An EAP should be designed to include specific evaluation plans wherein the progress of the programme needs to be monitored.
- EAPs should be evaluated to justify their existence to some external authorities and should be assessed to ascertain the extent to which they are reaching its objectives and find ways to improve its performance.

- Process evaluation is needed to ensure that the EAP is correctly designed for the organization in which it is operating, and that it is meeting the needs of that organization and its employees.

- A comprehensive evaluation framework is important when evaluating the programme. It contains elements of both process and outcome evaluation.

- A value-driven approach is important to the operation of EAPs in South Africa and was relevant to the study since one of the aspects being evaluated was programme adequacy.

- The elements for successful EAP operation and evaluation discussed included: written policy statement, top management endorsement, union involvement, staffing, EAP awareness, role of supervisors, confidentiality, appropriate insurance coverage, broad service components, and programme evaluation.

- EAP evaluation plays a vital role in the success of the programme. The following aspects can be evaluated: programme utilization, characteristics of EAP clients, programme penetration, referral sources as well as employees' awareness of the EAP.

- EAPs are evaluated for vindication, marketing, verification, improvement, understanding, and accountability.

- The types of evaluation discussed in this chapter are outcome evaluation, cost-effectiveness, impact evaluation, empowerment evaluation, and process evaluation.

- Without continued evaluation, an EAP could risk becoming a static and outdated intervention programme.

- Evaluation can be done to improve the service, to strengthen the plans for delivery, to raise the outcome of the programme, and to increase the efficiency of services rendered.

- An evaluation must be planned.

- Referral increases utilization of the EAP.

- Supervisor training improves awareness.

CHAPTER 3

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

3.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the empirical findings of the study. The research methodology is briefly described, followed by the discussion of the research findings which are presented according to the sections of the questionnaire. The aim of the research was to evaluate the Employee Assistance Programme at the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District, specifically focusing on employees' awareness of the EAPs, utilization and programme adequacy. The questionnaires were administered from 9 -17 July 2007.

3.2. Research methodology

The research was evaluative in nature. The researcher developed a questionnaire as a data collection instrument from literature on evaluation of EAPs. In order to facilitate understanding by respondents, the aim of the research was highlighted on the front page of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was pilot tested at the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District where five employees who were not in the sampling frame were requested to complete the questionnaire. The purpose of pilot testing the questionnaire was to determine if the employees would be able to understand and complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire was translated into Tshivenda by an expert in order for the respondents to clearly understand the content of the questionnaire since most employees had little grasp of English.

 After having obtained permission to conduct the study, the researcher visited the Human Resources section at the Sibasa District office in order to obtain the list (sampling frame) of all employees at the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District. After obtaining

the list, it was evident that the Department had 877 employees in Vhembe District. The researcher used a systematic random sampling wherein every 10th person from the sampling frame was selected. A total of 86 employees were identified to participate in the study.

After identifying the respondents, the researcher wrote a letter to the Deputy Manager Employee Wellness as well as the Manager Shared Services in order to request them to inform the cost centre managers to alert employees about the dates and venues for the study. A list of employees to participate in the study was circulated to all the cost centre managers. Data were collected in Vhembe District in all the cost centres. The participants and areas visited were as follows:

- 15 employees were from Vhembe District office in Sibasa;
- 5 employees were from Makhado cost centre;
- 6 employees were from Mutale cost centre;
- 10 employees were from Hlanganani cost centre;
- 7 employees were from Dzanani cost centre;
- 8 employees were from Malamulele cost centre; and
- 35 employees were from Thohoyandou cost centre.

The questionnaires were administered over a period of seven days. Eighty six (86) questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and all questionnaires were returned and this represents a 100% response rate. The data were analyzed by the statistician using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The research findings will be presented following the sequence of the sections within the questionnaire.

3.3. Research findings

3.3.1. Demographic factors

The demographics of an organization influence EAP utilization (Jones, 1987: 108), hence, the measurement of these factors in the study.

3.3.1.1. Age distribution of respondents

Pie-chart 1: Age distribution of respondents
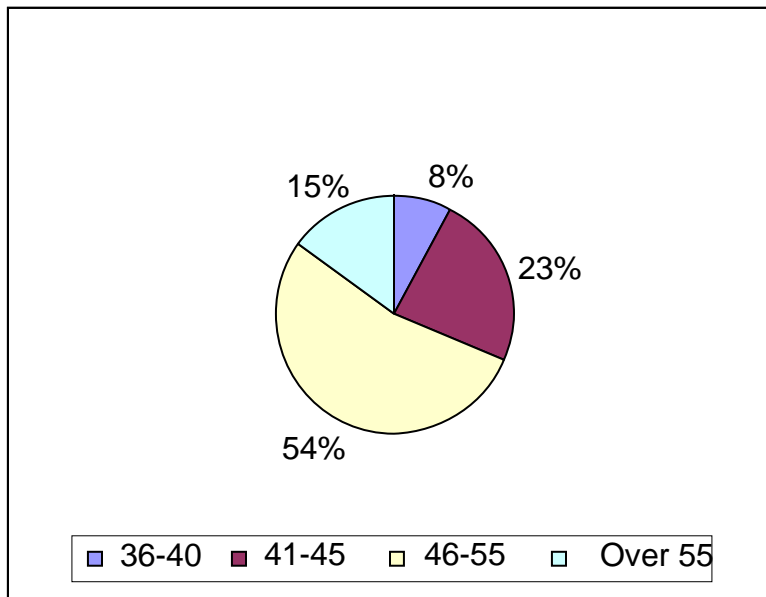
Pie chart 1 depicts that the majority of respondents were between the ages of 46-55 years. This finding may suggest that the Department of Public Works is constituted mainly by adult employees. Older employees include not only the elders but also persons in their 40s and 50s. From the research findings, EAP within the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District was mainly utilized by employees between the ages of 46-55. Research findings in (Mnisi 2005: 97) indicate that employees within the age group of 31-40 were more willing to utilize EAP than older ones. The researcher is, however, of the opinion that older employees would utilize an EAP more readily than younger ones since they are faced with more challenges.

3.3.1.2. Gender distribution

The majority of the respondents (55%) were males while (45%) were females. The reason for this is that the Department of Public Works employs more males than females as can be seen from the staff profile of the Department. Women are likely to utilize EAP more readily than males (Brodzinski and Goyer, 1987: 1). From the research findings, EAP within the Department of Public Works was mainly utilized by males when compared to females. Gould and Smith (1988: 221) are of the opinion that women are likely to be underutilized in the departments. This might be due to the nature of the work done which is mainly construction at the Department of Public Works and the fact that artisan work was viewed as careers for men.

It is interesting to note that the gap between the sexes is narrow. This can be as a result of the legislative framework in South Africa such as the Employment Equity Act, No 55 of 1998 which aims at ensuring equality and non-discrimination in the workplace. The Labour Relations Act, No 66 of 1995, aims at regulating the resolution of disputes between workers and employers and sets out the rights of employees while the Affirmative Action policy described as the White Paper on Transformation of 1995 aims at reshaping the public service by continually improving the lives of the previously disadvantaged people of South Africa including women through a transformed public service which is representative, coherent, transparent, efficient, effective, accountable and responsive to the needs of all. The Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, No 4 of 2000 sets out measures for dealing with various forms of unfair discrimination and inequality while the South African Constitution Act, No 108 of 1996 outlines human rights such as the right to equality and non-discrimination.

3.3.1.3. Rank of respondents

Table 1: Rank of respondents

Rank of respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Personnel officer	2	2.3%
Admin/clerical staff	6	7%
Artisans - building - electricity - carpentry - landscaping - painting	25	29%
Cleaning staff	2	2.3%
Drivers	6	7%
General workers	29	34%
Security officers	12	14%
Accountant	2	2.3%
Transport officer	1	1%
Telecom operator	1	1%
Total	86	100%

Table 1 illustrates that the sample was representative of various ranks in the Department. The majority of the respondents were employed as general workers followed by artisans. The fact that most of the respondents were employed as general workers and artisans in the Department may be attributed to the following:

▪ The Department's mission which is aimed at promoting the government's objectives of economic development, good governance and rising living standards and prosperity by providing and managing accommodation, housing, land and infrastructure needs of national departments, the National Expanded Public Works Programme and by encouraging the transformation of the construction and property industries.

▪ It is evident that the Department of Public Works focuses mainly on construction and property management. The researcher is of the opinion that general workers would

utilize an EAP more due to the fact that they constitute a large percentage within the Department and the nature of their work.

3.3.1.4. Number of years employed by the Department of Public Works

Table 2: Number of years employed by the Department of Public Works

Number of years employed	Number of employees	Percentage
2	1	1.2
4	1	1.2
9	2	2.3
10	1	1.2
12	2	2.3
13	2	2.3
14	5	5.8
15	6	7.0
16	3	3.5
17	4	4.7
18	5	5.8
19	7	8.1
20	3	3.5
21	14	16.3
22	8	9.3
23	9	10.5
24	4	4.7
25	4	4.7
26	1	1.2
28	2	2.3
Total	84	97.7
Missing System	2	2.3
Total	86	100.0

Table 2 shows that the majority of respondents were in the Department of Public Works for 21 years. This could be attributed to the fact that most respondents' level of education was low and that most of them were not highly skilled. The economy of South Africa expands greatly in the professional area. The other reason for employees to stay in the Department for long might be the fact that their career paths were limited due to the nature of work which is mainly construction and property management at the Department. The demand for artisans and general workers by other departments is limited

compared to other professions. The researcher is of the opinion that irrespective of the fact that most employees were in the Department for years, the existence of the EAP should continually be communicated to all employees in order to enhance the utilization and penetration rate of the programme.

3.3.1.5. Marital status

Pie chart 2: Marital status
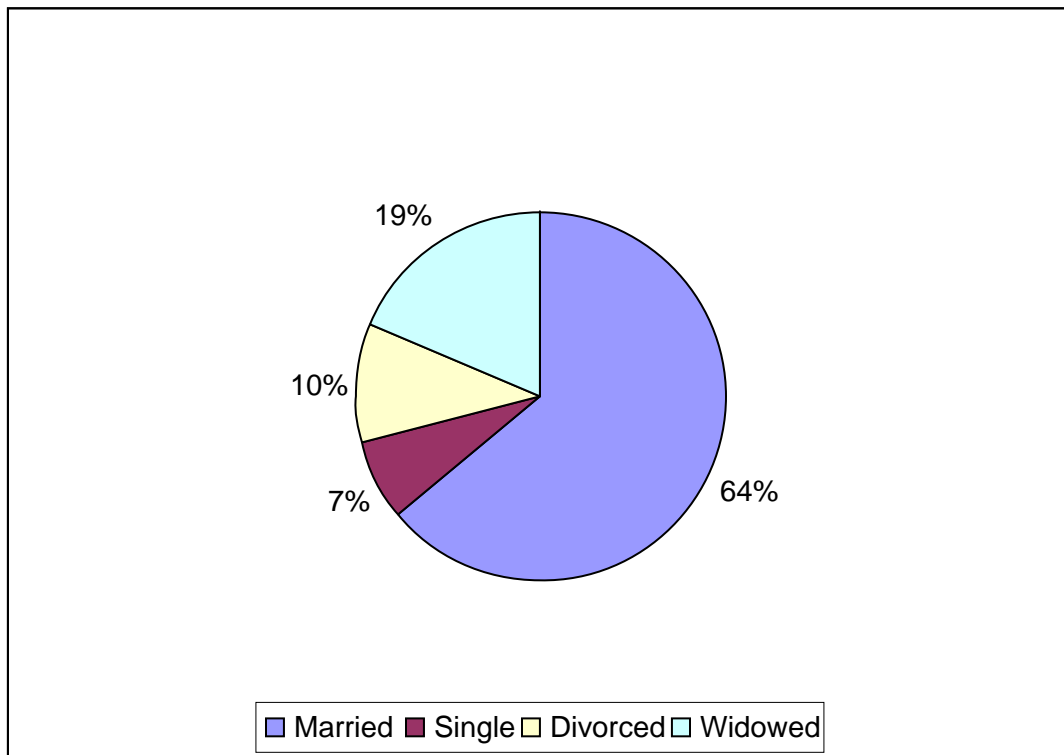
Pie chart 2 indicates that the majority of respondents were married while a lesser number were divorced and a minority was single. It is evident that there were more married people. This corresponds with the fact that the majority of respondents were between the ages of 46-55, where their focus would be on the family. Families and marriages often experience problems and challenges. Relationship problems comprise the second largest EAP caseload (Dickman in Emener, Hutchison and Richard, 2003: 52). The researcher is, therefore, of the opinion that married employees would utilize EAP services more than others.

3.3.1.6. Number of dependent children

Histogram 1: Number of dependent children
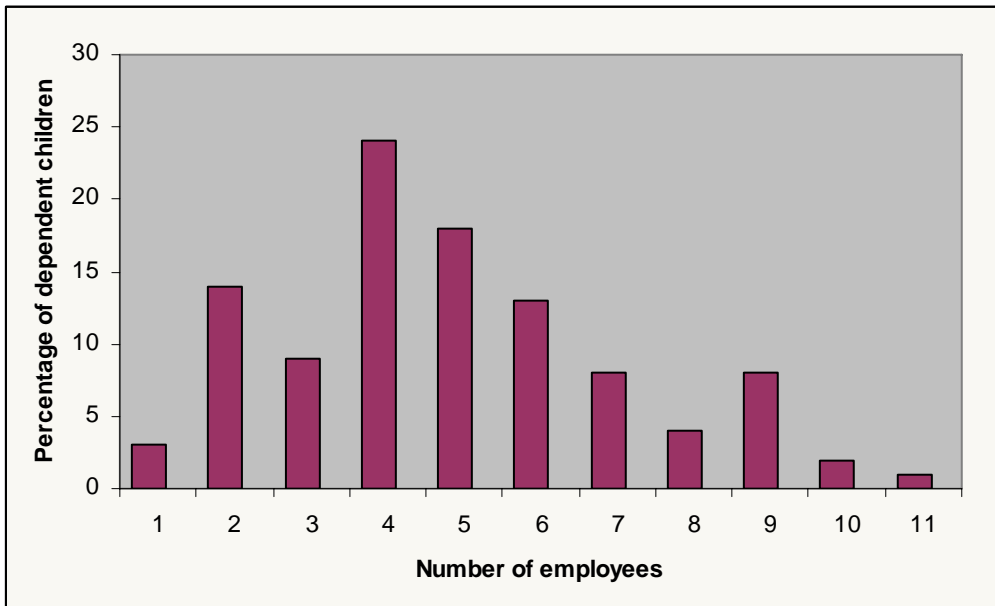
Histogram 1 shows that all the respondents had dependent children. It can be deduced that the majority of employees who utilized EAP had dependent children. According to Jones (1987:108), EAP is intended to serve all employees and their dependents that are experiencing problems. The researcher is of the opinion that an EAP should communicate its availability and services to all employees and their families in order to enhance utilization and penetration rate of the programme. This view is also supported by Csiernik (2003: 21).

3.3.2. Awareness of EAP

3.3.2.1. Employees' awareness of EAP's existence

Pie chart 3: Employees' awareness of EAP existence
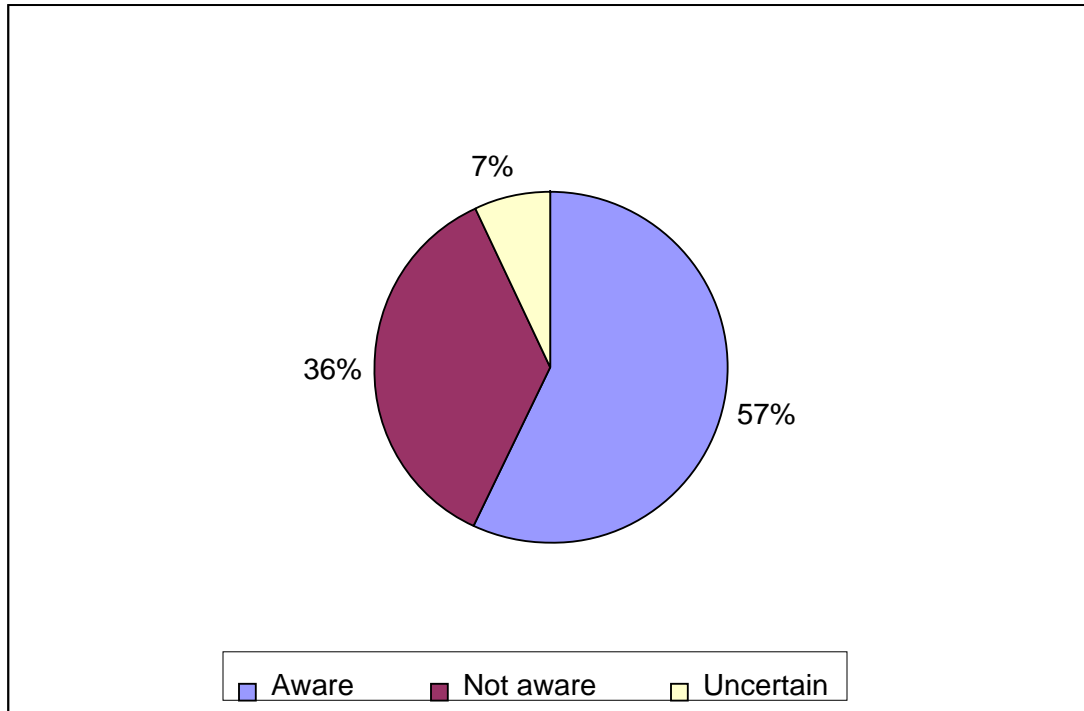
Pie chart 3 depicts that the majority of the respondents were aware of the existence of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Awareness of EAP means knowing the programme, services rendered and how to access the programme. The researcher supports Frost (1990: 46) who maintains that employees' awareness about EAP is an important predictor of utilization. It is therefore, important, that all employees be informed about the programme in order to enhance their chances of utilizing EAP and enhancing the programme penetration rate. Marketing of EAP refers to the theory and practice of presentation, advertising and selling the programme. Constant marketing of EAP enhances employees' awareness of EAP (Dickman 2003: 53).

3.3.2.2. EAP marketing strategies

Histogram 2: EAP marketing strategies
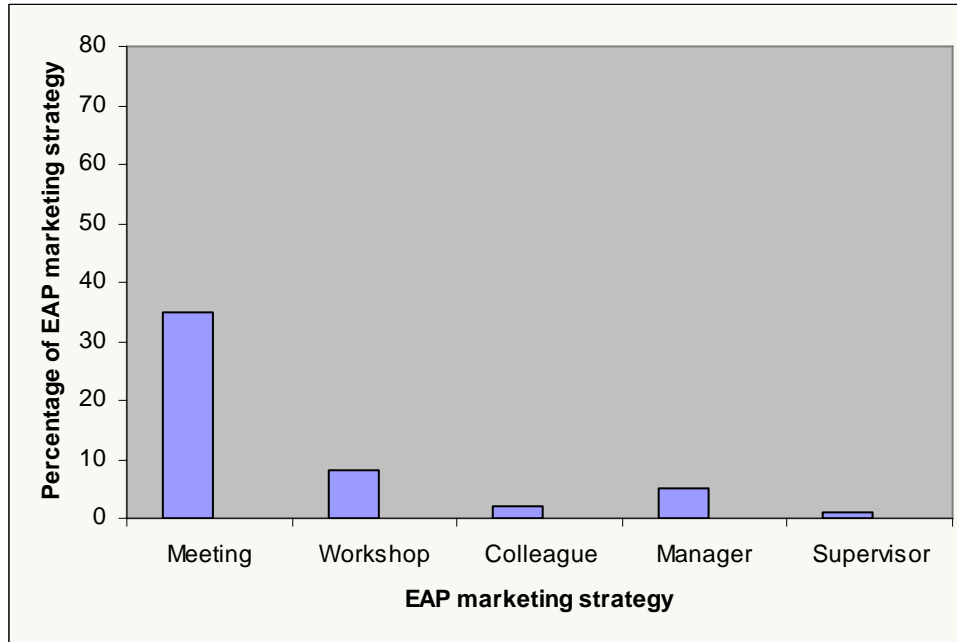
Histogram 2 illustrates marketing strategies used to inform employees about the EAP in the Department. It is evident from the findings that most of the respondents knew about the EAP through meetings. A meeting could be an effective marketing tool to a largely illiterate workforce. The workshop could not be used effectively because general workers do not often attend meetings. Forty-one percent (41%) did not respond to the question. This could be the respondents who were not aware of the EAP services in the Department. The researcher agrees with Frost (1990: 47); Oher (1999: 91) and Dickman (2003: 53) that when an EAP utilizes several methods to inform the workforce about its services, the employees' level of awareness is likely to be high and thus enhances utilization of the programme as well as the penetration rate. Frost (1990: 47) suggests that information presented orally and complemented by written material enhances the utilization and penetration rate of EAP.

3.3.2.3. Employees' exposure to EAP

Employees' exposure to EAP differs from awareness of the programme. Exposure means introduction or disclosure of the programme to the workforce whereas awareness entails having knowledge and understanding of the programme and its services. The majority of respondents (51%) indicated that they were exposed to EAP information sessions while 49% indicated that they were not exposed to EAP information sessions. It is interesting to note that the difference between employees exposed to EAP and those not is narrow. It is evident from the findings that the majority of employees from Thohoyandou Cost Centre were not exposed to EAP information sessions. This might be due to the fact that most employees were stationed in various building projects wherein they were unlikely to access EAP information. The researcher concurs with Frost (1990: 46) that essential to a successful EAP is the ability to communicate to all employees' available services through the EAP since this can have an impact on the employees' utilization of an EAP, penetration rate and programme adequacy.

3.3.2.4. Services rendered by EAP in the Department of Public Works

Pie chart 4: Services rendered by EAP in the Department of Public Works
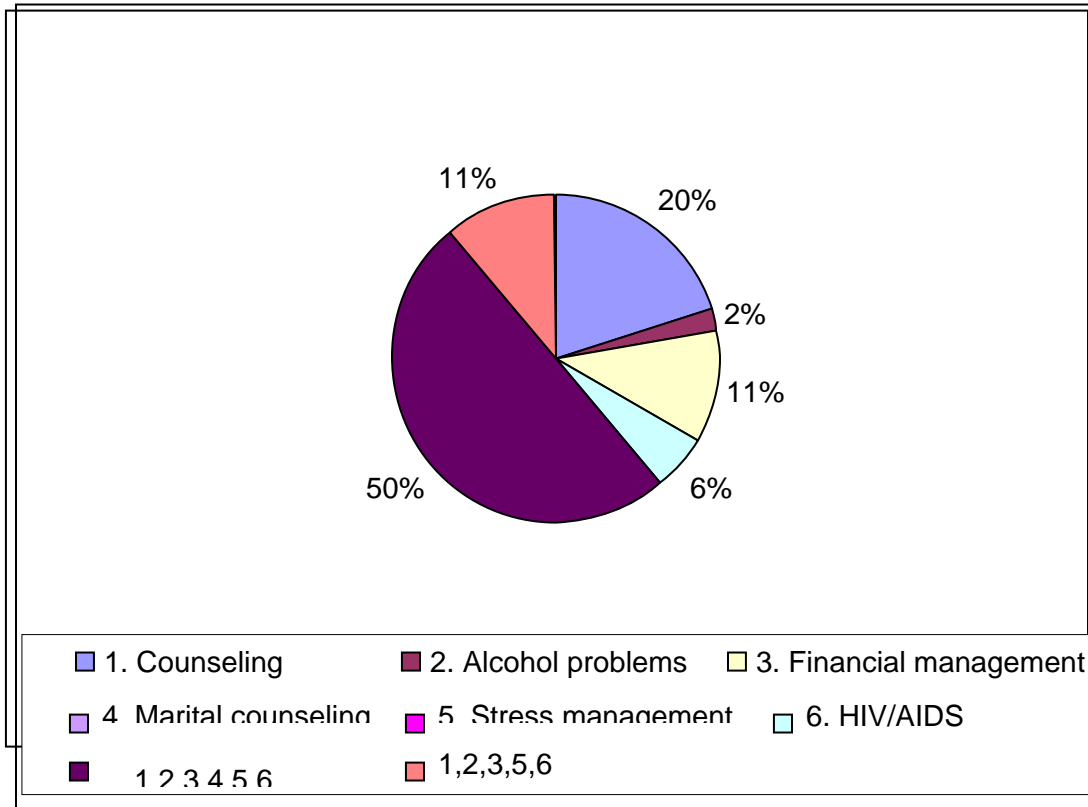
The EAP must be designed to positively respond to a wide variety of employees' problems such as alcohol and drug abuse, personal, family, financial, grief, mental, health, and legal problems. From the research findings, it can be deduced that the EAP within Department of Public Works used a broad brush approach. A broad brush approach means that the EAP is able to respond to a variety of problems experienced by employees (Dickman 2003: 53). The majority of the respondents stated that the EAP renders all services identified in the diagram. It is interesting to note that most of the respondents within the Department were aware of various EAP services. The researcher supports Lawrence, Boxer and Tarakeshwar (2002: 4) who maintain that there is a link between employees' familiarity with EAP services and utilization of the programme. The researcher also agrees with Balgopal and Patchner (1988: 98) who state that when employees realize that the EAP is open to any problem that the employee or a family

member has, employees will more likely avail themselves of the programme services and thus enhance the penetration rate.

3.3.2.5. Other services rendered by EAP in the Department of Public Works

The minority of the respondents (12%) identified other services rendered by the EAP within the Department of Public Works as sports and recreation, occupational health and safety, trainings, and coordinating disability awareness sessions for people with disabilities. When the EAP is designed to positively respond to all employees problems, more employees will utilize the programme (Emener, Hutchison and Richard, 2003: 52).

3.3.3. Employees' perception of using EAP
3.3.3.1. Employees' attitude towards EAP

The research findings revealed that the majority of the respondents (62%) had a positive attitude towards the EAP whereas 38% were uncertain. The small percentage of respondents who were uncertain of their attitude towards the EAP could be those who were not aware of the programme or those who had not utilized the service before. This may be an indication that even though some employees had not utilized the EAP services, they might utilize the service when the need arises since they had a positive attitude towards it. Harlow (1998: 2) mentions that employees who had used the EAP, before, usually had a more positive attitude towards the programme than non users. However, factors such as convenience of the EAP location and overall effectiveness of the programme could have an impact on how employees perceive the programme. The researcher is of the opinion that when employees have a positive attitude towards the EAP, utilization of the programme may be enhanced.

3.3.3.2. Accessibility of EAP

Pie chart 5: Accessibility of EAP
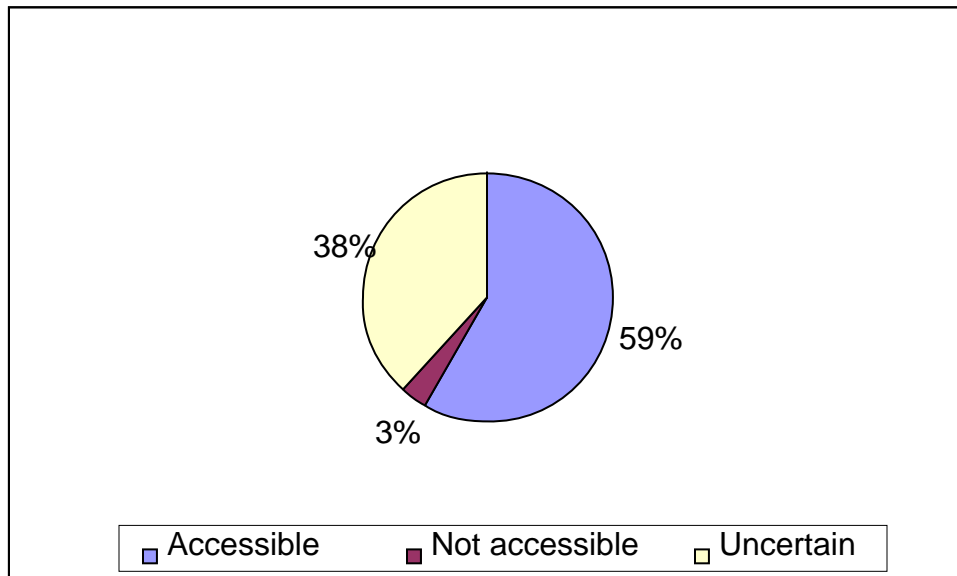
Accessibility entails being able to reach the EAP in a convenient manner. From the research findings, the majority of the respondents confirmed that EAP services were accessible whereas a smaller number were uncertain and a minority indicated that an EAP was not accessible. The respondents who were uncertain about the accessibility of the EAP could be those who were not aware of the programme. The researcher concurs with Dickman (2003: 53) who mentions that when employees are able to get to their EAP site in a timely, convenient and efficient manner, utilization of its services as well as the programme penetration rate increases. Accessibility is one of the major policy principles within the Department of Public Works. The policy on EAP in the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District does not outline how accessibility of the programme will be ensured. However, transport is made available for employees who would like to utilize the EAP while employees were allowed time off duty to utilize the programme. The EAP service within the Department must be made available to the workforce in the language of their choice consistent with the Constitutional imperative. In terms of section 30 of the Constitutional Act No.108 of 1996 (Bill of Rights), everyone has a right to use the language of his/her choice.

3.3.3.3. Employees' utilization of EAP during working hours

Pie chart 6: Employees' utilization of EAP during working hours
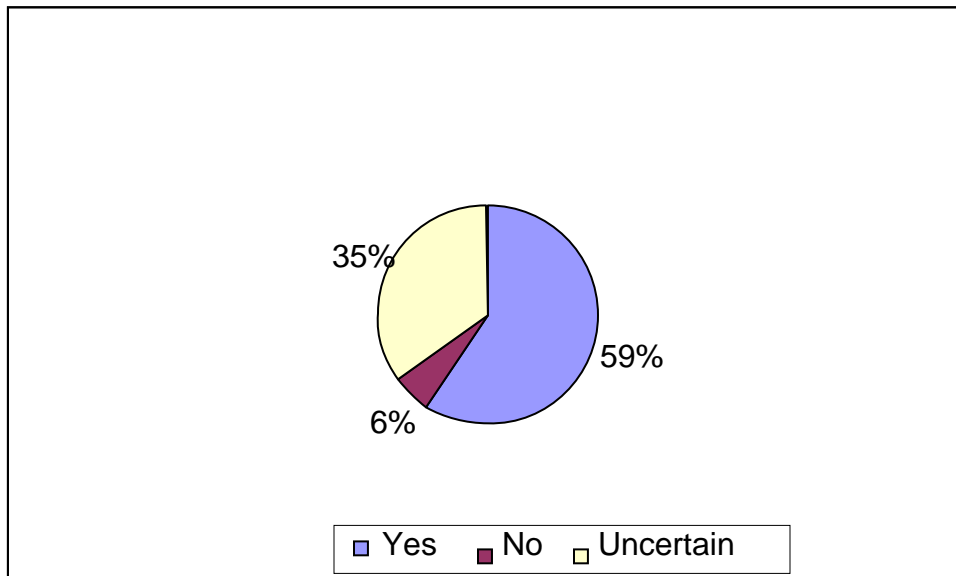
Pie chart 6 illustrates that most of the respondents agreed that the Department allowed them time off duty to use the EAP services whereas the minority indicated that the Department did not allow them time off duty. A smaller number were uncertain and this might be employees who were not aware of the EAP services within the Department. The researcher thus confirms that time off duty for EAP utilization may enhance the penetration rate of the programme and encourage employees to utilize the service. However, time off duty for using an EAP is not stated in the Departmental policy on EAP, hence this confusion.

3.3.4. EAP utilization

3.3.4.1. Employees' utilization of EAP

Pie chart 7: Employees' utilization of EAP
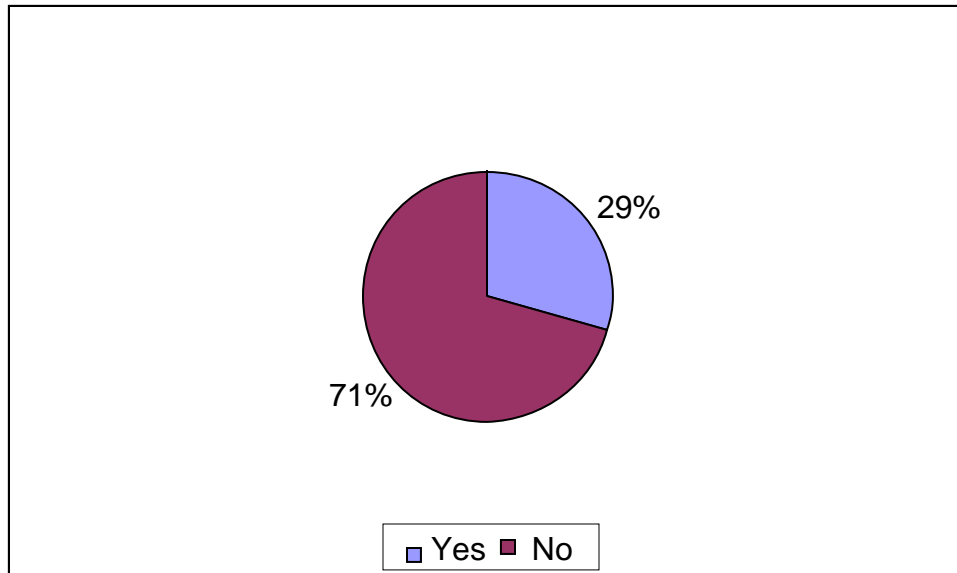
Pie chart 7 shows that the majority of the respondents mentioned that they had never utilized the EAP before whereas a minority indicated that they had utilized the EAP services. Lawrence, Boxer and Tarakeshwar (2002: 3) identify issues that appear to mediate EAP utilization including employees' trust in confidentiality of the services provided, the ease of access and perceived efficacy of the programme. Trust and confidentiality issues are influenced by amongst others, the location of EAP and the privacy of the EAP office. The researcher is therefore, of the opinion that when the EAP is located where employees are seen when going to the EAP office, utilization of the programme can be negatively affected. The researcher supports French, Dunlap, Roman and Steele (1997) in Tarakeshwar *et al.* (2002: 4) who maintain that when employees believe that other personnel can find out if they used the EAP, utilization of the programme becomes relatively lower. However, when managers and supervisors support employees with problems, utilization of the is programme enhanced.

3.3.4.2. EAP Referral

Table 3: Types of referral

	Referral	Frequency	Percentage
Valid	Self	10	11.6
	Supervisor	12	14.0
	Colleague	2	2.3
	Family	1	1.2
	Total	25	29
Missing	System	61	71
Total		86	100.0

There are two types of referral namely formal and informal. Formal referral occurs to a situation when a supervisor or manager refers an employee with personal problems contributing to poor performance to the EAP. A formal referral takes place when performance at work is an issue. Supervisory referral of employees to EAP can assist in enhancing the utilization rate of the EAP. The research findings revealed that most of the respondents were referred by supervisors to EAP whereas a smaller number referred themselves and a minority was referred by colleagues or family members. Seventy-one percent (71%) did not respond to the question, and most probably this might be the respondents who had never utilized the EAP before. It is evident from table 3 that the difference between self-referral and supervisory referral is narrow. Self-referral is based on one of the fundamental principles of EAP, namely: voluntarism. Voluntarism means employees should be encouraged to use EAP on their own and this has implications for the utilization and penetration rate of the programme. Although the respondents were able to refer themselves to the EAP, the more managers and supervisors refer employees to the programme the more the penetration rate increases (Schenger and Hayward in Thoreson and Hosokawa 1984: 333).

3.3.4.3. Employees' satisfaction with EAP

Histogram 3: Employees' satisfaction with EAP
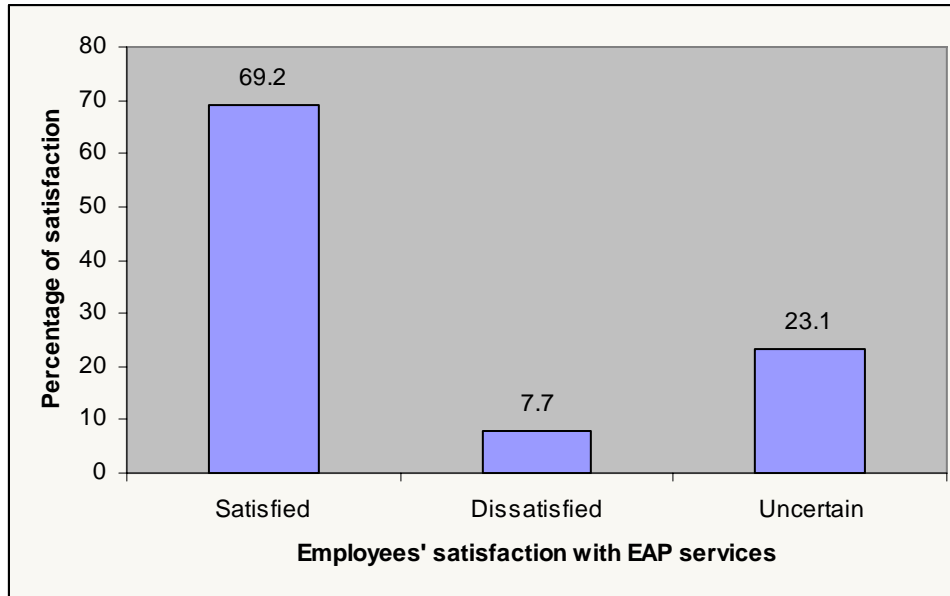
Histogram 3 illustrates the respondents' satisfaction with the EAP. The majority of the respondents who had utilized the service before were satisfied with the EAP, whereas a smaller number were uncertain and the minority dissatisfied. Satisfaction with the programme may also mean that the services are effective and this may imply that the programme responds to the needs of the workforce. The researcher is of the opinion that employees' satisfaction with EAP can enhance staff utilization of the programme and can be a good indication of the programme's success. Satisfaction with the programme is good for marketing in that satisfied employees would inform their colleagues about the programme and this is likely to improve utilization. Employees' satisfaction evaluation is thus contributory towards programme improvement and when employees are satisfied, they are more likely to utilize the programme (Yamatani 1993: 78; Ligon and Yegidis in Emener *et al.* 2003: 131).

3.3.4.4. Referral of employees to external resources

The EAP operates at its optimal level when it is fully acquainted and maintains a working relationship with support resources available in the community. In the study's findings, 19% of the respondents indicated that they had been referred to external resources while 19% mentioned that they had never been referred. It is interesting to note that the number of employees who had been referred to external resources is equal to the number of those who had never been referred. Sixty-two percent (62%) did not respond to the question. Most probably these were employees who had never utilized the EAP services before. According to Jones (1987: 116), where the EAP clients are referred to may determine the quality and effectiveness of the care the client will receive. The researcher is of the opinion that when employees are referred to external resources, utilization of EAP can be enhanced. The delivery of quality services responsive to the individual needs of employees requires that the EAP develop and maintain an effective community network of local resources. By so doing the programme will be addressing the needs of the employees (Emener and Hutchison 2003: 192).

3.3.4.5. Employees' knowledge about location of EAP

Pie chart 8: Employees' knowledge about location of EAP
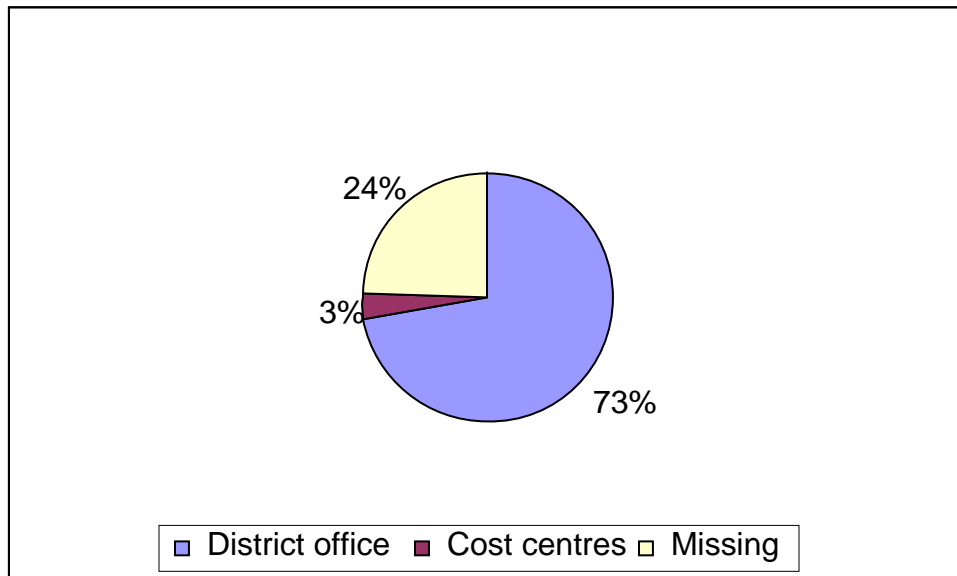
Pie chart 8 illustrates the respondents' responses regarding knowledge about the location of the EAP. The majority of the respondents indicated that their EAP was located at the District office, while a minority indicated that the EAP was located at cost centers and a smaller number did not respond. The latter were probably employees who were not aware of the EAP. The EAP service in the Department of Public Works in Vhembe is located at the Sibasa District office. It can be deduced that the majority of the employees were aware of the EAP's location at the Department of Public Works. The location of an EAP office may influence client utilization of the programme. It is, therefore, important that EAP staff create awareness of the location of the EAP services to all employees (Murphy cited in EAPA, Exchange 2000: 22). This can be achieved through presentations to employees in meetings or workshops. The researcher agrees with Lawrence, Boxer and Tarakeshwar (2002: 4) that there is a link between employees' familiarity with the EAP's location and utilization of the programme. When employees are aware of the EAP's location, they are more likely to utilize the service.

3.3.4.6. Distance of EAP from employees' work station

Pie chart 9: Distance of EAP from employees' workstation
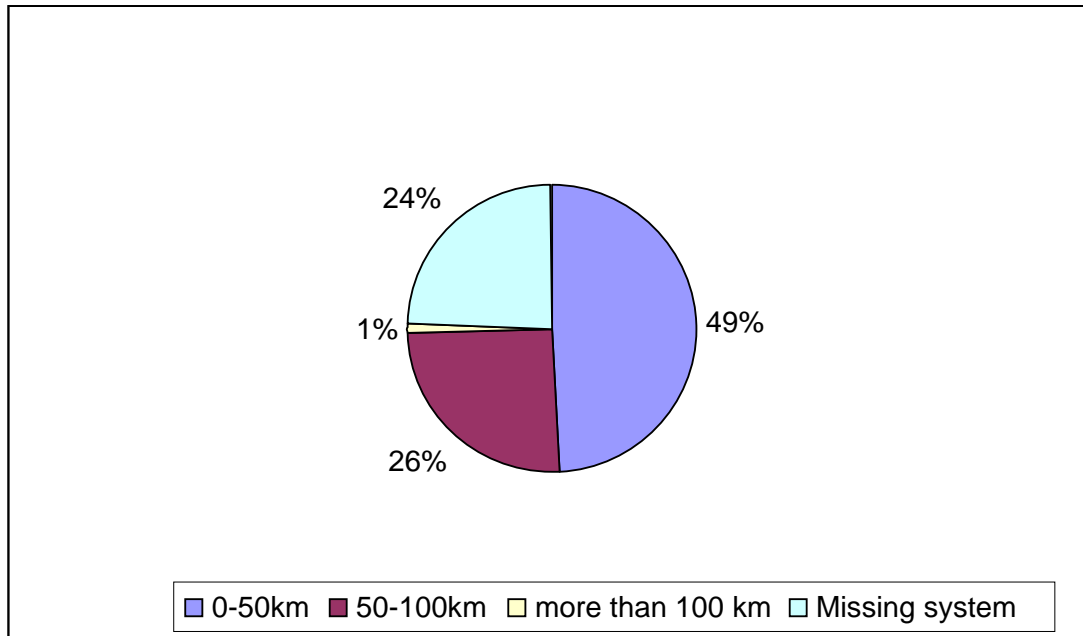
According to the majority of the respondents EAP was between 0 – 50 kilometers from their work station. Twenty-four percent (24%) did not respond, and these were probably respondents who were not aware of the existence of the EAP. It can be deduced that the EAP at the Department of Public Works is accessible since most employees indicated that it is within 50 kilometers from their work station and that the Department also assists the employees with transport to access the EAP although it is not stipulated in the Departmental policy on EAP. The ease of EAP access is identified as one of the aspects that can enhance employees' utilization of the programme (Lawrence, Boxer and Tarakeshwar 2002: 3).

3.3.4.7. Satisfaction with current location of EAP

Histogram 4: Satisfaction with location of EAP
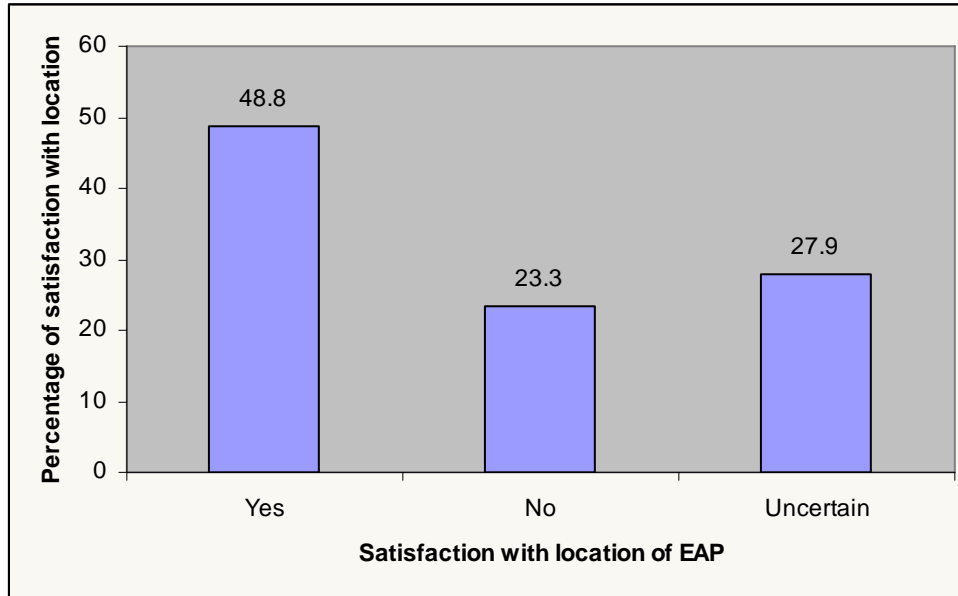
Histogram 4 illustrates the respondents' replies regarding their satisfaction with the current location of the EAP. Most of the respondents indicated that they were happy with the current location of the EAP and this might be ascribed to the fact that the current location of the EAP ensures privacy, whereas the minority was not satisfied and a small number were uncertain. The researcher thus deduces that employees, who were not satisfied with the location of the EAP, might be employees who would prefer the EAP to be located at the cost centres. When an EAP is located where employees' fears for a breach of confidentiality, it might inhibit the employees' utilization of the service (Murphy cited in EAPA-Exchange 2000: 22). The employees' fear for confidentiality of the programme can be anticipated when the programme's location does not ensure privacy. The researcher is, therefore, of the opinion that when employees are satisfied with the location of the EAP, utilization of the programme as well as the penetration rate increases.

3.3.4.8. Preferred location of EAP by employees'

The research findings showed that 12% of the respondents were not happy with the EAP's location. Twenty-one percent (21%) stated they would prefer EAP services to be at cost centers while 11% indicated that they would prefer EAP services to be in mobile offices. The researcher thus deduces that the respondents who preferred the EAP to be at the centres might be those who indicated that the EAP is located within 50-100 km from their work station. Visibility of an EAP can have a positive impact upon employees' awareness of its location which in turn is related to utilization of an EAP (Frost 1990: 50).

3.3.4.9. Recommendation of EAP to a colleague
Pie chart 10: Recommendation of EAP to colleague
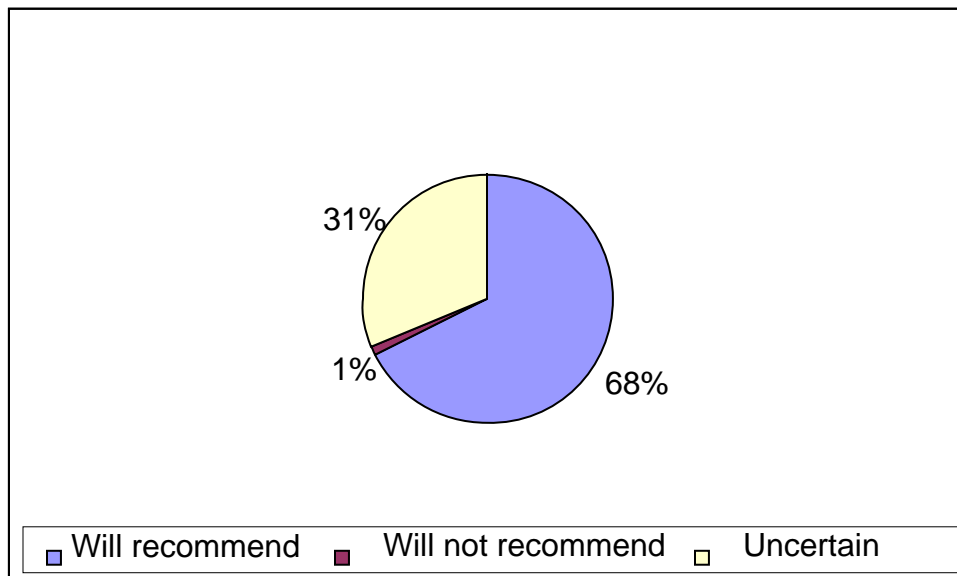
Pie chart 10 illustrates that the majority of the respondents indicated that they would recommend EAP services to a colleague. A minority would not and a smaller number were uncertain about recommending EAP to colleagues. Although most of the respondents had not utilized EAP services before, the majority of the respondents stated that they would recommend EAP services to a colleague. The respondents who had

previously used an EAP can serve as a consumer grapevine sharing their experiences with other employees and this can enhance employees' utilization of the programme (Frost 1990: 47). From the research findings, it can be inferred that a large number of employees who were aware of the EAP and were satisfied with the latter's services, would recommend the services to their colleagues. This could be a clear indication that they may have developed confidence in the programme. The researcher is of the opinion that when employees are satisfied with the location of the programme as well as the services rendered, they are more likely to refer their colleagues to the programmes. This will enhance utilization of the programme as well as the penetration rate.

3.3.5. Employees' concerns about confidentiality

3.3.5.1. Employees' feeling safe about disclosing their problems

The majority of the respondents (69%) indicated that they would feel safe to discuss their personal problems with EAP staff members, while 2% indicated that they would not feel safe to discuss their problems with EAP staff and 29% were uncertain. Confidentiality is one of the fundamental principles of an EAP. As a result, confidentiality influences the utilization of the programme. The research findings, thus clearly reveal that majority of employees view the EAP as confidential. Lawrence, Boxer and Tarakeshwar (2002: 3) regard employees' trust in confidentiality as one of the issues that mediate EAP utilization by employees.

3.3.5.2. EAP staff adherence to confidentiality

Histogram 5: Employees' trust in EAP staff to maintain confidentiality
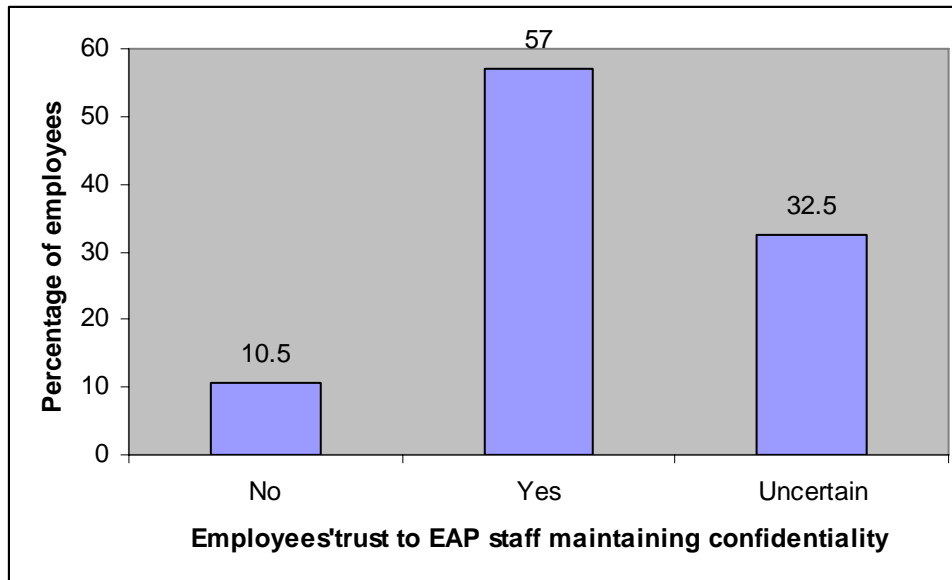
Histogram 5 illustrates respondents' responses with regard to their trust in EAP staff in maintaining confidentiality. A minority indicated that they thought that the EAP staff would discuss their problems with other employees, whereas the majority mentioned that the EAP staff would not discuss their problems with other employees while a small number were uncertain. These could be employees who were not aware of the existence of the EAP. This indicates that the level of employees' trust and confidentiality in the programme is high. This finding can enhance employees' utilization of the programme. Employees' trust in the confidentiality of the services provided is identified as one of the aspects that enhance utilization of the programme (Tarakeshwar 2002: 3).The researcher supports Weiss (2003: 63) who maintains that assurance of client confidentiality is associated with a higher utilization of the programme.

The Departmental policy identifies confidentiality as one of the major policy principles of the EAP within the Department of Public Works. This is clearly stipulated.   The Employee Assistance practitioners are social workers, psychologists and doctors who are registered with different councils and when they falter on maintaining confidentiality their licenses to practice may be revoked.

3.3.5.3. Privacy of EAP's office

Pie chart 11: Privacy of EAP's office
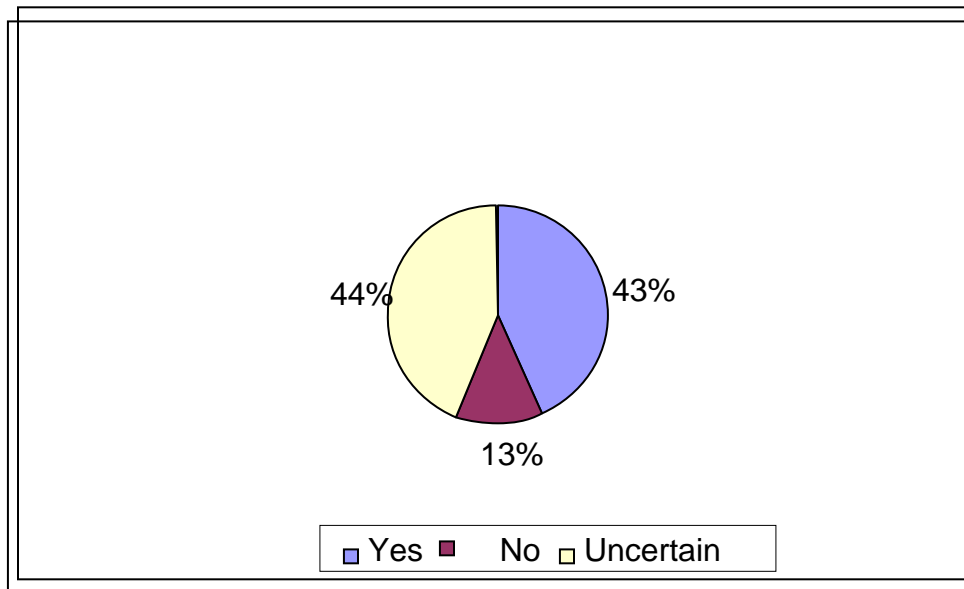
Pie chart 11 reveals that most of the respondents revealed that the office in which EAP services were provided was conducive to privacy, while a smaller number regarded it as not conducive to privacy and 44% were uncertain. The researcher is of the opinion that most respondents were aware of the EAP's office conduciveness to privacy although some were not privy to its location. The fact that most of the respondents viewed the EAP's office as conducive to privacy may help in enhancing employees' utilization as well as the penetration rate of the programme. The researcher suspects that employees who were uncertain about the conduciveness of the EAP's office to privacy might be among the category of workers who were not aware of the programme. An EAP office's conduciveness to privacy may determine employees' utilization of the programme. When the EAP is located where employees fear for confidentiality, it might inhibit the utilization of the programme (Emener and Hutchison 2003: 195; Csiernik 2003: 18). The EAP's office within the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District is located next to the management offices and this can be inhibitory to employees' privacy and confidentiality when utilizing the programme.

3.3.5.4. Employees' awareness of EAP policy within the Department

Histogram 6: Employees' awareness of EAP policy within the Department
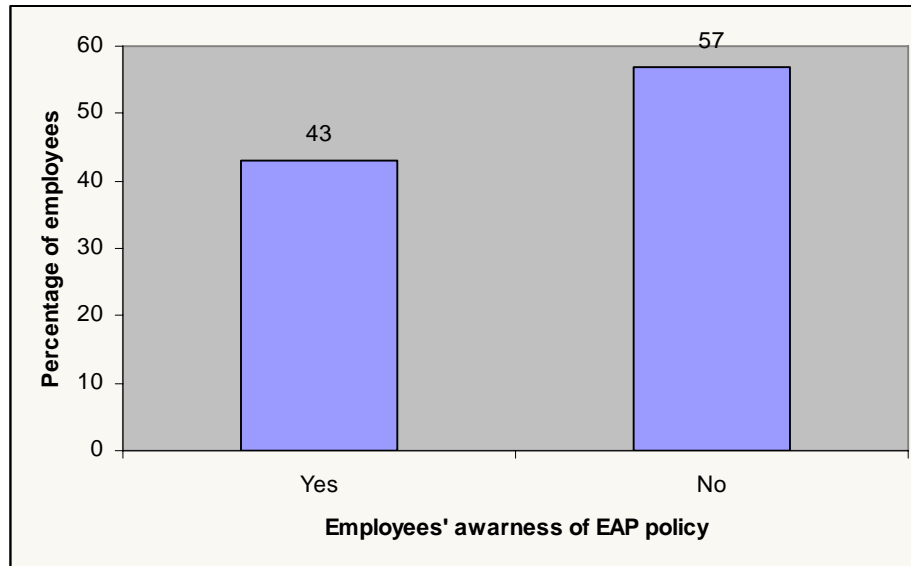
The EAP policy within the Department of Public Works is posted on the notice board in the District office. The majority of the respondents indicated that they were not aware of the EAP policy while only a few were aware of it. This can be attributed to the fact that the EAP policy was not communicated to all employees in an accessible language within the Department and that it was not accessible to all employees. The policy is written only in English and most employees had a little understanding of English, meaning that employees who can neither read nor write or those who do not understand English would not be able to understand the policy. The existence of a written policy on EAP enhances staff utilization of the programme. The researcher supports Weiss (2003: 3) who states that it is important for employees to know about the organization's EAP policies and to understand what the programme can and cannot do for them. This can be done through marketing of the EAP policy to all employees, by, for instance using meetings as one of the strategies to educate employees about the EAP policy. Unfamiliarity with the policy and scope of the programme could restrict employees from using the EAP. The researcher is of the opinion that the existence of a written policy and employees' awareness of it might enhance the utilization of the programme as well as the penetration rate.

3.3.5.5. Employees' participation in policy formulation

The research findings revealed that the majority of the respondents (84%) indicated that they did not participate in policy formulation while 16% indicated that they did participate in policy formulation. The researcher is thus of the opinion that employees' participation in policy formulation may have an impact on the utilization of the EAP by workers. Employees' participation in policy formulation enhances and facilitates ownership of the programme and, therefore, utilization of the programme. The involvement of employees in policy formulation allows them to make inputs that might be relevant to services needed so that the programme could be addressing the employees' needs.

3.3.6. Programme adequacy

3.3.6.1. EAP's response to employees' personal problems

Most of the respondents (58%) mentioned that the existing EAP was responding to their personal needs whereas 42% were uncertain. Most probably, the uncertain group constituted employees who were not aware of the existence of the service. From the research findings, it can be deduced that EAP is offering services needed by employees probably because the programme adapts a broad-brush approach as can be seen from pie-chart 4. Yamatani (1993: 70) reports that programme adequacy focuses on the extent to which the programme is offering needed services and the extent to which those services are provided to those who need them. When the EAP is addressing the needs of the employees, the level of satisfaction with the programme as well as the penetration rate may increase. One may also infer that the programme is adequate in that it meets the needs of the majority of the employees.

3.3.6.2. Usefulness of EAP services to employees

In this study, the majority of respondents (52%) indicated that EAP services were useful, whereas 4% found them not useful and 22% indicated that they were uncertain. Twenty-two percent (22%) did not respond to the question and this may constitute employees who were not aware of the programme or those who had never used the service before. However, it can be inferred that most employees viewed EAP services as useful. This might be a clear indication that employees were satisfied with the programme and that the programme addressed their needs and can thus be a contributing factor for employees' utilization of the programme. Programme adequacy is the feature that attempts to address the output of a programme in relation to the needs that the programme is projected to serve (Perry and Cayer, 1992: 8). For an EAP to be effective, useful and adequate it needs constant marketing at all levels of the organization (Balgopal and Patchner 1988: 98; Dickman in Emener *et al*. 2003: 53).

3.3.6.3. Employees' suggestions on other services that EAP should deliver

Table 4: Employees' suggestions on other services that EAP should deliver

Valid		Frequency	Percentage
	EAP should coordinate availability of tools to help make our jobs easier and safer	1	1.2
	Awareness workshops on EAP services	51	58.8
	EAP staff should visit cost centres once a week	2	2.3
	EAP should initiate support groups and ARV treatment	1	1.2
	EAP must visit schools and homes	1	1.2
	EAP should create friendship between EAP officer and workers	1	1.2
	Team building session between employees and supervisors	1	1.2
	Handwork	1	1.2
	HIV/AIDS and training workshops	2	2.3
	EAP should include ABET and first aid	2	1.2
	EAP should investigate promotions	1	1.2
	Financial management and family counseling	3	2.3
	Satisfied with current EAP services	7	3.5
	Supply of EAP materials	1	1.2
	Teach employees in all cost centres about drugs and alcohol abuse	2	2.3
	Teach children about drugs and alcohol abuse	1	1.2
	EAP should facilitate uniform availability	1	1.2
	Total	86	100.0

It is evident from the research findings that the majority of the respondents indicated that they would prefer EAP staff to conduct awareness campaigns in all cost centres in order to alert all employees about EAP services as indicated in Table 4. The workshops should cover aspects such as: what is EAP, principles of EAP, types of referrals, services rendered as well as the policy on EAP. The researcher is thus convinced that EAP should be marketed to all employees at the Department to know about the services rendered and

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thus improve utilization of the programme. The researcher concurs with Coshan (1991: 43) that essential to a successful EAP is the ability to communicate to employees what services are available and how to access them. An EAP can only be effective, if it is constant marketed at all levels within the organization (Balgopal and Patchner 1988: 98). The researcher thus suggests that if all services are provided, the programme would be adequate and penetration rate may be enhanced.

3.3.6.4. Employees suggestions on improvements of EAP services

Table 5: Employees suggestions on improvement of EAP services

Valid		Frequency	Percentage
	EAP should conduct awareness about its services to all employees in various cost centres	35	40.8
	Visit the cost centres as often as possible	14	16.2
	EAP should also include prevention discrimination and family violence services	1	1.2
	EAP should give employees feedback on time	2	2.3
	EAP should ensure good working relationships with supervisors	1	1.2
	EAP should have an office in Mutale area	1	1.2
	EAP should help workers learn to write	1	1.2
	EAP staff should investigate money laundering	1	1.2
	EAP should investigate promotions	1	1.2
	EAP services should have offices in all cost centres to that it is accessible to all employees	2	2.4
	EAP should introduce sports activities	3	3.5
	EAP should supply materials for those injured at work	1	1.2
	EAP should train other people who will render peer education	2	2.3
	EAP workshops must be held every quarter	1	1.2
	Total	86	100.0

The research findings thus showed that the majority of the respondents indicated that EAP staff should conduct awareness campaigns or workshops in various cost centres about its services. A minority stated that EAP staff should visit the cost centres frequently. It is evident that there is a need for EAP services to be marketed in all the cost centres in order to enhance employees' awareness of the services rendered by EAP. The researcher agrees with Frost (1990: 46) that essential to a successful EAP is the ability to communicate to all employees services available through the EAP and how to access these services. The researcher contends that there is a need for EAP staff to frequently visit cost centres to inform all employees about EAP services. Higher visibility of EAP has a direct impact upon utilization (Frost 1990 47).

3.3.7. Referral of employees to EAP by managers and supervisors

3.3.7.1. Frequency of supervisors' referral of employees to EAP

Pie chart 12: Frequency of supervisors' referral to EAP
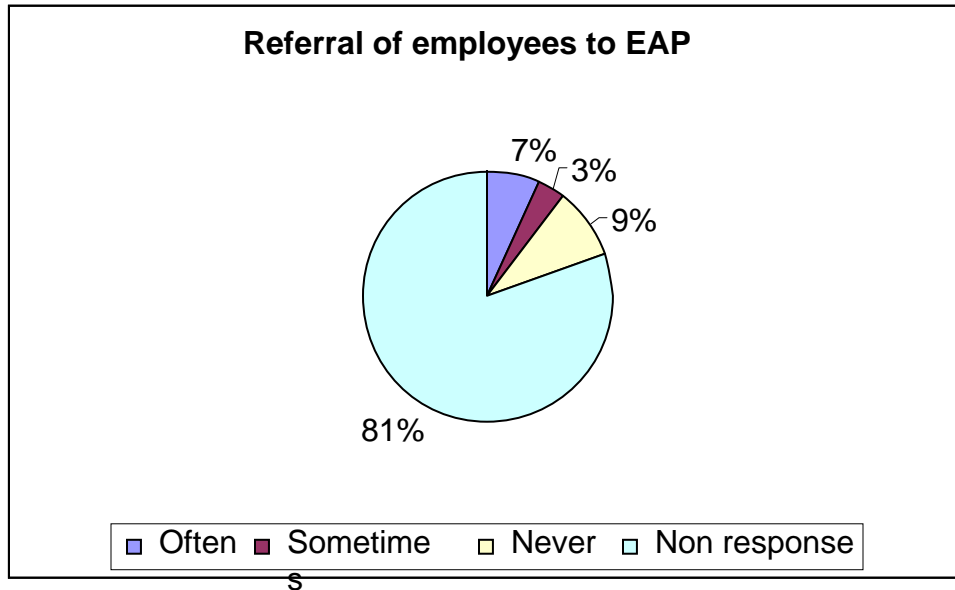
The study has revealed that the majority of the respondents did not respond. This might be employees who were not in supervisory or management positions. However, few supervisors/managers indicated that they often referred employees to the EAP, whereas a minority indicated that they sometimes referred employees to the EAP and most indicated that they had never referred employees to the EAP. It is thus evident that the referral rate of employees to EAP was low. The researcher concurs with Schenger and Hayward in Thoreson and Hosokawa (1984: 333) that the more managers and supervisors refer employees to the programme, the more the penetration rate will increase. However, employees' utilization of EAP services is to a great extent a function of the success of ongoing workforce education and supervisory training. The researcher is of the opinion that awareness programmes need to be conducted constantly in order to educate supervisors' and managers about referring employees to the EAP. The most effective way to gain supervisors support is through management training designed to create awareness of the EAP, its principles, role clarification within the context of EAP and to provide adequate procedures for referral. Supervisory training on EAP would enhance

management understanding of the EAP and this might have a positive impact on the utilization and programme penetration rate (EAPA-SA 2005:20).

3.3.7.2. Identified problems for employees' referral to EAP

Supervisors' referral of employees to EAP is based on some of the following factors: (i) job impairment, (ii) poor performance, (iii) tardiness, and (iv) absenteeism. Supervisors can only refer on the basis of these aspects if they were given the necessary training.

Although a few employees were referred to the EAP by their supervisors or managers, only 2.3% were referred to the EAP due to health problems and 2.3% for financial problems. The minority of employees were referred due to absenteeism and alcohol as well as drug abuse. This can be attributed to the fact that most employees lack financial management skills and had low levels of formal education. Loan sharks, credit institutions and some insurance companies exploit these workers. The researcher is of the opinion that financial management programmes should be introduced to all employees within the department of Public Works. It is evident from the research findings that problem with health constitutes one of the challenges facing employees at the Department of Public Works. This can be attributed to the fact that employees might be exposed to health risk activities such as dust, high temperatures and noise and therefore opportunistic infections could be contributing to ill-health in the workplace. The researcher, therefore, suggests that health and wellness promotion activities should be introduced. The purpose of the health and wellness promotion activities is to improve the health and productivity of employees. The health and wellness promotion activities are usually targeted at a large population that has health risks that are likely to result in future serious illness or disability (Cagney in Oher 1999: 308).

3.3.7.3. Decision whether to use EAP or not by managers/supervisors

Although the supervisory referral rate of the respondents to the EAP within the Department was low, the majority of supervisors (82%) indicated that they had never decided not to use EAP services when there was a need and 18% indicated that they had decided not to use EAP before. This might be attributed to the fact that more supervisors were not trained on EAP services and on the referral of employees. The researcher contends that supervisory training need to be constantly conducted to educate managers about the importance of referring employees and utilizing EAP services. Management training also assists in helping line managers to identify troubled employees and then refer them for assistance. The more managers refer employees to the EAP, the more the penetration rate of the programme (Schenger and Hayward in Thoreson and Hosokawa, 1984: 333).

3.3.7.4. Problems encountered by supervisors/managers when referring employees to EAP

Pie chart 13: Problems encountered by supervisors/managers when referring employees to EAP
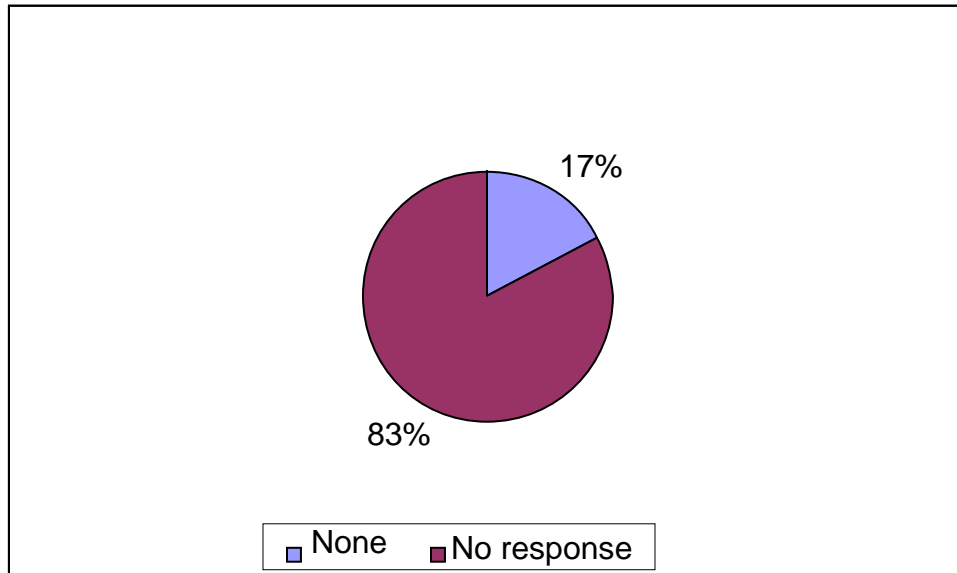
Pie chart 13 clearly indicates that 17% of the supervisor/manager respondents did not have problems when referring employees to EAP whereas 83% did not respond to the question. The researcher thus suggests that most of the supervisors who did not respond to the question were those who had never referred employees to EAP before. However, the researcher is of the opinion that although there were no identified problems by supervisors when referring employees to an EAP, supervisory training need to be constantly conducted to enlighten managers about the importance of utilizing the EAP and how to refer employees, since the referral rate is low. Supervisors play a key role in the operation and success of EAPs. It is, therefore, important that supervisors have a broad understanding of the EAP (Gould and Smith 1988: 52).

3.3.7.5. Observation of changes after an employee was referred to EAP

Histogram 7: Observation of changes after an employee was referred to EAP
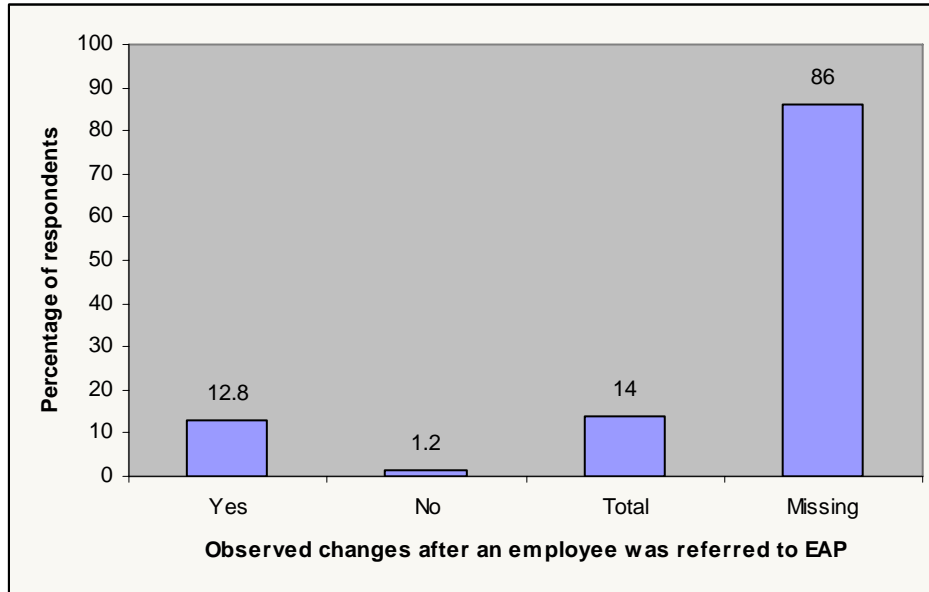
Histogram 7 indicates that although the referral rate by the supervisor respondents at the Department was low, most supervisors/managers indicated that they had observed positive changes after an employee had been referred to the EAP and a minority indicated that no changes were observed after an employee had been referred to an EAP. Eighty-six (86 %) did not respond to the question and this figure represents employees who were not in supervisory or managerial positions. From the research findings it is thus clear that most supervisors who referred employees to EAP indicated that they had observed positive changes. It can thus be inferred that the programme is addressing the needs of the employees which in turn enhances client satisfaction. Programme effectiveness is evaluated by measuring the extent of changes associated with programme intervention (Yamatani 1993: 74).

3.3.7.6. Motivation by supervisors on changes observed after referring an employee to EAP

Table 6: Motivation by supervisors on changes observed after referring employees to EAP

		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	An employee with alcohol problem was referred to EAP and stopped drinking or miss work	1	1.2
	Absenteeism reduced	1	1.2
	Employees' performance enhanced	1	1.2
	Reduction of debts	1	1.2
	Improvement of health	2	2.4
	Profound change in employees' behaviour	4	4.5
	Total	10	13

Table 6 shows that most of the supervisor respondents stated that they had observed positive changes in employees' behaviour after referral to EAP. This could be attributed to the fact that although few referrals to EAP had been made, EAP was seen to be addressing the needs of employees. EAP is one of the mechanisms to help workers towards being more fully functioning individuals in the workplace (Dickman and Emener 1988: 126). The researcher is of the opinion that the EAP within the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District is effective. Programme effectiveness can be evaluated by measuring the extent of changes associated with programme intervention. The anticipated changes include two major categories, namely work behaviour such as changes in work attendance, performance as well as attitude and reduction in the cost of health insurance and other related benefit (Yamatani 1993: 74).

3.3.7.7. Employees' familiarity with EAP

Pie chart 14: Employees' familiarity with EAP
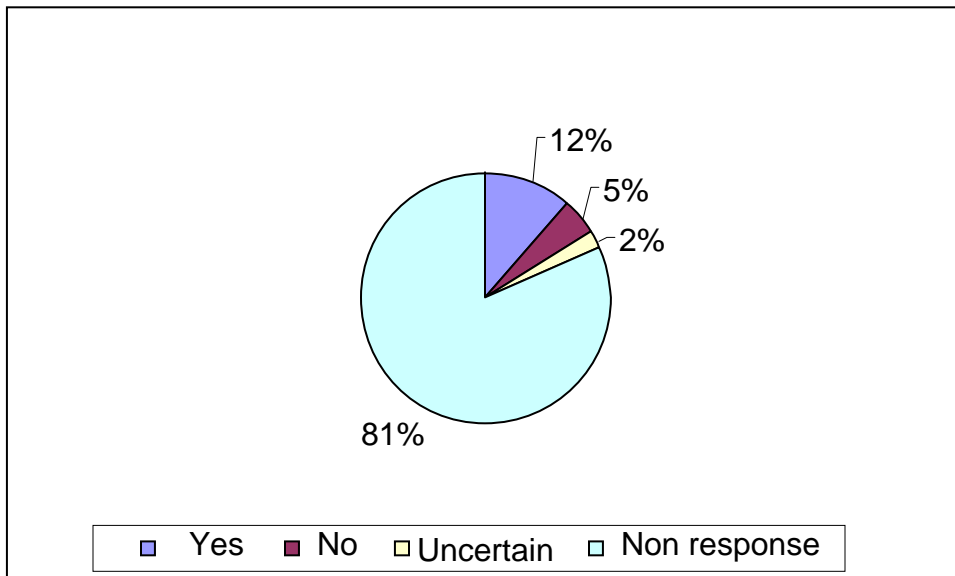
Pie chart 14 indicates that most of the supervisor respondents indicated that employees were familiar with the EAP services, while a small number remarked that employees were not and a minority was uncertain. Eighty-one (81%) of the respondents did not respond to the question. This can be due to the fact that they were not in supervisory positions. The researcher thus proclaims that EAP should be marketed to all employees in the Department to ensure that employees are aware of where the programme is located, how to access the programme and services rendered as this can enhance employees' utilization of the programme. The researcher supports Lawrence *et al.* (2002: 4) who states that there is a link between employees' familiarity with the EAP and utilization of the programme. When employees are aware of EAP services, they are more likely to utilize the services (Frost 1992: 51).

3.3.8. Summary of findings from empirical study

The following is the summary of the findings from the empirical study:

- The study was aimed at evaluating employees' awareness of the EAP, its utilization and programme adequacy.

- It was evident that the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District employed more males compared to females and that most employees were within the age group of 46-55.
- The findings have shown that the majority of the employees were aware of the EAP services within the Department and were also satisfied with the services provided.
- The EAP policy was not accessible to all employees.
- The level of the employees' trust of the EAP staff in maintaining confidentiality was very high and the programme was viewed as addressing the employees' problems.
- The EAP met the needs of the employees.
- The EAP provides broad-brush services.
- Self-referral was dominant.
- The EAP was effective and met the needs of the employees.

The following chapter will focus on the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Introduction

An Evaluation of EAP is critical and pivotal to a successful operation of the programme. An Evaluation focusing on employees' awareness and utilization of the EAP while programme adequacy can provide valuable feedback with regard to programme aspects that need to be improved and to determine if the programme is reaching its objectives. The main purpose of the study was to evaluate employees' awareness of the EAP, its utilization and programme adequacy in the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District. A summary, followed by conclusions based on the research findings and recommendations will be given in this chapter.

4.2. Summary of the Study

This study was aimed at evaluating the EAP at the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District, specifically focusing on the employees' awareness of the programme, its utilization as well as the adequacy of the programme. A systematic random sampling was used for the study wherein every 10th person was selected from the sampling frame. A total of 86 employees from various ranks participated in the study.

A quantitative approach was used in the study, while group-administered questionnaires were used as the data collection instrument. The researcher was available to assist the respondents in case they experienced problems with the completion of the questionnaires. The questionnaires were translated into Tshivenda language since most of the respondents could not read and understand English. The questionnaires were administered over a period of seven days.

4.2.1 Summary of the Main Findings

The following is a summary of major findings from the study:

- The majority of employees were aware of the existence of the EAP within the Department of Public Works through meetings.
- The Employee Assistance Programme within the Department of Public Works was viewed as accessible by the majority of the employees.
- The utilization rate of the EAP within the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District was low, since 29% of respondents indicated that they had utilized the services before.
- Employees who had utilized the EAP were mainly referred by their supervisors while some had referred themselves. Only ten percent (10%) of supervisor/manager respondents indicated that they had referred employees to the EAP. The referral rate of employees to the EAP by supervisors/managers was low.
- The EAP was viewed as confidential by the majority of employees within the Department and the level of employees' trust in the EAP staff was high.
- The majority of employees were not aware of the EAP policy and they had never participated in policy formulation.
- Most employees within the Department indicated that the EAP was addressing their personal problems, and the programme was viewed as useful (programme adequacy).
- The majority of the employees were satisfied with the EAP within the Department of Public Works in Vhembe.
- Most employees identified a need for an EAP staff member to inform all employees within the Department about its services and to visit the Cost Centres frequently.

4.3. Conclusions and Recommendations

The following conclusions and recommendations with regard to the study were made:

4.3.1 Demographic factors

The following conclusions about the employees' demographic factors are salient:

Conclusions

- The researcher concludes that the Department of Public Works comprises of more males than females. The majority of employees are married with dependents and are within the age group of 46-55.

Recommendations

Based on the study, the following recommendations are pertinent:

- Taking into consideration the fact that most employees were old, married and had dependent children at the Department of Public Works as highlighted in the research findings, it is recommended that the EAP introduce pre-retirement programmes for workers in order to educate and prepare older employees for retirement.
- Gould and Smith (1988: 207) suggest that pre-retirement programmes should include the following:
- Financial planning: This should include items pertaining to investments and financial management.
- Health planning: This should include physiological changes associated with advancing age. Physical fitness and nutritional needs should be stressed.
- Psychology of retirement: Employees should be prepared for various kinds of stress and adjustments that accompany retirement.

4.3.2. Employees' awareness of EAP

The following conclusions about employees' awareness of EAP are pertinent:

Conclusions

- The majority of the respondents (57%) were aware of the existence of the EAP within the Department while 37% of employees were not.
- The Department of Public Works in Vhembe District utilizes meetings and workshops as the strategies for informing employees about the EAP.
- Almost half of the employees were aware of the EAP services rendered within the Department of Public Works.
- There is a need for all employees to be informed about the EAP within the Department of Public Works.
- Awareness of the EAP is an important predictor of programme utilization and willingness to utilize the services.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are significant with regard to employees' awareness of EAP:

- It is, therefore, recommended that all employees within the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District be informed about the EAP in order to ensure that all workers are aware of the programme.
- There is a need for the Department to develop continuous and innovative marketing strategies to enhance employees' awareness of the EAP.
- It is also recommended that EAP marketing strategies take into consideration the educational level of the employees within the Department. Therefore, EAP marketing strategies should be designed to cater for all employees.

- The Department of Public Works should utilize various marketing strategies as suggested by literature. These include the following:
- Posters and brochures which should be in languages that are accessible to all employees.
- Off site visitation: The EAP staff needs to visit various cost centres in order to inform employees about EAP.

These strategies could assist in improving on the visibility of the programme and this will in turn enhance employees' awareness of the programme and its penetration rate.

4.3.3. Accessibility of EAP

Based on the findings regarding the location of the programme, the following conclusions are applicable with regard to the accessibility of the programme:

Conclusions

- Although EAP is centralized at the District office, the programme was viewed as accessible. However, 24% of the respondents were uncertain about the EAP's location within the Department.
- Most of the respondents indicated that EAP was within 0-50 kilometres from their work stations. However, the minority of the respondents would prefer the EAP to be at various cost centres.

Recommendations

The following recommendations regarding the EAP's location are relevant in order to ensure that the EAP is accessible to all employees within the Department of Public Works.

- Although an EAP is located at the Vhembe District office, there is a need for EAP staff to regularly visit cost centres to ensure that all employees are able to access the programme.

- The EAP should be located where employees would feel free to consult the EAP staff.
- By visiting cost centres, the EAP staff will get an opportunity to interact with employees and to establish good working relationships with employees which in turn may assist in enhancing the utilization and penetration rate of the programme.

4.3.4. Employees utilization of the programme

Based on the findings the following conclusions are important:

Conclusions

- The utilization rate of EAP within the Department of Public Works was low.
- The referral rate of employees to EAP by supervisors/managers was low.
- The minority of the respondents (10%) were able to refer themselves to the programme.
- It can be concluded from the research findings that employees utilize EAP due to financial and health problems.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are pertinent in ensuring maximum utilization of EAP by employees:

- Employees should also be informed about the various methods of utilizing the EAP such as self-referral, supervisor's referral, and referral by colleague or family member as highlighted in the study. This could be communicated to employees during meetings, workshops, induction, and seminars.
- It is also recommended that EAP introduces financial management sessions to employees within the Department as well as Health Promotion Programmes in order to assist employees with financial and health related problems.

- Supervisory training for managers and supervisors should be conducted at least twice a year to educate supervisors and managers about the EAP services, referral procedures, principles of the EAP, and provide feedback on the operation of the programme.

4.3.5. Employees' concerns about confidentiality

The following conclusions about confidentiality are salient:

Conclusions

- The majority of the respondents in the Department of Public Works view the EAP as confidential. However, a minority of the employees were concerned about confidentiality issues. It can, therefore, be concluded that not all employees within the Department were aware of confidentiality when using the programme.
- The EAP's office was viewed as conducive to privacy by the majority of employees. It can nevertheless, be concluded that there were employees in the Department of Public Works who did not know about the location of the EAP's office.
- Most employees were not aware of the EAP policy within the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District.
- The majority of employees did not participate in policy formulation.

Recommendations

Based on the study, the following recommendations are applicable:

- Since the study revealed that confidentiality is the cornerstone of EAP, it is recommended that the employees be informed about the confidentiality aspect of EAP within the Department of Public Works.
- All employees should be educated about the EAP policy.
- It is also recommended that all employees be involved when developing the policy to give them an opportunity to make inputs.

4.3.6. Programme adequacy

The study led the researcher to make the following conclusions with regard to programme adequacy:

Conclusions

- It can be concluded that the EAP within the Department of Public Works is addressing the problems of the majority of employees.
- It is also evident from the research findings that supervisors indicated that they observed positive changes after employees had been referred to the EAP.
- The majority of employees viewed the EAP services as useful although some were uncertain. The uncertainty of the employees about the usefulness of the services might be due to the fact that some employees were not aware of the programme.

Recommendations

The following recommendations regarding programme adequacy are pivotal:

- The researcher recommends that there should be regular evaluation of the EAP in order to determine if the programme is addressing the employees' needs or not.
- Evaluation should be done using the focus groups, suggestion boxes and evaluation forms. Giving employees an opportunity to make suggestions and give feedback with regard to the programme will assist in the improvement of the programme.

4.3.7. Referral of Employees to EAP

Based on the study, the following conclusions about referral to EAP were outstanding:

Conclusions

- The referral rate of employees to the EAP by supervisors or managers in the Department of Public Works was low. It is evident from the research findings that most supervisors or managers had never referred employees to the EAP.
- It can, therefore, be concluded that most supervisors and managers within the Department were not subjected to supervisory training.
- Supervisors and managers lack knowledge regarding their roles in EAP.

Recommendations

The following recommendations regarding employees' referral to EAP are crucial:

- A recommendation is made that supervisory training be conducted within the Department. The training should include the following aspects;
- How to make a referral;
- Confidentiality of the programme;
- Policy on EAP;
- How to identify a troubled employee; and
- Alcoholism awareness as well as drug dependency.

4.3.8. Employees' familiarity with EAP

The following conclusion about employees' familiarity with EAP was important:

Conclusion:

▪ Most supervisors indicated that the employees were familiar with the EAP services, although some indicated that the employees were not familiar with the EAP. It can, therefore, be concluded that not all employees within the Department of Public Works were familiar with the EAP.

Recommendation

The following recommendation with regard to employees' familiarity with the EAP is fundamental:

▪ It is recommended that EAP staff conduct awareness sessions with all employees within the Department of Public Works. The sessions should be conducted on a regular basis in order to enhance employees' familiarity with the EAP.

4.3.9. Areas for Further Research

Evaluation of the EAP is viewed as crucial to the success of the programme. The present study was conducted in the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District. A similar study could be done in other provinces and Departments rendering EAPs.

The following research areas can also be considered:

▪ Challenges faced by supervisors when referring employees to an EAP

▪ The impact of EAP on employees' performance in the workplace.

▪ Effective strategies for marketing EAP in government departments to enhance employees' utilization of the programme.

4.3.10. Concluding statement

The evaluation of an EAP is one of the mechanisms to determine if the programme is reaching its objectives or not. Evaluation also assists in improvement of the programme. This study was aimed at evaluating the Employee Assistance Programme at the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District. The study focused on the employees' awareness of the programme, its utilization and programme adequacy.

The goals and objectives of the study were reached since the researcher was able to determine the employees' awareness of the programme, its utilization and programme adequacy. The study presented recommendations in order to improve the EAP within the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District.

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ANNEXURE: A

QUESTIONNAIRE

DEAR RESPONDENT

RESEARCH STUDY: EVALUATION OF AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS: VHEMBE DISTRICT

You are invited to participate in this study of which the topic is reflected above. This study, conducted through the University of Limpopo, is in fulfillment of the requirements for an MA (SW) degree.

Please note the following aspects concerning the research:

- There are no wrong or right answers.
- The information provided will remain absolutely confidential and anonymous.
- The information which you will provide will assist in improving the programme.
- You are requested to indicate your answers by ticking "X" in the appropriate boxes. In other questions you will be asked to motivate your answers.

Thanking you in anticipation of your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

_____

Ndivhuwo Nelly Khorommbi

ANNEXURE A: QUESTIONNAIRE

EVALUATION OF AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS: VHEMBE DISTRICT

QUESTIONNAIRE TO EMPLOYEES AT COST CENTRES/DISTRICT OFFICE

1. Demographic factors

1.1. How old are you?

21 - 25	26 – 30	31 - 35	36 - 40	41 - 45	46 - 55	Over 55

1.2. What is your gender?

Male		Female	

1.3. State your rank: _____

1.4. Number of years' employed by the Department of Public Works: _____

1.5. What is your marital status?

Married	Single	Divorced	Widowed

1.6. How many dependent children do you have?_____

2. Employees' awareness of EAP in the Department

2.1. Do you know an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)?

Yes	No	Uncertain

NB: If your answer to 2.1 is yes, proceed to answer the following questions:

2.2. How did you get to know about the EAP?

Meeting	Workshop	Brochure	Colleague	Posters	Manager	Supervisor	Pay Slip Information	Other

2.3. Have you ever been exposed to an EAP information session?

Yes	No

2.4. Which of the following services are rendered by your EAP?

Counseling	Alcohol problems	Financial management	Marital problems	Stress management	HIV/AIDS	Other (specify)

3. Employees perception of using an EAP

3.1. What is your attitude towards the EAP?

Positive	Negative	Uncertain

3.2. Do you think that the EAP service is reachable?

Yes	No	Uncertain

3.3. Does the department allow you time off duty for using EAP services during working hours?

Yes	No	Uncertain

4. Employees' utilization of EAP

NB: This part can only be answered by those who know an EAP

4.1. Have you ever used the EAP before?

Yes	No

4.2. If yes, who referred you to the EAP?

Self	Supervisor	Colleague	Family	Other

4.3. How did you feel about the service?

Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Uncertain

4.4. If you have used the EAP services before, were you ever referred to external resources for further assistance?

Yes	No

4.5. Where is the EAP service located?

District officer	Cost centres	Other Specify

4.6. How far is the EAP from your work station?

0-50 kilometers	50-100 kilometers	More than 100 kilometers

4.7. Are you happy with the current location of the EAP services?

Yes	No	Uncertain

4.8. If your answer is no in 4.7, where would you prefer the EAP services to be?

Cost centres	Mobile offices

4.9. Would you recommend the EAP services to a colleague?

Yes	No	Uncertain

5. Employees concerns about confidentiality

5.1. Would you feel safe to discuss your problems with the EAP staff?

Yes	No	Uncertain

5.2. Do you think EAP staff would discuss your personal problems with other employees?

Yes	No	Uncertain

5.3. Is the office in which the EAP services are provided conducive to privacy?

Yes	No	Uncertain

5.4. Are you aware of the EAP policy in your Department?

Yes	No

5.5. Did you participate in policy formulation?

Yes	No

6. Programme adequacy

6.1. Does the existing EAP respond to your personal problems?

Yes	No	Uncertain

6.2. If yes, how useful are the services to you?

Useful	Not useful	Uncertain

6.3. What other services would you want the EAP to render?

_____

_____

_____

6.4. If you could make one improvement to the EAP, what would it be?

_____

_____

_____

NB: This part should be completed by Managers and Supervisors only

7. Referral to EAP

7.1. How often do you refer employees to the EAP?

Often	Sometimes	Never

7.2. For which of the following problems have you referred an employee for an EAP?

Absenteeism	Aggressive behaviour	Tardiness	Low performance	Alcohol abuse	Personal crisis	Health problems	Financial problems	Drug abuse	Other

7.3. Did you ever decide not to use the EAP?

Yes	No

7.4. Do you have problems when referring employees to the EAP?

Yes	No

7.5. Have you observed changes after an employee was referred to the EAP?

Yes	No

7.6. Please motivate:

_____

_____

_____

7.7. Do you think that employees are familiar with EAP services?

Yes	No	Uncertain

Thank you.

ANNEXURE B: TRANSLATED QUESTIONNAIRE (TSHIVENDA)

DZIMBUDZISO

KHA VHAFHINDULI

NGUDO YA ṰHOḒISISO: U SEDZULUSWA HA MBEKANYAMUSHUMO YA THUSEDZAVHATHOLIWA (EAP) KHA MUHASHO WA ZWA MISHUMO (PUBLIC WORKS): TSHIṰIRIKINI TSHA VHEMBE

Vha khou humbelwa u dzhenela u vha tshipiḓa tsha ngudo yo bulwaho afho nṱha. Ngudo iyi i khou itwaho nga kha Yunivesithi ya Limpopo hu u itela u swikelela ṱhoḓea dza ngudo ya nṱha ya MA (SW) digirii.

Vha humbelwa u dzhiela nzhele zwi tevhelaho:

- A hu na phindulo i re yone kana i si yone.

- Mawanwa a no ḓo ṋetshedzwa kha ngudo iyi a ḓo dzula a a tshiphiri.

- Mawanwa a ne vha ḓo ṋetshedza a ḓo thusa kha u bveledza mbekanyamushumo ya EAP.`

- Vha humbelwa u sumbedza phindulo yavho nga u vhea luswayo "X"kha tshibogisi phanda ha phindulo yavho. Kha dzinwe mbudziso vha do humbelwa u tikedza phindulo yavho.

Ndi livhuha tshumisano yavho

Wavho a fulufhedzeaho

_____

Ndivhuwo Nelly Khorommbi

U SEDZULUSWA HA MBEKANYAMUSHUMO YA THUSEDZAVHATHOLIWA (EAP) KHA MUHASHO WA ZWA MISHUMO (PUBLIC WORKS): TSHIṰIRIKINI TSHA VHEMBE

MBUDZISO KHA MUTHOLIWA WA MUHASHO WA ZWA MISHUMO: TSHIṰIRIKINI TSHA VHEMBE

1. Mbuno dza dimografiki

1.1. Vha na miṅwaha mingana?

21 - 25	26 – 30	31 - 35	36 - 40	41 - 45	46 - 55	U fhira 55

1.2. Mbeu yavho ndi ifhio?

Munna		Musadzi	

1.3. Vhuimo havho mushumoni ndi vhufhio? _____

1.4. Vha na miṅwaha mingana vha tshi khou shuma kha muhasho wa zwa mishumo:
_____

1.5. Tshiimo tshavho tsha mbingano ndi tshifhio?

Malwa/ Mala	A vha athu u mala/ malwa	Ṱalwa/ Ṱala	Tshilikadzi

1.6. Vha unḓa vhana vhangana?_____

2. Tshenzhemo ya vhashumi nga ha mbekanyamushumo ya EAP muhashoni

2.1. Vha a ḓivha nga ha mbekanyamushumo ya EAP?

Ee	Hai	Thina vhuṱanzi

Kha vha dzhiele nzhele: Arali phindulo yavho i Ee afho nṱha kha 2.1, nga vha fhindule mbudziso dzi tevhelaho nga fhasi:

2.2. Zwo ḓa hani uri vha ḓivhe nga ha mbekanyamushumo ya EAP?

Muṱanganoni	U pfumbudzwa (wekishopo)	Luṅwalo lwa khungedzelo (brotshara)	Mushumisani	Phosiṱara	Mulanguli (minidzhere)	Mulavhelesi (foromane)	Luṅwalo lwa muholo	Zwiṅwe

2.3. Vho no vhuya vha bviselwa khagala nga ha mbekanyamushumo ya EAP?

Ee	Hai

2.4. Ndi tshumelo dzifhio kha dzi tevhelaho dzi itwaho kha mbekanyamushumo ya EAP?

U khuthadza	Thaidzo ya zwikambi	Vhulanga masheleni	Thaidzo dza mbingano	Vhulanga mutsiko	HIV/AIDS	Zwiṅwe (kha vha zwi bule)

3. Mbonelo ya mutholiwa kha mbekanyamushumo ya EAP

3.1. Vha dzhiisa hani mbekanyamushumo ya EAP?

Ndi ya vhuḓi	A si ya vhuḓi	Thina vhuṱanzi

3.2. Vha vhona u ngari mbekanyamushumo ya EAP i a swikelelea naa?

Ee	Hai	Thina vhuṱanzi

3.3. Muhasho wavho u a vha tendela naa uri vha shumise mbekanyamushumo ya EAP nga tshifhinga tsha mushumo?

Ee	Hai	Thina vhuṱanzi

4. Nḓila ine vhashumi vha shumisa ngayo mbekanyamushumo ya EAP

Kha vha dzhiele nzhele: Tshipiḓa itshi tshi nga fhindulwa fhedzi nga vha ḓivhaho nga mbekanyamushumo ya EAP

4.1. Vho no vhuya vha shumisa mbekanyamushumo ya EAP?

Ee	Hai

4.2. Arali phindulo yavho i Ee afho nṱha, ndi nnyi o vha isaho?

Vhone muṋe	Mulavhelesi (Foromani)	Mushumisani	Muṱa	Zwiṅwe

4.3. Vho ḓi pfa hani nga tshumelo ye vha i wana?

Vho fushea	A vho ngo fushea	Thina vhuṱanzi

4.4. Arali vho no vhuya vha shumisa mbekanyamushumo ya EAP, vho vhuya vha rumelwa kha tshiṅwe tshiimiswa u wana thuso naa?

Ee	Hai

4.5. Tshumelo ya mbekanyamushumo ya EAP i ngafhi?

Ofisini dza tshiṱiriki	Dzi sentharani	Huṅwe

4.6. Mbekanyamushumo ya EAP i vhukule vhungafhani na mushumoni wavho?

0-50 khilomithara	50-100 khilomithara	U fhira 100 khilomithara

4.7. Vha khou fushea naa nga hune mbekanyamushumo ya EAP ya vha hone zwa zwino?

Ee	Hai	Thina vhuṱanzi

4.8. Arali phindulo yavho i hai kha 4.7, vha nga takalela uri mbekanyamushumo ya EAP i vhe ngafhi?

Dzi sentharani	Dziofisi thendeleki	Huṅwe

4.9. Vha nga themendela naa mbekanyamushumo ya EAP kha mushumisani?

Ee	Hai	Thina vhuṱanzi

5. Vhuḓipfi ha vhashumi malugana na tshiphiri tsha mbekanyamushumo ya EAP

5.1. Vha pfa vho tsireledzea na u bvisela thaidzo dzavho khagala kha mushumi wa mbekanyamushumo ya EAP

Ee	Hai	Thina vhuṱanzi

5.2. Vha vhona u nga mushumi wa mbekanyamushumo ya EAP a nga haseledza nga ha thaidzo dzavho na vhaṅwe vhashumi naa?

Ee	Hai	Thina vhuṱanzi

5.3. Vha vhona u nga ofisi ine mbekanyamushumo ya EAP ya farelwa hone i a kombetshedza tshiphiri naa?

Ee	Hai	Thina vhuṱanzi

5.4. Vha a ḓivha nga ha mulayotewa wa mbekanyamushumo ya EAP muhashoni wavho?

Ee	Hai

5.5. Vho vhuya vha dzhenelela na kha u ita mulayotewa wa mbekanyamushumo ya EAP muhashoni wavho?

Ee	Hai

6. U fusha ha mbekanyamushumo

6.1. Iyi mbekanyamushumo ya EAP i a vha thusa na kha thaidzo dzavho?

Ee	Hai	Thina vhuṱanzi

6.2. Arali phindulo i Ee afho nṱha, ndeme ya tshumelo ndi ifhio?

Ndi ya ndeme	A si ya ndeme	Thina vhuṱanzi

6.3. Ndi zwifhio zwine vha tama mbekanyamushumo ya EAP i tshi zwi katela?

_____

_____

6.4. Arali hu na mveledzo dzine vha nga dzi ḓisa kha mbekanyamushumo ya EAP dzi nga vha dzifhio?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Kha vha dzhiele nzhele: Tshipiḓa tshi tevhelaho tshi tea u fhindulwa nga vhalavhelesi na vhalanguli fhedzi.

7. Thumelo kha mbekanyamushumo ya EAP

7.1. Ndi lungana vha tshi rumela vhashumi kha mbekanyamushumo ya EAP?

Lunzhi	Tshiṅwe tshifhinga	A vha athu

7.2. Ndi dzifhio thaidzo kha dzi tevhelaho dze dza ita uri vha rumele mushumi kha mbekanyamushumo ya EAP?

Vhulova	Vhuhali	Tshineto	U itela mushumo fhasi	U nwesa	Dzi khakhathi	Thaidzo ya mutakalo	Thaidzo ya masheleni	Zwidzidzivhadzi	Zwiṅwe

7.3. Vho no vhuya vha anganya u sa shumisa mbekanyamushumo ya EAP?

Ee	Hai

7.4. Vha a vha na thaidzo na musi vha tshi rumela vhashumi kha mbekanyamushumo ya EAP?

Ee	Hai

7.5. Arali phindulo yavho i Ee afho nṱha, kha vha tikedze phindulo yavho:

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7.6. Vho no vhuya vha vhona tshanduko na nga murahu ha musi vho rumela mushumi kha mbekanyamushumo ya EAP?

Ee	Hai

7.7. Kha vha tikedze phindulo yavho

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7.8. Vha vhona u nga vhashumi vha na nḓivho ya mbekanyamushumo ya EAP naa?

Ee	Hai	Thina vhuṱanzi

Ndi a livhuwa.

13 JUNE 2006

THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
POLOKWANE

DEAR SIR/MADAM

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY

Ndivhuwo Nelly Khorommbi is a registered Masters student at the above named institution. She is currently engaged in a research project whose title is **The Evaluation of the Employee Assistance Programme in the Department of Public Works in Vhembe District.**

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the Employee Assistance Programme specifically focusing on: staff utilization of the programme, employee knowledge of the EAP and programme adequacy. The findings of this study will help in improving the programme, strengthen the plans for service delivery and increase efficiency of the programme since programme evaluation is one of the elements for successful EAP operation. The information obtained from the respondents will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. The research report will be made available to the management of the Department.

Your department is requested to assist the student in whatever way possible to realize her goals.

Thanking you in advance for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully
Dr. S.L. Sithole (Supervisor)

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