AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN NAMIBIA

by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled "**An Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Namibia**" is my own work. As far as humanly possible, all sources and quoted references in this study has been fully acknowledged. Where help was sought, it was also acknowledged. I further declare that the thesis has not been submitted to any other university for purposes of obtaining a degree.

………………………………….   ……………………………

Signature   **Date**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude to:

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mom, Magdalena.

I am forever indebted to you for giving me the opportunities and experiences that have made me who I am. You selflessly encouraged me to explore new directions in life and seek my own destiny. This journey would not have been possible if not for you, and I dedicate this milestone to you.

SUMMARY

AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN NAMIBIA

Keywords: *Employee, Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), EAP core technologies, EAP counsellor, Programme development, Programme evaluation, Programme implementation, Small and Medium Enterprises, Supervisors, Troubled employee, Workplace productivity.*

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) contribute significantly to employment and poverty alleviation in Namibia, relying mostly on the labour of its employees for production. However, not much is known about the personal and work-related problems experienced by employees in SMEs that impact their productivity and how these problems are addressed in the workplace.

Therefore the aim of this study was to design, implement and evaluate an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) suitable for SMEs in Namibia. In order to achieve the general objectives of the study, the following sub-objectives were formulated:

- Explore the type of problems experienced by SMEs and its employees;
- Describe ways to address these problems as viewed by SMEs and its employees;
- Develop and implement an EAP for SMEs;
- Evaluate the newly developed EAP after a 12-month implementation and administration period;
- Compile and disseminate guidelines for EAPs for SMEs in Namibia, based on the research findings.

An extensive literature review was conducted to contextualize SMEs in terms of significance, operations and the challenges it faces. In addition, a review of the literature around EAPs was undertaken with a specific focus on small businesses. It became

evident from the literature that EAPs are diverse. The intervention research design was applied in this study. The study adopted the two-phase sequential mixed methods research approach in which both quantitative and qualitative approaches, methods and procedures were combined to come up with a more complete picture of the research problem. The review of the literature led to the exploration of needs of SME owners/employers and employees using semi-structured interviews. The outcome of the needs assessment provided input for the development of an EAP guided by the EAP core technologies and EAPA-SA Standards. The EAP which was developed was implemented in four SMEs in Windhoek and focused on employee education.

Pre- and post-intervention assessments measuring the impact of the employee education sessions in terms of absenteeism, presenteeism, work engagement, life satisfaction and workplace distress was undertaken using the Workplace Outcome Suite (WOS). The WOS is a standardised measuring instrument, was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the EAP intervention. In addition, trainings provided to the EAP counsellors and supervisors in SME as well as the marketing strategy applied was also assessed. The evaluation of the training sessions and marketing strategy revealed that participants gained insight into EAPs and its benefits for employees as well as the workplace. Although there was a reduction in absenteeism as a result of the intervention, there is a need for a comprehensive EAP that incorporates both counselling and employee education to ensure optimal utilisation and effectiveness. Overall, this study highlighted the need for an EAP for SMEs, taking into account the uniqueness of SMEs.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Regardless of their position in an organisation and the size of the organisation, employees in Namibia as is globally may face a variety of problems in their daily lives that impact their productivity at work. Many employers realised that assisting employees to cope with their problems could improve their productivity and may be less costly than terminating their employment (Cohen & Schwartz, [sa]). The workplace is also well positioned to help employees with their problems and at the same time improve employee morale and performance (Richmond, Pampel, Wood & Nunes, 2017). The assistance offered by the employer in most cases is provided through a formal intervention system that identifies and assists employees with a wide range of personal and work-related problems that may affect their job-related behaviours (Cohen & Schwartz, [sa]). According to Altshuler, Berry, McIninch and Nayeem (2014), such services are mostly available in larger-sized businesses but not in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

This chapter will present a general overview of the study by providing the background and objectives of the study. The chapter will further discuss the significance of the study and the theoretical framework which guided it. It concludes with a discussion of the limitations and the presentation of an outline of the chapters which provides the thesis with its structure.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Human resources have been valued as an integral part of any business. It is also widely accepted that for an organisation to succeed at what it does, it needs employees (Brown & Harvey, 2006; Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhardt & Wright, 2017). This view means that

employees in today's organisations are not interchangeable, easily replaceable parts of a system but rather a source of the company's success or failure (Noe et al., 2017). With businesses now heavily dependent on the contribution of their human resources in terms of meeting goals and targets, it is essential that employers value their employees and keep them motivated through various ways for increased commitment and competence (Cocker, Martin, Scott, Venn & Sanderson, 2013). This is more so for SMEs who heavily rely on the productivity of its human resources (Altshuler et al., 2014).

SMEs contribute significantly to continued global economic growth and the generation of new jobs, making the promotion of employee health/wellness and productivity in this setting vital (Cocker et al., 2013). According to the United Nations Economic Commission on Entrepreneurship, UNECE (2003) cited in Ipinge (2010), SMEs are regarded as principal driving forces in economic development in transitional, as well as developing economies. Namibia faces challenges to overcome poverty, unemployment and inequality (Institute of Management and Leadership Training (IMLT), 2003) hence the resolve by the Namibian Government to accord national importance to SMEs for the country's economic development and employment creation (Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), 1997).

Despite the significant role accorded to SMEs in terms of economic development, not much is known about the personal and work-related problems experienced by employees in this sector as well as how these problems are dealt with within the workplace. The assumption is that the functioning and work performance of employees in SMEs, just like in any employment sector, may be negatively impacted by human and structural factors (Health-matters, [sa]). This will ultimately compromise service delivery standards of SMEs, negating the sector's expected positive outcomes. While some large employers in Namibia offer HIV and AIDS, health, wellness and/or employee assistance programmes, there are no examples of such in SMEs. Similarly, it was also noted that although the HIV and AIDS pandemic had become a major concern for SMEs in Namibia, HIV and AIDS programmes designed specifically for SMEs did not exist (Chikukwa, 2008). Globally, the growth in Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) has been rapid, with medium to

large companies without EAPs being in the minority (Joseph, Walker & Fuller-Tyszkiewicz, 2018). Besides the limited literature and research on EAPs in SMEs that exist suggests that there are models of EAPs being utilised by SMEs in other parts of the world. The Employee Assistance Professionals Association, EAPA (2011) noted that gradually a growing number of SMEs have globally established EAPs and as demand for services has grown so too has the variety of service delivery models available. A first step towards understanding these models appropriateness to the Namibian context suggests that a greater literature review and data collection is needed to explore its appropriateness.

1.3 PROBLEM FORMULATION AND HYPOTHESIS

SMEs contribute significantly to employment and poverty alleviation in Namibia (MTI, 1997; Ipinge, 2010) relying mostly on the labour of its employees for production. Enhanced employee productivity could thus be an essential factor for SMEs effectiveness and provide a stimulus for the introduction of health, wellness and counselling programmes in the workplace (Tham, 1998). Even though occupational health and wellness programmes, as well as EAPs, have become a business imperative for many larger businesses globally, the same cannot be said for SMEs (Cocker et al., 2013). In Namibia, very few employee assistance services are offered by SMEs, attributed mostly to factors such as financial feasibility or lack of knowledge about available programmes (Altshuler et al., 2014).

Besides the financial constraints, small businesses worldwide face various limitations in terms of their development and growth amongst which is the ignorance around the human factor (April, 2005). According to April (2005), entrepreneurs spend most of their time on sales and finance and tend to solve problems related to personnel only on a crisis basis. A troubled employee could, however, pose a great threat to the business since employee commitment and involvement is important to a thriving business enterprise (Brown & Harvey, 2001). The researcher, through her informal engagement with small business owners, noted with concern the impact of absenteeism and presenteeism on businesses

hence the interest in undertaking this study. Fouché and De Vos (2011:84) rightly state that "satisfying one's own curiosity is one of life's greatest sources of satisfaction". Due to a lack of existing case studies as well as limited literature on EAPs in SMEs, this study will mostly be informed by literature on larger organisations and without evidence that the findings are influential within SMEs. Joseph et al. (2018) noted that EAPs by small to medium organisations has been underexplored to date as the focus hitherto has been on large organisations. It was also evident from the preliminary literature sources consulted that there was a gap in intervention studies on EAPs in SMEs worldwide, including Namibia. This study intends to fill the gaps that were noted.

Subsequently, the following hypothesis guided the research:

1.3.1 Main hypothesis:

If an Employee Assistance Programme is implemented in Small and Medium Enterprises, then employees' productivity in the workplace will improve.

1.3.2 Sub-hypotheses:

- If an EAP is implemented in SMEs, then employee absenteeism will be reduced.
- If an EAP is implemented in SMEs, then employee presenteeism will be reduced.
- If an EAP is implemented in SMEs, then employees' life satisfaction will be enhanced.
- If an EAP is implemented in SMEs, then employees' work engagement will be improved.
- If an EAP is implemented in SMEs, then employees' workplace distress will be reduced.

1.4 RESEARCH GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of this study was to design, implement and evaluate an EAP suitable for SMEs in Namibia.

Emanating from the goal, the objectives of this study were to:

- Explore the type of problems experienced by SMEs and its employees;
- Describe ways to address these problems as viewed by SMEs and its employees;
- Develop and implement an EAP for SMEs;
- Evaluate the newly developed EAP after a 12-month implementation and administration period;
- Compile and disseminate guidelines for EAPs for SMEs in Namibia, based on the research findings.

1.5   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study:

- Are employees of SMEs experiencing psychosocial problems as an indicator of the need for an EAP?
- What would be the expected services to be rendered by the EAP suitable for employees of SMEs?

1.6   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of theory is to explain and predict events (Gitlin & Czaja, 2015). Theory helps to explains why people behave as they do, better understand how environment affect behaviour, guide intervention and predict what is likely to be the result of a particular intervention (Greene, 2011). A theoretical framework provides a structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007; Miller, 2018). It introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists (Greene, 2011). The research was based on the following central theoretical frameworks:

1.6.1 Systems theory

A system is an organised whole comprising component parts that interact in a distinct way and endure over time (Greene & Ephross, 1991:228). It is a complex unity formed of many often diverse parts subject to a common plan or serving a common purpose (Oliver, Kelliher & Keegan, 1997). Systems theory examines the interaction between an individual and his/her systemic environment (Attridge, Herlihy and Maiden, 2005). According to this theory, all systems are interrelated parts constituting an ordered whole and each subsystem influences other parts of the whole. The interdependency of the parts of the system also means that a change in one part of the system ripples through the entire system and has consequences in other parts of the system (Brown & Harvey, 2006:40). Therefore, when change occurs in one aspect of the system, the rest of the components are impacted in some way. This process of mutual influence, therefore, is believed to generate change and development (Longres, 1995:17). Hence, the application of the principle of systems theory to various forms of social organisations, including families, social groups, corporations and communities in social work practice (Greene, 2011).

From a systems perspective, behaviour in the workplace is understood as the product of the dynamic interaction and relationship ties among the people who form a system at the workplace (Brown & Harvey, 2011). It highlights the relationship of a person with their social environment which, in this case, refers to the employee and his/her relationship to the employer and other employees in the workplace as well as other significant social connections. The troubles of employees are regarded as products of the dynamic interaction and relationship among the people and processes that form a system at the workplace and vice versa (Greene, 2011). It can thus be assumed that employees personal and/or work-related problems, is as a result of their interaction with others at their work, home and community environments. The needs assessment that was undertaken as part of this study provided insight into the reciprocal impact of these interactions on an employee and his/her productivity in the workplace. It was thus imperative for this research study to consider systems theory to gain an understanding of

the influence of the work and social environment on the employee and vice versa. Systems theory was also deemed appropriate for this study because it is suitable for working with diverse client populations, in this case the social phenomena of various SMEs and its employees. Since a workplace is part of the system, the management's main challenge is also to achieve cooperation and synergy among the groups and individuals within this social system, in the interests of achieving organisational goals (Gabor & Mahoney, 2010). The EAP could be seen as a tool available to management for this purpose.

Greene and Ephross (1991:229 & 230) regard social systems as "not static, but instead purposive, goal-directed, and in constant states of interchange with their environments". This is an important aspect to bear in mind when determining possibilities for intervention and change, in this case the development and implementation of the EAP. In addition, the rapid change in businesses also requires new structures and new models to enhance and improve the quality of the businesses as well as to assist with responding to challenges (Dawson, [sa]). This echoes to the significance of the development of an EAP for SMEs and its potential in providing a fresh perspective for approaching employee relations initiatives, allowing managers to understand their employees' importance and position as a vital system in the organisation, rather than viewing employees as an expense through the lens of accounting (Gregory, [sa]).

Systems theory principles are also useful as a theoretical framework for examining human behaviour since it draws attention to the need for examining the multiple systems in which people function (Greene & Ephross, 1991:228). In addition, systems theory was used for networking and referrals of employees for specialist treatment or connecting them with resources or organisations that can help their situation.

1.6.2 Programme development

Programme development aims to deliver a clear, well thought out and deliverable pipeline of initiatives over a given horizon taking into consideration a range of constraints

(Australian Transport Assessment and Planning (ATAP) Steering Committee Secretariat, 2017). This study systematically designed and developed an intervention, namely the EAP, offered to the employees to prevent, relieve or eliminate work-related and social problems with a view to promoting job satisfaction, productivity and general social functioning (Engelbrecht, 1999).

Intervention research is carried out for the purpose of conceiving, creating and testing innovative human services approaches to preventing or ameliorating problems (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:475). It is also perceived as a form of applied research that takes account of issues which are of importance to the target group and aims to promote an understanding of these issues (Du Preez & Roux, 2008:78). Intervention research involves programme design, implementation, and evaluation and requires a theory-based, systematic approach (Fraser, Richman, Galinsky & Day, 2009). The following six phases of the intervention research outlined below were applied in this study (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:476).

Figure 1.1: Phases of the intervention research process

PHASE ONE:
Problem analysis and project planning

PHASE TWO:
Information gathering and synthesis and project planning

PHASE THREE:
Design

PHASE FOUR:
Early development and pilot testing

PHASE FIVE:
Evaluation and advanced development

PHASE SIX:
Dissemination
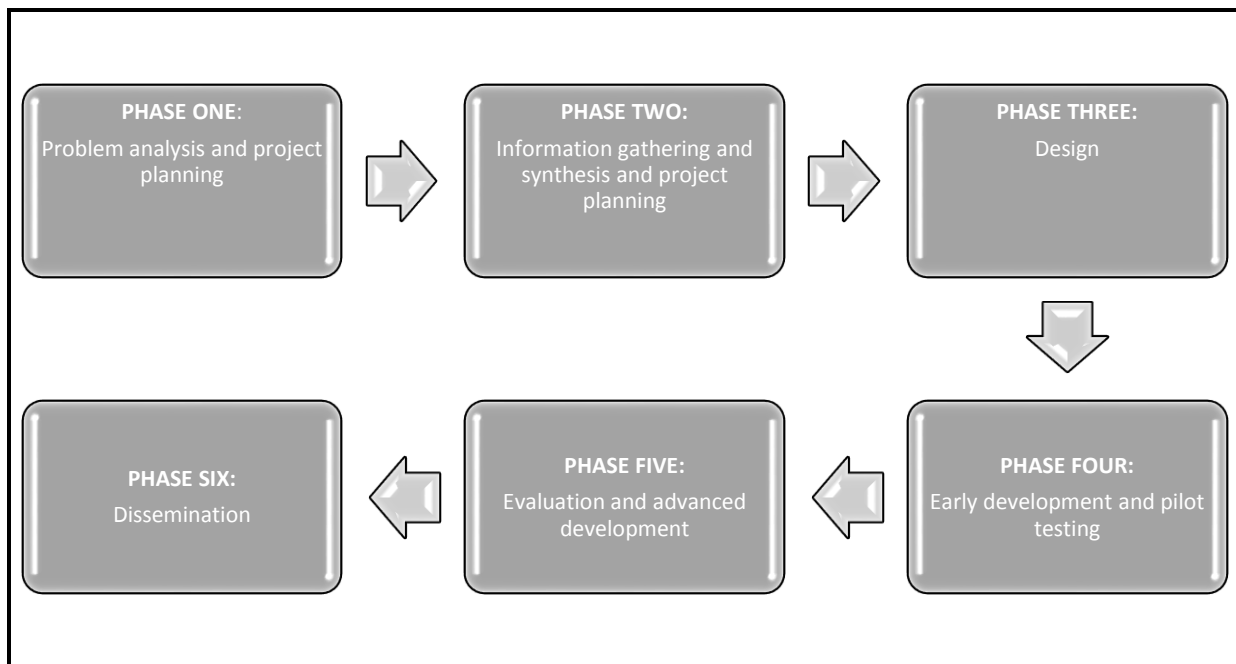
- **Phase one: Problem analysis and project planning**

Five critical actions are highlighted by De Vos and Strydom (2011:477- 480) during the problem analysis and project planning phase. Employees in SMEs were identified as the population with whom the researcher would collaborate. In order to gain access and cooperation from the population, the researcher engaged in conversations about the intended programme and its benefits with key informants such as SME owners/managers and professionals. Permission to undertake the research was also sought from the Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCI), the leading business representative and support organisation in Namibia as well as Healthworks Business Coalition, an organisation aimed at creating a healthy and productive workforce in Namibia through the provision of workplace wellness support services (Annexure 1).

To provide a sense of ownership, key informants were also engaged in the identification of the problem, as well as in the planning and implementation of the intervention. The researcher guarded against imposing her views about the problem under study, but gathered various perceptions from SME owners/managers and employees themselves. The concern that was identified is that employees in SMEs experience personal and work-related problems that impact their productivity in the workplace. Unlike with larger-sized businesses, workplace interventions to address the problems of employees in SMEs is lacking. Therefore, the need to develop, implement and evaluate an EAP that will address SME employees' health, wellness and psychosocial concerns was identified.

- **Phase two: Information gathering and synthesis**

This involves identifying and selecting relevant types of knowledge, and using and integrating appropriate sources of information (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:480). The researcher conducted an in-depth literature review from a variety of sources to gain an understanding of the personal and work-related problems that impact employee productivity in the workplace in general and SMEs in particular. Since SMEs are described differently in different countries and settings, the search used terminology such as small business, small enterprise or corporation, small and medium-sized enterprise to refer to the same thing.

A review of the literature on EAP models for workplace interventions was also done. In addition, the researcher conducted key informant interviews with SME owners/managers as well as employees in SMEs to assess the type of problems experienced, the current and proposed strategies to address the identified problems. The insights gained from the literature review on successful EAPs as well as results from the needs assessment were used to develop an EAP for SMEs in Namibia.

- **Phase three: Design**

According to De Vos and Strydom (2011: 482 & 483), two important tasks are carried out in the design phase namely, the design of an observational system and specifying procedural elements of the intervention. The standardised measuring instrument chosen as an observational system during the pre- and post-test was the Workplace Outcome Suite (WOS). The WOS is an empirically validated measurement tool designed to quantify the relationship between EAP intervention and workplace outcomes (Sharar & Lennox, 2010). It was developed by Drs Richard Lennox and Dave Sharar, researchers at Chestnut Global Partners, to illustrate the workplace effects of EAP intervention by quantifying productivity improvements. For the purposes of this study, the WOS was adapted to include biographical information as well as information on programme design to aid with the final evaluation of the programme that was implemented.

Finally, procedural elements in terms of a step-by-step planning of the EAP intervention was also carried out to ensure that the programme can be replicated by others.

- **Phase four: Early development and pilot testing**

In this phase of intervention research, the programme was implemented and used on a trial basis, and developmentally tested for its adequacy (De Vos and Strydom, 2011:483). The self and supervisory referral process, as well as the response time by the service providers, were given attention. Pitfalls, especially around response time, were identified in that response by the EAP counsellors was delayed because of their work schedules. Subsequently, an additional cell phone that was kept by the researcher was acquired.

The cell phone number was communicated to the participants who were requested to call both numbers if necessary.

The initial six months of intervention was used as a prototype and changes made as programme implementation continued. The biggest challenge that came about was the non-availability of the EAP counsellors due to a change in their work conditions. The utilisation of the EAP through self and supervisory referrals were also low which according to the Encyclopedia of Small Business (2007) is a sign of a flawed EAP (see 4.5). Input was sought from EAP counsellors, SME management and employees for the refinement and redesign of the EAP that was developed that subsequently changed the focus from counselling to education.

- **Phase five: Evaluation and advanced development**

A single system design was chosen as an appropriate design to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. According to Strydom (2011a: 160), a single system can be a group, family or community. Employees participating in the EAP were the single system on which the intervention was applied. During the intervention, quantitative data were collected using the WOS and analysed at different stages (pre- and post-intervention). In addition, evaluation of the marketing strategy, supervisory trainings as well as employee and EAP counsellors' orientation session was undertaken. The comments and evaluations of the participants obtained during the qualitative study also were used for the refinement of the intervention programme (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:485).

- **Phase six: Dissemination**

De Vos and Strydom (2011:487) assert that intervention research results must be disseminated with community organisations, scholars and other stakeholders. They further state that the process of dissemination and adaptation would be effective if the following actions are considered, namely preparing the product for dissemination, identifying potential markets for the intervention, creating a demand for the intervention, appropriate adaptation and providing technical support for adopters (De Vos & Strydom,

2011:487). The findings will be shared with the SME Department in the Ministry of Trade, Industrialisation and SME Development, as the government agency responsible for policy and programmes on SMEs. The EAP can be replicated in other regions of the country as an intervention programme for improved employee productivity. To reach out to a broader scholarship, articles will be submitted to accredited journals for publication and possibilities will be sought for the presentation of the findings at national, regional and international platforms.

Eventhough the phases of intervention research was presented in a linear way, Du Preez and Roux (2008:79) caution that in practice "the sequence of design and development methodologies is not always linear, and the stages are often cyclical and interactive". Many of the activities associated with each phase continue after the introduction of the next phase and there is sometimes looping back to earlier phases as difficulties are encountered or new information is obtained (De Vos & Strydom; 2011:476). The application of intervention research in this study will be explored in-depth in Chapter 5.

1.7   DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

For the purpose of this research, the following key concepts will be clarified.

1.7.1 Small and Medium Enterprises

Besides many attempts at defining what constitutes an SME, there is no universal definition thereof (Bhalla, 1992; Kongolo, 2010; Watson & Everett, 1996). There is thus no universally agreed definition of the SME sector; consequently, the definition has many variants depending upon who is doing the defining and the purpose for which the definition is being done (Kutazo, 2008:8). The challenges with a definition of SMEs is echoed by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) who views the definition of SMEs as a significant issue for policy development and implementation (Dababneh & Tukan; 2007:6). SME definitions, therefore, vary with different countries adopting slightly different definitions based on the local context as well as within the

country over a period of time (Theng & Boon, 1996). The definition of SMEs is further exacerbated by the different names that refer to that sector. The ensuing discussion gives light to the complexities of a definition of SMEs.

The European Union (EU) defines SMEs based on the following categories:

Table 1.1: European Union (EU) enterprise categories

ENTERPRISE CATEGORY	HEADCOUNT (ANNUAL WORK UNIT)	ANNUAL SALES	TOTAL ASSETS
Micro	< 10	≤ $ 3 million	≤ $ 3 million
Small	< 50	≤ $13 million	≤ $13 million
Medium	< 250	≤ $67 million	≤ $56 million

Source: Adapted from Gerstenfeld & Roberts, 2000

The Banking Association of South Africa (2016a) in the South African National Small Business Act 102 of 1996 defines a small business as a medium, small, very small and micro enterprise based on certain characteristics. This definition was updated by the National Small Business Amendment Act 26 of 2003 that further define business based on five categories namely standard industrial sector and subsector classification, size of class, equivalent of paid employees, turnover and asset value (excluding fixed property).

According to Watson and Everett (1996) and Scott and Bruce (1987), a small business is one where:
- Management is independent, and usually, the managers are also owners.
- Capital is supplied and ownership is held by an individual or small group.
- Area of operation is mainly local. Workers and owners are in one home community but markets need not be local.

SMEs are also said to possess the characteristic of personal touch in that the owner often knows personally all his/her employees, and may know many of his/her customers, some on a first-name basis (Breslin, Kyle, Bigelow, Irvin, Morassaei, MacEachen, Mahood, Couban, Shannon & Amick III; 2010).

For the purposes of policy development, UNIDO generally advises countries to take into account the quantitative and qualitative indicators for the SME definition (Dababneh & Tukan; 2007:6). The following table summarizes the main qualitative indicators suggested by UNIDO that may be used in order to differentiate between SMEs and large companies.

Table 1.2: United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) SME qualitative indicators

CATEGORY	SMEs	LARGE COMPANIES
Management	Proprietor entrepreneurship. Functions linked to personality.	Manager-entrepreneurship. Division of labour by subject matter.
Personnel	Lack of university graduates. All-round knowledge.	Dominance of university graduates. Specialisation.
Organisation	Highly personalized contracts.	Highly formalized communication.
Sales	Competitive position not defined & uncertain.	Strong competitive position.
Buyer's relationships	Unstable.	Based on long term contracts.
Production	Labour intensive.	Capital intensive, economies of scale.
Research development	Following the market, intuitive approach.	Institutionalised.
Finance	Role of family funds, self-financing.	Diversified ownership structure, access to anonymous capital market.

Source: Dababneh & Tukan, 2007

The above framework by UNIDO has, however, been criticised on the basis that some businesses may possess features of both SMEs and large companies (Ogbokor & Ngeendepi, 2012). Nevertheless, Baumback et al. (1973:5) are of the opinion that "however one defines a small business, whether by qualitative or quantitative standards, depends largely on the problem at hand or the purpose of the analysis".

As is the case in most global settings, there are several names and definitions given to SMEs in Namibia since there is no unique definition describing a small business or enterprise (Ipinge, 2010; Tonin, Dieci, Ricoveri, Foresi & Hansohm, 1998). The analysis of Namibia's SME sector, therefore, faces the challenge of defining and demarcating the

sector and to distinguish formal and informal as well as micro, small and medium enterprises due to the problem of setting the criteria for defining and measuring SMEs (Schöneburg-Schultz & Schultz, 2006). Subsequently, an SME in Namibia could be anything from a street vendor, a person repairing shoes in an informal settlement area to the company manufacturing solar-technologies with a respectable capital employment (Jauch, 2010). April (2005:67), however, argues that the multitude of definitions of a SME should not be seen as a problem, but rather "an indication of the challenges regarding the lack of clarity and consistency faced by all when dealing with this sector". Hallberg (2000:1) also warns against being overly concerned about the lack of consistency in employment-based SME definitions, since the number of employees viewed in isolation from the size of markets or the economy, may be misleading.

Since it is not the intention of this study to frame a definition of SMEs, it will adopt the widely used definition by the Ministry of Trade, Industrialisation and SME Development as outlined in the table below:

Table 1.3: Definition of SMEs in Namibia

SECTOR	EMPLOYMENT	TURNOVER (N$)	CAPITAL EMPLOYED (N$)
Manufacturing	Less than 10 persons	1 000 000	500 000
All other businesses	Less than 5 persons	250 000	100 000

Source: Ministry of Trade of Industry (1997)

Thus the underlying assumption about an SME in the Namibian context is that it should be a privately owned and operated business which employs less than a given number of employees. The above definition is deemed appropriate not only because it is the commonly used terminology in Namibia but also because all over the world, numbers of employees or capital investment or both have been used as the basis for defining SMEs (Ayyagari, Beck & Demirguc-Kunt, 2007; Dangayach & Deshmukh, 2005).

Whilst there is no single definition of SMEs in the literature, it is evident that there is a general consensus on the significance of SMEs for a country's economic growth.

1.7.2 Employee Assistance Programme

The Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA), the largest international, professional organisation for EAPs, define an EAP as "a workplace program designed to assist (a) work organizations in addressing productivity issue and (b) 'employee clients' in identifying and resolving personal concerns (including but not limited to health, marital, family, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress, or other personal issues) that may affect performance" (EAPA, 2011). Jacobson and Attridge (2010:3) extend the definition by stating that an EAP is "the work organization's resource that utilizes specific core technologies to enhance employee and workplace effectiveness through prevention, identification and resolution of personal and productivity issues". The National Business Group on Health, NBGH (2008:15) expanded the definition of EAP to include the provision of

> ...strategic analysis, recommendations, and consultation throughout an organisation to enhance its performance, culture and business success. These enhancements are accomplished by professionally trained behavioural and/or psychological experts who apply the principles of human behaviour with management, employees, and their families, as well as workplace situations to optimise the organization's human capital.

In the African context, the Employee Assistance Professionals Association of South Africa, EAPA-SA (2010:1) defines the EAP as "a work organisation's resource, based on core technologies or functions, to enhance employee and workplace effectiveness through prevention, identification and resolution of personal and productivity issues".

The fundamental aspect of EAPs as evident from the various definitions is that it operates within an organisation with the purpose of identifying and assisting troubled employees. EAPs are motivating employees to resolve their troubles and providing access to counselling or treatment for those employees who need these services (Carroll, 2002; Steele, 1998,). Although the definitions for EAPs vary, Jacobson and Attridge (2010:2&3) is of the opinion that employers provide EAPs for reasons ranging from

wanting to support employees and their family members, accepting the evidence that healthy employees make for a more productive workplace, and protecting themselves from liability and legal issues, in addition to simply believing that offering employee assistance is "just the right thing to do".

According to the NBGH (2008:16), the EAP operates with a common purpose of optimising employee wellness and productivity and ultimately the organisations' performance by:

- Helping employees resolve personal issues that negatively affect job performance and/or health and productivity.
- Helping dependents resolve personal issues that affect and functionality, especially as these issues negatively affect employed parents or spouses.
- Discussing with managers and supervisors the effect employees personal issues have on job performance.
- Consulting with organisational leaders to identify and resolve risk factors that negatively affect the safe work environment.

EAPs are thus found in organisations which "exhibit genuine concern for their employees ... and demonstrate a commitment to the wellbeing of their staff" (Mishra & Kar, 2003:36).

For Cagney (1999:61) the target of the EAP is

employees whose performance shows a pattern of decline which is not readily explained by supervisory observation of their job circumstances, and those that are aware of personal difficulties that may be affecting or may start to affect their work lives.

Ultimately, the EAP aims to assist employees with difficulties which affect their functioning on the job and at home (Balgopal & Patchner, 1988:95). The EAP should thus be viewed as an organisational asset which can play an important role in helping those in a position of authority to resolve complex work performance problems (Klarreich, Francek & Moore, 1985:116).

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although the study produced an expanded understanding of psychosocial and related needs of employers and employees in SMEs and contributed towards the development of an EAP for SMEs, the results of this study need to be interpreted with some attentiveness and with the following limitations:

- Systems theory which forms the theoretical framework for the study highlights the importance of the relationship between an individual and his/her environment. Systems theory posits a reciprocal relationship between a troubled employee and his/her social and work relations when it comes to personal and/or work-related problems that impacts on employee productivity. This study however was not able to measure aspects around the environment such as the work conditions. The EAP in general does not take into account the aspects of the environment, given that its focus is on helping the employee resolve personal problems (Milot & Borkenhagen, 2018). The inclusion of additional information pertaining to work environments and characteristics of employees' workplace would strengthen future studies.

- The inclusion of management training and coaching in the study was aimed at indicating the importance of using EAPs more strategically and proactively in order to develop human capital and avert the escalation of issues within the workplace (Joseph & Walker, 2017). Due to the limited time that was availed for management training (that is, one-and-a-half hours), the sessions ended up being more of an orientation rather than training. Nevertheless, the time was sufficient for the introduction of the concept of EAP, its uses and benefits, the different types of offering and to address various concerns from management, amongst others. The information provided through this training has proven to be adequate to get buy-in from management for the establishment of an EAP and also pledge the participation of their organisations. Further research can focus on this area and explore the characteristics of the utilisation of management training and coaching.

- Another drawback for the study was that the EAP counsellors that were initially engaged for the purposes of the study were no longer available due to other professional/job responsibilities. The researcher was also not readily available at the respective SMEs for intake and referrals as originally anticipated resulting in a low utilisation of services. As a result, the focus of the study was changed from counselling to encompass the broader aspects of the EAP such as training and development, marketing and stakeholder management as per the EAP core technologies outlined by Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015). It also meant the extension of the implementation period by additional months. The changes might have compromised the core service of the EAP, namely counselling, in the participating organisations and subsequently affected the utilisation of the EAP for management and self-referral. A limitation could be that the study did not assess the real impact of the change in the focus of the EAP. Even though EAPs should not only focus on counselling but also on other aspects for the improvement of workplace productivity (Tosches, [sa]), face-to-face counselling still remains the crust. To that effect Joseph et al. (2018) also affirms that although EAPs can deliver whatever it is their clients require or request, short term psychological counselling interventions remain the core offering.

- The limited time in which the SME management and employees had to become familiar with the EAP and its services may also have had an impact on the utilisation of the services.

- An EAP policy that served as a guiding principle for the programme was developed as part of the study. However, the document did not make a clear delineation between the policy and its operational guidelines. This resulted in a document that did not present an outline of the particular ways and steps of accomplishing the EAP tasks to be undertaken as part of programme implementation.

- Aspects around the marketing and promotion as well as case management and reporting in the EAP was also erroneously omitted from the qualitative study but was explored during the supervisory trainings and orientation sessions with employees.

- The size of the sample for the quantitative study was relatively small at both individual and organisational levels. The study was based in Windhoek and only focusing two SMEs in the manufacturing and service sector, respectively. In the course of the study, the SME with the majority of employees had been involved in a major industrial action leading to retrenchments. This created a degree of mistrust amongst the employees and later on, the business withdrew its participation from the study. Another business also closed down operations. These unforeseen situations had a major impact on the study in terms of number of participants available for the study and hence reduced the initially planned number of four participating businesses to two. Therefore the findings from this study cannot be used alone to generalise the outcomes to the entire population.

- The WOS was not pilot tested and it became apparent during its administration that the respondents did not comprehend some of the statements contained in the WOS. Subsequently, the researcher and EAP counsellors assisted with translation of the WOS statements which may have biased the respondents' results. Similarly, the questionnaires for the assessment of the training and marketing interventions were not pilot tested which was a limitation in terms its validity and reliability. Hence, individual differences in the interpretation of the various concepts (Milot & Borkenhagen, 2018) in the survey instruments may also have influenced the responses by the employees and how they disclosed information.

- This study used a single group pre- and post-test design. Due to the under-utilisation of the programme for counselling purposes because of insufficient referrals, the focus of the programme was eventually on employee education. Without a matched comparison group, the results cannot claim to show that education and training offered by the EAP caused the improvements. However, revealing that EAP services are consistently associated with improved work effectiveness supports the hypothesis that the EAP contributes to work effectiveness along the attributes measured by the WOS. The study should be replicated and include different types of interventions outlined in the EAP core technology.

- Another major limitation was that the study relied on self-report for both the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study without direct observation of the employees in their work environment. The data collected was from the perspective of the respondent and likely to contain some level of error or perception bias. Self-report can also be associated with social desirability bias which is a type of response bias where respondents answer questions in a manner that will be viewed favourably by researcher.

These limitations are rarely strong enough to invalidate the overall findings of the study. The study is a first of its kind in the Namibian and possibly the African context, which explored personal and work-related problems of employees within SMEs which impact workplace productivity, the current and proposed problem-solving strategies and subsequently developed, implemented and evaluated an EAP for SMEs.

1.9   CHAPTER OUTLINE

The research report was presented as follows:

- **Chapter 1: Orientation to the study**

This chapter provides a general overview of the study by introducing the goal and objectives of the study. It further contained the rationale for the study, the research problem and the research approach.

- **Chapter 2: Small and Medium Enterprises – a theoretical study**

In this chapter the researcher concentrates from a theoretical point of view on what is an SME, their work conditions and typical personal and/or work-related challenges faced by employees and employers in SMEs that affect their business operations. It also focused on SMEs in Namibia to give a greater understanding of the roles and functions of this sector. The chapter, furthermore, highlighted the challenges that this sector face.

- **Chapter 3: Employee Assistance Programmes – a contextual and historical overview**

This chapter presents an in-depth discussion of literature relating to EAPs, its evolution, core technology and EAP models.

- **Chapter 4: An EAP for SMEs – A theoretical overview**

This chapter presents a discussion of an EAP suitable for SMEs in terms of programme design and implementation taking into consideration the unique characteristics of the SME sector.

- **Chapter 5: Research methodology and ethical aspects**

This chapter provides an extensive discussion of the research process, including the research design and methodology followed in the study. It also presented the ethical aspects and indicated how those ethical aspects were addressed in this study.

- **Chapter 6: An EAP for SMEs in Namibia - findings of the needs assessment**

This chapter presents an analysis of the qualitative data obtained from interviews that explored the personal and work-related problems that impact on employee performance in SMEs. It also explores the utilisation of and the type of EAP model suitable for SMEs in Namibia.

- **Chapter 7: Development and pilot testing of an EAP for SMEs in Windhoek, Namibia**

This chapter present elements of the EAP that were developed, incorporating findings from the needs assessment as well as aspects of the EAP Core Technology.

- **Chapter 8: Empirical data on the implementation and evaluation of an EAP for SMEs**

This chapter contains pre- and post-test survey data obtained from employees who participated in the quantitative study based on the EAP that was implemented. The

analysis of the survey culminates in the development of recommendations with regard to the utility and type of EAP model/s appropriate for SMEs in Namibia.

- **Chapter 9: Summary, conclusions and recommendations**

This chapter presents the key findings and conclusions drawn from the study. It further makes recommendations for practice and future research.

1.10   CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a general overview of the scope of this study which was to explore the feasibility of an EAP for SMEs in Namibia. It is a known fact that people have worked in one way or another since the beginning of the human race and for most, working is a prerequisite for survival (Fraser, 1989; Klarreich, Francek & Moore, 1985). SMEs, being the impetus for economic development for any given country, also absorb workers. As employee assistance in SMEs is a previously under-studied field, the results of this study are an addition to the growing knowledge base on SMEs.

The next chapter presents a contextual and historical overview of the EAP internationally and within Namibia.

CHAPTER 2

SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES – A THEORETICAL STUDY

2.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapters provides a broader landscape of SMEs in general and in Namibia in particular. The researcher focuses on the definition of SMEs and outlines its significance from a macro-economic level as well as at a micro-level in terms of its significance to employers and employees. The chapter also introduces Namibia as a country as well as SME development in the country, with the aim of giving the reader a greater understanding of the role and function of the SME sector in the Namibian context. The chapter, furthermore, highlights the challenges that SMEs face and how these challenges may impact its owners and employees.

It should be noted that while the term enterprise, small business, firm and entity is used, all refer to the same type of business namely SMEs.

2.2   BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON NAMIBIA AS A COUNTRY

The Republic of Namibia is a vast, sparsely populated country situated along the south Atlantic coast of Africa. Namibia has a population of 2 247 124 (Namibia Statistics Agency [NSA], 2015) in a surface area of 824 268 km^2. Namibia was a German colony from 1884 to 1915 and was thereafter administered by South Africa until independence in 1990. The Namibian labour movement has played a prominent role in Namibia's liberation struggle. The trade unions under the umbrella of the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW) were formally established from 1986 onwards and provided workers with an organisational vehicle through which they could take up workplace grievances as well as broader political issues, which were always seen as linked to the economic struggle (Jauch, 2018).

The post-independence Namibian economy has a well-functioning physical infrastructure, a strong institutional framework for market development, a stable macro-economy and a reasonably well organised public administration (Karvinen, 1999:1). The Government has subsequently adopted an open market policy and established generous incentives in order to attract foreign investment and stimulate manufacturing (Karvinen, 1999). The Government, in its Vision 2030, a document that describes the country's development programmes and strategies, (International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2010:8) aims to transform Namibia into a developed country by 2030. This transformation is anticipated through the stimulation of sustainable economic growth and wealth creation (Gaomab, 2004; Mori, 2013). Apart from moving the economy up to higher levels, Vision 2030 initiatives focus on the spreading of wealth and growth across the country, creating employment, reducing regional disparity and eradicating poverty (Mori, 2013:13).

Despite these aspirations and the number of policy incentives to promote investment in the economy, the development of the economy has been slow. The country's colonial past brought great restrictions of the rights of the population based on race, ethnicity, class gender and language which is still visible in present day Namibia (Räty, 2010). For the majority of people, little has changed in terms of economic welfare notable from the high levels of poverty in the country since independence (Karvinen, 1999). Poverty as a reality is echoed by The World Bank (2015) in their observation that "Namibia's economic growth, prudent macroeconomic policies and generous social programmes have not generated the jobs needed to overcome the inequitable distributions of income and assets or raise living standards in rural areas and among the urban poor". Unemployment still remains a significant and growing macroeconomic problem in Namibia (Kutazo, 2008:1). Unemployment rates, defined as the proportion of people of working age who were actively looking for employment but had not found jobs, stands at 28.1% (NSA, 2015). A summary of the Namibian labour market activities drawn from the 2014 Namibia Labour Force Survey Report are depicted below:

Figure 2.1: Namibia labour force activity


```
                        TOTAL POPULATION
                           2 247 124

        ┌────────────────────────┴────────────────────────┐
POPULATION 15 YRS AND ABOVE              POPULATION UNDER 15 YRS
        1 443 270                               813 854

   ┌────────┴─────────┐
ECONOMICALLY INACTIVE    ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE
    POPULATION               POPULATION
  452 273 (31.3%)          990 997 (68.7%)

                      ┌────────┴────────┐
                   EMPLOYED          UNEMPLOYED
                712 752 (71.9%)    278 245 (28.1%)
```
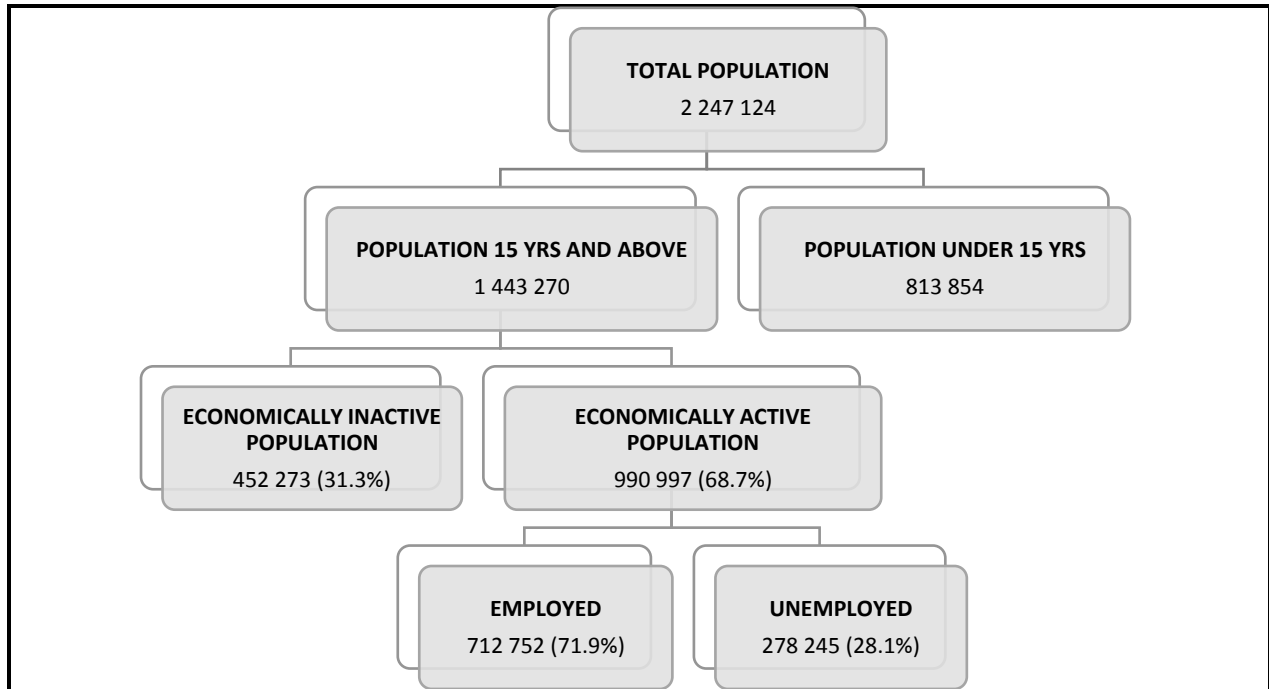
Source: Namibia Statistics Agency, 2015

With a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of about US$5700 (Namibia Press Agency, 2013), Namibia is classified as an upper-middle income country (World Bank, 2015b; National Planning Commission (NPC), 2012). This means that Namibia is doing relatively economically well compared with other African countries (World Bank, 2015b). However, behind the slightly high per capita income is one of the most unequal societies in the world, in terms of income distribution, with a Gini-coefficient estimated between 0.58 (NPC, 2012) and 0.60 (World Bank, 2015a). About half the population of Namibia lives below the international poverty line of US$1.25 a day (ILO, 2010). Hence, the prioritisation of high and sustained economic growth, job creation and reduction of income inequality as key goals for the country (NPC, 2012:4).

Governments, in general, are not able to absorb all job seekers in the public service which in most cases are already bloated (Kutazo, 2008). Subsequently, many developing countries faced with severe unemployment and wide income gaps see SMEs as a viable

strategy for employment creation (Kutazo, 2008:1). SMEs are also seen to significantly contribute to economic growth and development (Ramsden, 2010; Kapepiso, 2014). SMEs are thus explicitly treated as an important part of national development and as central to the expansion and deepening of the industrial base to enhance the country's economic development (Mori, 2013:13). According to Kutazo (2008:2), SMEs are seen as avenues for:

- creating employment opportunities, especially for people with low levels of education and training who constitutes the majority of the unemployed in Namibia,
- providing income opportunities for those at the lower tail of income,
- reduce income inequality, and
- involving the majority of the people in productive activities.

Recognising the importance of SMEs for socio-economic development of the country, the Namibian Government in 1997, through the Ministry of Trade and Industry, renamed in 2015 the Ministry of Trade, Industrialisation and SME Development, introduced a policy for the advancement of SMEs in the country.

2.3   RELEVANCE OF SMEs FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SMEs cover a wide spectrum of industries and play an important role in both developed and developing economies (Dangayach & Deshmukh, 2005). They are recognised as a major source of employment and income in many countries and are a vital part of the economy, contributing the largest proportion of economic growth (Gerstenfeld & Roberts, 2002). Hence, the establishment of SMEs is viewed as an integral and dynamic part of a healthy economy (Ipinge, 2010) as "they provide innovation, competition, flexibility in the labour market, and are a crucial source of job creation" (Knight, 2001:156). The majority of the world's output is produced by SMEs (Gerstenfeld & Roberts, 2002). SMEs also bear economic significance in terms of employment creation, helping to diversify economic activity and making a significant contribution to exports and trade, as well as the alleviation of poverty (United Nations Economic Commission on Entrepreneurship, UNECE (2003) cited in Ipinge (2010). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and

Development, OECD (1997) established that SMEs account for over 95% of businesses, create roughly 50% of total value added worldwide and, depending on the country, generate between 60% and 90% of all new jobs. Detailed surveys in several countries suggest that as many as a quarter of all people of working age are engaged in SME activities and this is increasing (Mead & Liedholm, 1998:61).

An important contribution of small businesses to national economy is derived from the US economy, which is considered a global economic powerhouse. According to Kongolo (2010:2290)

> Small businesses with fewer than 500 employees are said to drive the US economy by providing jobs for every half of the nation's workforce. During 2001-2002, small businesses with less than 20 employees increased employment by 853,074. Small businesses represent 99.7% of the firms, creating more than half of the private non-farm gross domestic product including 60 to 80% of the net new jobs in the economy. In 2004, there were an estimated 23,974,000 businesses in the US, of which 5,683,700 were small businesses who employed about 5,666,600 people.

In the European Union, small businesses contributed to 84% of employment growth between 2002 and 2007 even though these firms account for only 67% of the share in employment (Breslin et al., 2010). In Canada, a total of 98% of all companies have less than 100 employees and employ 48% of the total Canadian labour force (Breslin et al., 2010). In China, one of the fastest developing economy in the world, SMEs generate nearly 80% of the jobs (Zeng, Guo, Lu, Han, Chen & Ling; 2014). In India, the SME sector accounts for 40% of the industrial production, 35% of the total export and provides about 80% employment in the industrial sector in the country (Dangayach & Deshmukh, 2005). In many Latin American countries, SMEs are said to employ over half the working population (Nichter & Goldmark, 2009:1454). Studies in five African countries (Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe) found that micro and small enterprises generate nearly twice the level of employment that registered, large-scale enterprises and the public sector do (Mead & Liedholm; 1998). It is estimated that, in South Africa, SMEs comprise 91% of formalised businesses, provide employment to about 60% of the labour

force and total economic output accounts for roughly 34% of GDP (The Banking Association of South Africa, 2016b).

It is evident that SMEs have undoubtedly been identified as productive drivers of economic growth all around the world. In affirmation, Kongolo (2010:2288 & 2289) states that

> politicians, academicians and developmental economists are of the view that enhancing small business development and promoting entrepreneurship would be a good strategy to contribute and promote economic development by creating employment for rural and urban growing labour force, providing desirable sustainability and innovation in the economy as a whole.

Small businesses also help stimulate economic growth by providing employment opportunities to people, either as owners or employees, who may not be employable by larger corporations (Business Case Studies, 2016; Ipinge, 2010). Beyond the economic benefits, many people choose to set up small businesses because it gives them independence and opportunity to reap the rewards for themselves (Business Case Studies, 2016). Fittingly, Schöneburg-Schultz and Schultz (2006:8) summed up the two factors prompting the establishment of SMEs as:

- Lack of alternatives in the economy: reasons might include the inability to find employment or sources of income. These are known as "push" factors.
- A deliberate choice to start a business: these are based on the motivation to pursue different business opportunities. These are known as "pull" factors.

Business Case Studies (2016) undertaken in the United Kingdom established that small businesses provide opportunities for:

- *Developing personal relationships*: small businesses are well placed to build personal relationships with customers, employees and suppliers. Person-to-person interaction is regarded as important as in building strong relationships.

- *Responding flexibly to problems and challenges*: in a small business, there is little hierarchy or chain of command. Large businesses may have set ways of operating and establish procedures that are hard to change. Small businesses are often far more flexible. It can also reach a quick decision on whether or not it can do what is required.
- *Inventiveness and innovation:* small businesses are well positioned to introduce and develop new ideas. This is due to their owners not having to report or seek approval from anyone else.
- *Low overheads*: due to the small scale of operation, small businesses have lower overhead costs.
- *Catering for limited or niche markets*: large firms with high overheads must produce high levels of output to spread costs. By contrast, small firms are able to make a profit on much lower sales figures. They can, therefore, sell into much smaller markets.

SMEs thus have many important roles in the economy, one of the crucial ones being the promotion of dynamism in the economy as part of the promotion of economic growth (Kawai & Urata, 2002: 41).

2.4   GROWING FOCUS ON SMEs IN NAMIBIA

As with many developing countries, there is limited research and scholarly studies about the SME sector in Namibia (Labour Resource and Research Institute [LaRRI], 2002). This sector is however exceptionally small in comparison to other African countries, partly contributed to the low population density (LaRRI, 2002:12). The pre-independence structural differences also had a huge impact on entrepreneurship and the economic situation in the country (Räty, 2010). The role and significance of SMEs were neglected in Namibia prior to independence in 1990 (Karvinen, 1999; April 2005). Pre-independence, priority was given to larger business sectors which were regarded as the stimulus for economic growth (April 2005:68). The colonial South African apartheid policies also directed development resources to areas of white settlers, while limiting the

indigenous population access to land and other means of production (Karvinen, 1999:5). These policies were aimed at securing the supply of cheap labour for the white-dominated formal sector and prohibiting blacks from pursuing other employment and entrepreneurship (LaRRI, 2002:12). Although potential small businesses operated successfully, they were not provided with the necessary support (April 2005:68). Seiche, (1995) cited in LaRRI (2002:13) noted that in the 1970s blacks were prohibited from owning a business and until 1988 hawkers were prohibited to do business. Such factors served to deter prospective black entrepreneurs from initiating a vibrant SME sector which by now could have become a competitor of the white-dominated formal business sector (LaRRI, 2002:13).

Rural dwellers that constitute the majority of the population are mostly affected because they have few employment opportunities outside subsistence agriculture in the rural areas and insignificant private investment (Karvinen, 1999:5). This results in immense rural-urban migration mostly to Windhoek, the capital city, in search for jobs in the formal sector but they are held back due to a lack of necessary skills and training (Karvinen, 1999:8). A study undertaken by Indongo, Angombe and Nickanor (2014:ii) found that the main reasons why people move from rural areas and smaller towns to urban areas, especially Windhoek, is to seek employment (75.3%). On the contrary, Windhoek has limited employment creation capacity to accommodate the increase of people migrating to the city (Ipinge, 2010). Hence, the SME sector has been identified by the Namibian Government as the priority sector for reducing unemployment and poverty (April, 2005; Ipinge, 2010). According to Schöneburg-Schultz and Schultz (2006) and Räty (2010) the majority of SMEs in Namibia started business out of a lack of employment alternatives, hinting to the survivalist nature of these businesses.

Regardless, there is a general recognition of the pivotal role that SMEs can play in the socio-economic development and diversification in Namibia (National Youth Council [NYC], 2012). Under Namibia's Vision 2030, SMEs are expected to contribute over 30% of national GDP (NYC, 2012). Subsequently, a national SME policy and programme was launched in 1997 to "set out the Government's firm commitment to transform the sector,

as a priority, from its current state of deprivation and underdevelopment into a lead sector of the economy" (MTI, 1997:i). The 2013 World Bank Enterprise Survey cited in Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development (2015:9) reports that smaller firms (with between 5 and 19 employees) increased employment at an annual rate of 10.9%, while medium (20-99 employees and larger firms (100 employees and more) averaged about 4% growth.

Although the SME sector in Namibia provides income and employment to the population, its contribution to the country's economic growth is rather vague since the overall number of SMEs in the country and the number of businesses per sector can only be estimated (Schöneburg-Schultz & Schultz, 2006). The contribution of the SME sector to the GDP in 2013 was estimated to be about 14% and the share of the labour force employed full-time in this sector was about 20% in the same period (Pohamba, 2014; Xoagub, 2014). Besides the fact that the majority of SMEs are individuals in the subsistence sector of the economy, and the unemployed seeking to supplement income (Karvinen, 1999:3), SMEs are believed to provide employment and income to approximately one third of the Namibian workforce (Schöneburg-Schltz & Schultz, 2006; Tonin, Dieci, Ricoveri, Foresi & Hansohm, 1998). This indicates the weight the sector has acquired in Namibian society. A survey conducted by Namibia Economic Policy Research Unit, NEPRU (2003) also concluded that the SME sector is important for poverty alleviation, economic growth and employment creation in Namibia. Hence an importance inference was made by the Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development (2015) that this sector plays a key role towards fostering job creation and income generation, and improving the living conditions of the Namibian people.

In view of the challenge in defining what classifies an SME, another major problem is the absence of detailed and accurate information on the overall number of SMEs and in which sectors they are active (Schöneburg-Schultz & Schultz, 2006). According to the Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development (2015) there is still a lack of accurate, quantitative information on SMEs that poses a problem for the monitoring of SMEs' development and the design of relevant support programmes. The lack of a database

was confirmed by a Development Planner in Business and Entrepreneurship in the Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development (Shityeni, 2014). Even though outdated, the Bank of Namibia in 2004 estimated that there were about 33 700 SMEs in the country providing some form of employment and income to about 160,000 persons (Ogbokor & Ngeendepi, 2012). Since very few reliable data exist on SMEs in Namibia and specifically Windhoek (LaRRI, 2002), this study will use data from the Small Business Baseline Survey conducted by MTI (2000) which is regarded as indicative of the Namibian SME sector (Maritz, 2013). The baseline survey established that there are about 5 369 SMEs in Windhoek (Table 2.1), with an average of 2 full-time employees in a business enterprise (Schöneburg-Schultz & Schultz, 2006:8).

Table 2.1: Small businesses in Windhoek

SECTOR	NUMBER OF SMEs	PERCENTAGE (%)
Manufacturing	408	7.6
Trade	3984	74.3
Service	873	16.3
Others	94	1.8
Total	**5 359**	**100**

Source: Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2000

Namibia faces challenges to overcome poverty, unemployment and inequality (Institute of Management and Leadership Training [IMLT], (2003). The fact that SMEs provide income and employment to the population is of importance to the field of social work and this study in particular since "poverty alleviation is a fundamental outcome of social work employing a social development approach" (Engelbrecht, 2008:2). Developmental social work aims to promote social and economic inclusion through enhanced personal functioning, strengthening of human capital, wellbeing and the livelihood capabilities of individuals, groups and communities that contribute to social justice and human development (Engelbrecht, 2008:2). The importance of SMEs can thus not be underscored in Namibia and an upward trend has been noted in this regard over the past years since "efforts targeted at the SME sector are based on the premises that SMEs are the engine of economic development" (Beck & Demirguc-Kunt, 2005:2).

2.5   CHALLENGES FACING SMEs

Despite its commendable contribution to a nation's economy in terms of generating substantial employment and economic output, SMEs face various challenges (Nichter & Goldmark, 2009; Kongolo, 2010; Omar, Arokiasamy & Ismail, 2009). The key to the success of SMEs and the programmes supporting them is the appropriateness of the policy, legal and regulatory environment in which they operate (Dababneh & Tukan, 2007:6). Consequently, there are local, regional and national policies and programmes in place that promote the growth and development of SMEs in Namibia (NYC, 2012). According to Schöneburg-Schultz & Schultz (2006:9), these policies were designed to "increase the rate of growth of existing small business so that they can employ additional labour, to increase the rate of new business formation; and to diversify the activities of the sector's businesses". Former President Hifikepunye Pohamba at the 5th Presidential Annual Business Forum held on the 16th July 2014, however, expressed his concern that "SMEs continue to encounter difficulties with financing, technology, business know-how, business support and trade linkages that are required to enable these businesses to succeed" (Pohamba, 2014). This affirms that policy alone does not suffice in developing the SME sector, as there are other factors that hamper the sector's growth.

The post-independence Namibian labour movement was also confronted with the threat of a dwindling membership base due to the increasing "casualisation" of work, the increase in 'flexible' forms of employment and a growing informalisation of the economy (Jauch, 2018). The 2016 labour force survey found that only about 17.5% of Namibia's employees belonged to trade unions covering mostly permanent workers in "traditional" sectors such as the public service, mining, fishing, construction and retail (NSA, 2017). According to Jauch (2018) trade union membership has become increasingly narrow in focus and unable to reach the majority of workers in precarious working conditions on farms, in private households, at labour hire companies and in the informal economy. The result is the low-unionisation of employees within certain sectors such as SMEs and subsequent neglect of their welfare within the workplace. Hence, much of the available

literature on SMEs, globally or in Namibia, also focuses on the challenges in the operational and economic categories

Islam and Tedford (2012) categorised the challenges that could cripple SME performance as follows:

Figure 2.2: Issues affecting SME performance

Source: Islam & Tedford, 2012

2.5.1 Operational and economic challenges

Kongolo (2010:2293) noted that the most general challenges affecting SMEs include "lack of management skills, finance, access to bank credit, access to markets, appropriate technology, low production capacity, recognition by big companies, lack of interest, long bureaucracy processes, and support for the roles that small businesses can play in economic development".

SMEs in Namibia are particularly constrained by:

- *Limited access to finance*: It is widely believed that of the many constraints to the stability and growth of small businesses in Namibia, a lack of finance is the most crucial (Tonin et al., 1998; Gaomab, 2014; Schöneburg-Schultz & Schultz, 2006). According to the World Bank Enterprise Survey (2014) cited in Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development (2015), 40.9% of small and 28.6%

of medium enterprises identify access to finance as a major constraint, whereas only 1% of large enterprises see access to finance as a challenge for their development. Only few businesses use financial services, the majority relies on their own financial contributions and contributions from family members or friends to start up and/or maintain their businesses (Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development, 2015).

- *Limited access to land*: Due to historical reasons and a skewed land distribution, there are limited affordable business premises available throughout the country for SMEs, and high rental costs jeopardise the implementation of start-up companies (Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development, 2015). Moreover, high cost of serviced land hinder further investments.

- *Limited access to and high costs of utilities*: With Namibia being a semi-arid country, water is not easily accessible throughout the year. Furthermore, Namibia is relying on imported electricity to cover its power consumption. Steadily increasing energy prices and insufficient energy and water supplies threaten the further development of the economy as a whole (Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development, 2015). SMEs are more exposed to rising prices as they cannot realise economies of scale (Gaomab, 2014).

- *Shortage of skills, competencies and access to technology*: Management competencies are required for growth in small organisations compared to larger organisations (Omar et al., 2009). A lack of entrepreneurial skills, creativity, and a commitment among business owners lead to poor business proposals and a lack of viable projects (Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development, 2015; Schöneburg-Schultz & Schultz, 2006). In the global marketplace, the ability to create, acquire and adapt new technologies has become a critical requirement to compete successfully against other economic players (Gaomab, 2014). Due to insufficient investments into Research and Development, Namibian SMEs depend strongly on imported technology and skills for its maintenance and operation (Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development (2015).

- *Increased global competition*: The opening of markets and lower tariffs contribute to an increased competition from imports, the entry of new foreign investors in the

domestic economy and the strengthening of domestic and large firms that conquer traditional, mostly local SME markets (Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development, 2015; Gaomab, 2014; Schöneburg-Schultz & Schultz, 2006). Globalisation is also linked with a shorter life cycle of products and technology, making it difficult for SMEs to catch up (Gaomab, 2014).

- *High voluntary staff turnover in small businesses*: Small firms experience difficulties to compete with large companies when it comes to employment conditions (Mayson & Barrett, 2006). Moreover, a high level of voluntary staff turnover increases costs (such as separation, replacement, training and general administration costs, other employees working overtime, and so on) and can generate a (temporary) decrease in productivity and customer loyalty (Sels, De Winne, Delmotte, Maes, Faems & Forrier, 2006:87; Wagar & Rondeau, 2006). Retaining key individuals may thus be particularly important for SMEs if a high-quality employee leaves the organisation, a smaller firm may be less likely to have a suitable internal candidate or lack the resources to selectively recruit on the external market (Wagar & Rondeau, 2006).

In addition, SMEs must consider motivations, constraints and uncertainties facing smaller firms, and recognize that these factors differ from those facing larger firms (Omar et al., 2009:97).

2.5.2 Occupational challenges

As could be noted from the above discussion, operational and economic factors are generally highlighted when considering business risks for SMEs and there is little focus on occupational health and wellbeing of employees. Islam and Tedford (2012) rightfully affirm that monetary factors alone may ignore many issues affecting the long-term reputation of the SME and its staff. Increased global competition, focus on customer service, and technological advances (which increase an employee's access to work) contribute to stress for both employees and employers (Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001:214; European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2013). Competing demands,

which arise between work and personal roles, often result in conflict for employees (Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001:214). The very size of SMEs lead to higher rates of work-related stress (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2013). SMEs are often under extra pressure to make sure they succeed in the market, and with smaller numbers of staff, they leave behind a disproportionate workload for their colleagues to cover (Cocker, Martin, Scott, Venn & Sanderson, 2013; Hansen & Andersen, 2008; European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2013).

Employee health, safety and wellness, in most occupational settings falls, under the human resources departments. Empirical research however confirms that human resource (HR) practices tend to be fairly ad hoc and informal in small firms (Mayson & Barrett, 2006:449; Sels et al., 2006:84). The main reasons for the lack of HR practices in small businesses seem to be the lack of time and resources (Mayson & Barrett, 2006:449). The HR management function, just like the other business processes, is undertaken by the owner of the SME. Small business owners may often be more worried about the mere survival of the businesses they have worked so hard to establish and build, (Business Case Studies, 2016) overlooking the value of employees to the business enterprise (Mayson & Barrett, 2006:449). Conversely, a poor psychosocial work environment can have significant negative effects on workers' health and work performance.

A Pan-European opinion poll on occupational safety and health reports that workers attribute work-related stress to job reorganisation or job security (72%), excessive workload (66%) and being subject to unacceptable behaviours such as bullying and harassment (59%) (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2013:7). Such stress, if not dealt with, results in loss of productivity attributed mainly from two sources, namely absenteeism and presenteeism:

- **Absenteeism**

Studies suggest that 50% – 60% of all lost working days can be attributed to work-related stress and psychosocial risks (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2013). A

survey to assess the typical internal operational disturbances that expose SMEs to operational risk showed absenteeism as the most risk indicator (Islam & Tedford, 2012). Absenteeism typically includes the objective aspects of diminished productivity and focuses on the physical absence from the workplace (Lennox, Schmitz & Goehner, 2010:114). It is the failure to report for scheduled work for either medical or non-medical reasons (Aronsson & Gustafsson & Dallner, 2000; Quazi, 2013). A lack of physical wellbeing is a guide for reduced work productivity and consequently plays a fundamental part in absenteeism (Aronsson et al., 2000). The direct causes of reduced profits were also attributed to an increased absenteeism (Jackson, 2002). In a study by Fraser, Grant, Mwanza & Naidoo (2002) absenteeism was cited as the most frequent indirect cost to SMEs in South Africa. Regarding the most common reason for absenteeism, over 45% of firms indicated health/illness, family responsibilities/problems (10%), attending funerals (7%) and attending to sick children/family members (7%) (Fraser et al., 2002). A study by Chikukwa (2008) with SMEs in northern Namibia also found that factors such as frequent illness, resignations and employee deaths places a lot of pressure on their operations. SMEs, in general, have inadequate measures and planned strategies in place to deal with absenteeism and staff turnover (Fraser et al., 2002).

Further exploration of the antecedents of sickness absence has identified organisation or firm size as positively correlate of absenteeism (Cocker et al., 2013). SMEs due to their size cannot afford to lose their labour force for significant periods. The need to re-organise workloads due to sickness absence can present a significant problem for SMEs due to lower employee numbers (Holt & Powell, 2014). Hence, the onset of presenteeism which may be much higher in SMEs compared to absenteeism (Islam & Tedford, 2012).

- **Presenteeism**

According to Quazi (2013:7), several authors have described the nature and impact of presenteeism differently, some of which are presented below:
- 'Going to work despite feeling unhealthy' (Aronsson et al., 2000; Dew et al., 2005).
- 'When employees attend work at times when sickness absence is justified and perform their work at sub-optimal conditions' (Caverly et al., 2007).

- 'The flip side of absenteeism is reporting to work but performing poorly because of physical or emotional problems which are far more costly in dollars, productivity and liability. This phenomenon is known as presenteeism' (Milano, 2005).
- 'When people show up for work, sick, injured, stressed or burned out, there is a drain on productivity' (Lowe, 2002).

This study designates presenteeism as a phenomenon of people, despite physical and emotional problems, still turn up at their jobs. Presenteeism may result in employees being physically present in their jobs but experiencing decreased productivity and below-normal work quality (Koopman, Pelletier, Murray, Sharda, Berger, Turpin, Hackleman, Gibson, Holmes & Bendel, 2002). There are various reasons for the rise of presenteeism. The degree of replaceability, which is the extent to which work not performed because of absence must be caught up with by the person on their return, has a part to play (Aronsson, et al., 2000). The issue of replaceability is in part connected with under-staffed organisations. The small team factor may necessitate the adoption of multiple role responsibilities which make it difficult for co-workers or managers to compensate for the diminished work capacity of a worker who continues to work whilst ill, thus increasing the subsequent cost (Islam & Tedford, 2012). In addition, those who work in some supervisory capacity and/or routinely work a higher than average number of hours per week are likely to feel under greater time pressure if they take time off for illness (Hansen & Andersen, 2008).

The financial loss of being absent from work are believed to have a greater impact on the low paid (who have narrower personal financial margins), and accordingly their disposition to presenteeism might be expected to be higher (Aronsson et al., 2000). Job insecurity is also hypothesised to influence the decision to go ill to work in situations where people fear losing their jobs (Hansen & Andersen, 2008).

Hansen and Anderson (2008) also point to the influence of team-work and pressure from colleagues on presenteeism. They hypothesised that higher levels of cooperation amongst employees in performing work tasks are associated with higher levels of

presenteeism. It is believed that continued work attendance by unwell employees may be more common in SMEs as small teams reliant on interdependent co-worker productivity prompt individuals to continue working whilst unwell (Islam & Tedford, 2012). The size of the firm/institution may also be a factor in this regard. Hansen and Andersen (2008:957) articulate that

> in small companies, employees will be more dependent on each other because the tasks of a person on sick leave will have to be shared among fewer colleagues. One would thus expect that the smaller the size of the firm, the higher the level of presenteeism. Moreover, employees who enjoy a high degree of social support from their colleagues would be more motivated by these bonds to show up ill at work than those who lack such support.

Factors outside work may also influence the decision to go to work unwell. Psychological characteristics are among the personal factors that may influence presenteeism. Aronsson et al. (2005) note the influence of what they refer to as 'individual boundarylessness', a personality characteristic that makes it difficult for people to say no to other people's wishes and demands. It is believed that a strong commitment to work will increase the likelihood of presenteeism (Hansen & Andersen, 2008:959). Presenteeism could have long-term detrimental health effects that could eventually lead to absenteeism. The presenteeism scale of the WOS attempts to capture the extent to which an employee is adversely affected by his/her problem to the extent that the distraction diminishes work performance (Lennox, Schmitz & Goehner, 2010:115).

- **Work engagement**

There has not been an agreed upon single definition of work engagement. According to Kuok and Taormina (2017:263), William Kahn in 1990 first conceptualised work engagement as the "harnessing of organizational members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performances". This conceptualisation underpins people bringing their personal selves into their work and their involvement at work could thus range from disengaged to fully engaged (Kuok & Taormina, 2017). Work engagement is also seen as a positive behaviour or a positive state of mind at work that leads to positive work-

related outcomes (Roozeboom & Schelvis, [sa]). Schauefeli and Bakker (2003:4&5) define engagement as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption. Rather than a momentary and specific state, engagement refers to a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual or behaviour.

An engaged employee is excited about their work and has a general satisfaction with life and general sense of wellbeing (Sharar & Lennox, 2010). Such an employee is aware of the business context, and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organisation (Patro, 2013). Hence, work engagement is the degree to which an employee is psychologically invested in the organisation and motivated to invest in its success (Lennox & Sharar, 2016). Engagement is thus about when enough people care about doing a good job and care about what the organisation is trying to achieve and how it goes about doing it. According to Patro (2013) work engagement comes about when people get satisfaction from the jobs and they believe that the organisation supports them.

Congruent to the systems theory which denotes that negative issues experienced by employees within the work - and social environment may impact on the level engagement by employees, Tyagi (2016) beliefs that employee engagement is produced by the work environment. According to Tyagi (2016) the efficiency of the employees, to a great extent, is

> influenced by the environment in which he/she works. There are many factors in the workplace which impacts engagement level towards organization and their engagement level enhances their intention to stay with the organisation Therefore, work-related stress and psychosocial risks could affect employee work engagement and ultimately life satisfaction.

Irrespective of the source of work engagement, it is given that when people are enthusiastic about their work and workplace, they provide greater discretionary effort, resulting in higher productivity (Medrano & Trógolo, 2018). The ultimate is that employee engagement has a direct impact on the organisation's productivity because it is linked to customer satisfaction which is linked to an organisation's financial success in turn (Patro,

2013). Work engagement is thus a term used to describe the extent to which employees are involved with, committed to, enthusiastic, and passionate about their work (Attridge, 2009:383).

- **Life satisfaction**

Many explanations and definitions of life satisfaction has been observed. According to Prasoon and Chaturvedi (2016:26) life satisfaction is "an overall assessment of feelings and attitudes about one's life at a particular point in time ranging from negative to positive". It is a person's subjective and global evaluation of the positivity of her/his life as a whole or with specific life domains (Naz, 2015). For Veenhoven (2012:67) life satisfaction is the same as happiness which "is the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his/her own life-as-a-whole favourably". Life satisfaction is a cognitive appraisal of the overall degree of satisfaction a person has with his or her life (Hart, 1999).

Life satisfaction refers to a judgmental process, in which individuals assess the quality of their lives on their own unique set of criteria. According to Naz (2015) life satisfaction judgements are dependent upon a comparison of one's circumstances with the idealised appropriate standard. This judgement of how satisfied people are, is linked with their present state of affairs and is not externally imposed. A comparison of one's perceived life circumstances with a self-imposed standard or set of standards is presumably made, and to the degree that conditions match these standards, the person reports high life satisfaction (Pavot & Diener, 1993). Therefore, life satisfaction is a conscious cognitive judgment of one's life in which the criteria for judgment are up to the person (Naz, 2015; Pavot & Diener, 1993). Together with the indicators of mental and physical health, life satisfaction indicates how well people thrive (Veenhoven, 2012).

Life satisfaction explains the difference which emerged after the comparison of individual's expectations with the real situation (Hart, 1999). Research has found that those individuals who are satisfied with their lives are also satisfied with their current jobs (Naz, 2015). Job satisfaction is an important criterion for the success of an organisation and has a close association with job turnover and life satisfaction. Job satisfaction can

also be defined as the extent that the working environment meets the needs and values of employees and the individual's response to that environment (Naz, 2015). It should however be noted that job satisfaction is a multi-dimensional concept as it includes several domains such satisfaction with pay, fringe benefits, the importance/challenge of the job, promotion opportunities, and job security (Ramawickrama, Opatha & PushpaKumari, 2017). Nevertheless, one common research finding is that job satisfaction is correlated with life satisfaction (Naz, 2015).

Life satisfaction is believed to have many positive benefits. A major benefit is that people feel good about themselves and their lives, which has an impact on their overall wellbeing and they are more likely to deal with problems and issues of work life productively and effectively (Donovan & Halpern, 2002). A high level of life satisfaction is desirable for employees because "when people are happier, they tend to be more open-minded and creative in their thinking. In contrast, people who are unhappy, stressed, or dissatisfied tend to exhibit 'tunnel vision' and rigid thinking" (Pasupuleti, Allen, Lambert & Cluse-Tolar, 2009:32). Life satisfaction is thus a measure that addresses satisfaction with one's life and addresses the impact of workplace problems on one's general wellbeing (Lennox, Sharar, Schmitz & Goehner, 2010).

- **Workplace distress**

People often feel distressed at work, triggered both by negative events at work and by non-work situations that carry over into the workplace such as being assigned undesirable work, experiencing interpersonal conflict with supervisors, co-workers, or customers, being subjected to discrimination, negotiating for compensation, or receiving or delivering negative feedback (Wolf, Lee, Sah & Brooks, 2016). Workplace distress therefore is the degree of discomfort associated with the work environment. The workplace distress construct concentrates on the employee's sense of "dread" about going to work and examines the degree of anxiety or stress at work (Chestnut Global Partners, 2017). For better understanding of the causes of workplace distress, Michie (2002) categorised the workplace factors associated with stress as those to do with the content of work and those to do with the social and organisational context of work as outlined in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: Model of stress at work

Sources of stress at work	Individual characteristics	Symptoms of occupational ill health	Disease

Intrinsic to job:
Poor physical working conditions
Work overload
Time pressures
Physical danger, etc

Role in organisation:
Role ambiguity
Role conflict
Responsibility for people
Conflicts re organisational boundaries
(internal and external), etc

Career development:
Over promotion
Under promotion
Lack of job security
Thwarted ambition etc

Relationship at work:
Poor relations with boss, subordinates,
or colleagues
Difficulties in delegating
responsibility, etc

Organisational structure and climate:
Little or no participation in decision
Restrictions on behaviour (budgets, etc)
Office politics
Lack of effective consultation, etc
Financial difficulties, etc

The individual:
Level of anxiety
Level of neuroticism
Tolerance for ambiguity
Type A behavioural pattern

Extra-organisational
Family problems
Life crises

Diastolic blood pressure
Cholesterol concentration
Heart rate
Smoking
Depressive mood
Escapist drinking
Job dissatisfaction
Reduced aspiration etc

Coronary heart disease

Mental ill health

Source: Michie (2002). A model of stress at work.

Due to distinctiveness of organisations and more especially SMEs, this study sought to explore the factors that causes distress in the SME work environment.

2.6   CONCLUSION

There is little doubt that at the centre of a country's economy, SME development would be at the heart of the progress, where production, employment and output could be increased (Kongolo, 2010:2293). However SMEs, globally and in Namibia, face serious challenges of which the biggest are access to finance, access to markets and market information, access to innovation, lack of business skills and knowledge and people issues. There, however, are also human factors that impact on employee productivity in

the workplace. This review highlighted absenteeism, presenteeism, work engagement, life satisfaction and workplace distress as factors that affects workplace productivity. It should be noted that a workplace is a system and that employee productivity is similarly affected by a "troubled" workplace. The promotion of employee health and wellbeing in the workplace thus becomes a pertinent matter.

CHAPTER 3

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME – A CONTEXTUAL AND HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

3.1   INTRODUCTION

People have worked in one way or another since the beginning of the human race and for most, working is a prerequisite for survival (Fraser, 1989; Klarreich, Francek & Moore, 1985). Employees spend most of their adult lives at work and the place of work is regarded by some as "the natural life space for adults" (McKendrick, 1990:201). Subsequently, personal problems will inevitably enter the world of work, just as work-related problems are taken home (Van Wyk, 2011), since employees do not leave their problems aside as they turn to face their working day (Oher, 1999:3). Employee problems manifest itself in the workplace not only in physical and mental ill-health, but also with relational problems, absenteeism, high turnover, decreased productivity and impaired quality of life in the work environment (Mishra & Kar, 2003). There is substantial cost to employers when employees experience personal and work-related concerns that impacts their ability to perform work functions (Oher, 1999; Richmond, 2017).

EAPs are designed to maintain or improve health and productivity on the job by assisting employees with a wide variety of personal problems, including mental health and emotional issues, substance use, family problems, relationship/marital problems, work-related concerns and others (Frey, Pompe, Sharar, Imboden & Bloom, 2018; Joseph et al., 2018; Milot & Borkenhagen, 2018). By addressing core issues that impair work performance, organisations can make dramatic impacts on productivity and reduce absences from the work site (Richmond et al., 2017). This chapter introduces the EAP and presents its origin. It will further discuss the benefits of the EAP to a given workplace. Before the discussion of the theoretical aspects around the EAP, the importance of employee wellbeing to a business operation will be explored.

3.2   EMPLOYEE WELLBEING AND ORGANISATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY

Human capital, embodied in employees, is rapidly becoming the most important resource in a work organisation (Carrell, Elbert, Hatfield, Grobler, Marx & Van der Schyff, 1998). A resource is "anything which could be thought of as a strength or weakness of a given firm... those tangible assets which are tied semi-permanently to the firm" (Wright, McMahan & McWilliams, 1994:4). In order for a resource to qualify as a source of sustained competitive advantage, the resource must add value to a business. A resource "must be rare, inimitable and there must be no adequate substitutes for the resource" (Wright et al., 1994:7). These authors further state that employees are a potential source of sustained competitive advantage for a business and important to business success and survival. It could thus be argued that a business, more so SMEs, depend on its employees' performance for its success. Therefore, an employee is expected to be one who is:

> excellent in what you do, learn and develop new skills, be special in your organisation, keep growing in your job, be creative and innovative, keep on marketing your skills and yourself, and choose jobs that will help you to build your career to the benefit of the organisation as well (Nel, Van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2004:41).

Employees will however not be able to live up to those expectations if they are facing job-related and personal stress situations that hamper their productivity in the workplace. Kreitner, Kinicki and Beulens (1999:503) noted that work not only provides individuals with income, recognition or other positive outcomes but can also be a source of conflict, overload, burnout and tension. All human beings at one stage or another experience some problems in their lives. Personal problems such as family, marital, emotional, financial, alcohol and drug related issues place the employee under great strain (Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA), 2011). Such strains, if unchecked, could cause work-related problems such as high staff turn-over, absenteeism, accidents, poor productivity and many other stress related disorders (Nel et al., 2004:41).

According to the National Business Group on Health, NBGH (2008) worsening health status and stagnating productivity has also become major concerns of many employers throughout the world. A study by Wyatt (2007) cited in the NBGH (2008:6) revealed that factors such as mental health conditions, sleep problems, mental health stigma and substance use and abuse, albeit preventable or modifiable, affect business performance by reducing productivity and increasing both planned and unplanned absences. Some of the factors that affect business performance is depicted in Figure 3.1:

Figure 3.1: Preventable health issues affecting business performance
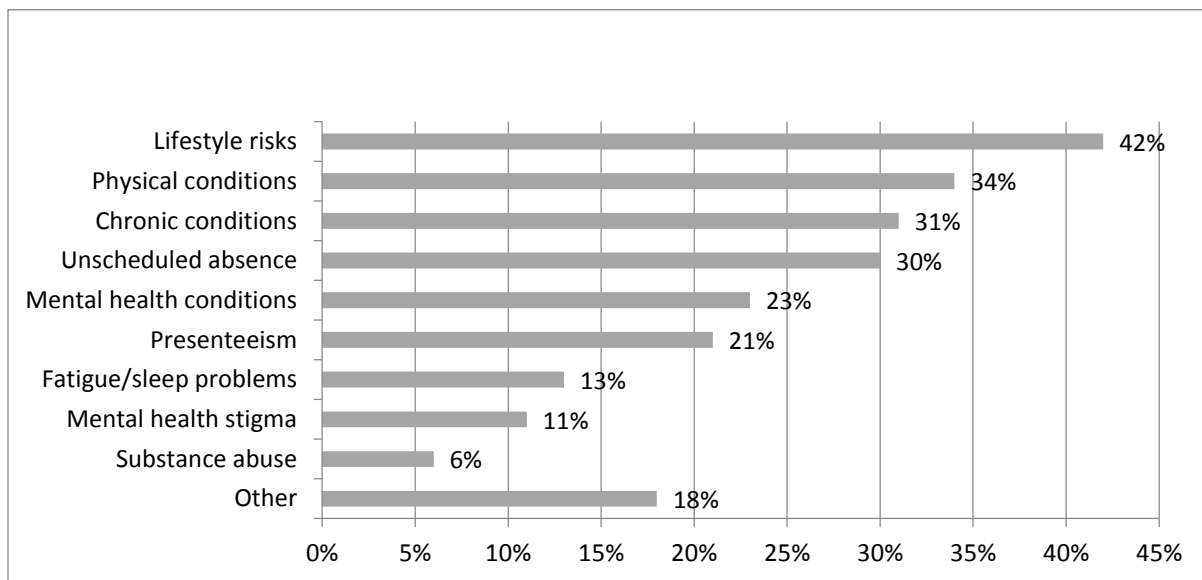
Source: Watson Wyatt (2007) cited in National Business Group on Health Report (2008)

However, more employers realize that illness and productivity do not go well together (Oher, 1999:3). Gornick and Blair (2005:2) noted that "forward-thinking employers [should] realise that the success of their organisation is fundamentally linked to how well they maximize the effectiveness of their people". Many employees experience damaging levels of stress due to problems that they may experience in their work lives or at home (Mishra & Kar, 2003). The UN World Labour Report (1993) cited in O'Hara (1995:205) states that "companies which are likely to be most successful in the future are those which help employees cope with stress and also carefully re-engineer the workplace to make it better suited to human aptitudes and aspirations". Employers' provision of assistance in the workplace also "highlights the value of people as organisational assets" ultimately

contributing to enhanced workplace productivity (Oher, 1999:4). A less commented on advantage associated with EAP implementation is that it allows business owners and managers to concentrate on their internal operations (Encyclopedia of Small Business. 2007). Joseph and Walker (2017:179) also stipulates that "by offering EAP as support service to staff, organisations may be seen as meeting the terms of employees' psychological contracts by positively contributing to staff wellbeing".

3.3   EVOLUTION OF EAPs

3.3.1 EAPs in the United States

EAPs historically began in the 1940s in the United States (US) with services focused on providing outreach to, identification of problems, and early intervention for employees struggling with alcohol-related problems impacting their job performance (Joseph, et al., 2018; NBGH, 2008; Steele, 1998; Jacobson & Attridge, 2010). EAPs were developed from two sources namely Occupational Alcoholism and Occupational Social Work (Masi, 2011; Carroll, 2002). Concerned groups such as the National Council on Alcoholism, the Occupational Programme Consultants Association and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) contributed to a heightened awareness of alcohol-related issues in the workplace and the development of broad-based programmes to assist people who have problems with alcohol misuse and train professionals in this area (Lee & Gray, 1994; Masi, 2011; Masi, 2005). Steele (1998) divides the evolution of EAPs into four periods, as illustrated in Table 3.1:

Table 3.1: Approximate stages in the development of EAPs

	Occupational Alcohol Programmes	Early Employee Assistance Programmes	Modern Employee Assistance Programmes	Managed Behavioural Health Care/EAPs
Time period	1940-1970	1970s	1980s	1990s
Problem Addressed	Alcohol only	Alcohol emphasis	Personal concerns influencing job performance	Wide range of personal and family concerns
Source of Referral	Co-worker/ Supervisor	Supervisor	Self/Supervisor	Self
Indication	Alcohol symptoms	Job performance	Job Performance/Personal Concern	Personal/Family Concern
Intervention	Programme support/ Self-help group	Professional Residential Treatment	Residential/Community Treatment Referral	In-EAP Counselling/ Community Referral

Source: Steele, P. 1998. Employee Assistance Programs: then, now and in the future.

Early occupational alcohol programmes were often initiated and staffed by recovering alcoholics with the support of medical departments (Steele, 1998; Challenger, 1988). Policies and procedures that dealt with efforts of the Alcoholism Recovery Programs, according to Challenger (1988:5), were:

- Limited in content and scope
- Not disseminated throughout the organization
- Reactive in nature
- Absent of any educational or preventative measures
- Lacking inclusion of family members
- Solely directed at alcoholism

Challenger (1988:7) noted that the shortcomings presented above and the effect of alcohol on the destruction of families, marital devastation and the catastrophic effect upon the younger generation pointed out the desperate need for EAPs that:

- Incorporate early identification and intervention
- Provide proactive education and prevention arms
- Utilize quality yet economically priced treatment modalities

- Are equipped to provide a full array of follow-up and evaluative data.

EAP services expanded to include other personal issues that impact on job performance (O'Hara, 1995:197). Subsequently, EAPs started to address more complex employee health and behavioural problems, as well as work-life employee challenges (Jacobson & Attridge, 2010:2). With the rise of professionalism in the EAP field, more staff had formal baccalaureate and graduate level training in social work, psychology, counselling and related disciplines (Steele, 1998:1) with relevant accreditation.

As can be noted from the literature, since the earlier days, the focus of the EAP has been to assist the troubled employee whose problems were affecting job performance. EAPs have grown steadily over past decades, becoming a standard practice that over three quarters of employers offer to their employees (Richmond et al., 2017). The purpose of the EAP still remains to help the employee return to full productivity through the process of assessment, referral and case management (Challenger, 1988). In addition, the modern EAP incorporates proactive and reactive aspects by offering both secondary and tertiary interventions such as training and coaching (Joseph et al., 2018)

3.3.2   EAPs in South Africa

Since the origin of the EA concept in the United States, countries all around the world were modelling and duplicating this programme as was also the case in South Africa (Kenny, 2014). The EAP started to emerge in South Africa in the 1980s with the introduction of the first formally-structured EAP by the Social Services Department of the South African Chamber of Mines in 1986 (EAPA-SA, 2015, Maiden, 1992). The EAP was viewed by employees for the most part as an agent of change in the social condition of the work environment (Maiden, 1999). Unlike the American EAPs that evolved from occupational alcohol programmes, South African EAPs evolved from changing social and legislative conditions within the workplace environment (Harper in Masi, 2000:317). The focus was fitting for the South African context faced with several issues such as violence, HIV and AIDS, political transformation, the changing nature of the workforce and health

care cost, amongst others (Harper in Masi, 2000:314). The call by government for business to contribute to the socio-economic development of the country also put the human factor high on companies' agendas (Maiden, 1999). EAPA-SA which is a member of EAPA, was launched in 1997 and led to the "professionalising" of EAP business in South Africa (Harper in Masi, 2000:320). In its initial stages, the EAP was associated only with certain industries, but the concept filtered through to almost every industry as well as to the public service (EAPA–SA, 2015). Even though the concept of the EAP evolved in the USA the differentiating factor was that

> EAPs in South Africa follow more of a macro approach, differing from the US micro model. Research findings also indicate that the majority of EAPs favour a comprehensive approach in relation to the individual approach. They focus on supporting and developing the present and potential capacity of employees, their families and communities for healthier and more productive lives… Many EAPs are also involved in employee development, mental and biopsycho-social health prevention and lifestyle disease management (Masi, 2000:319).

Besides the community focus, EAPs in South Africa offered a different twist by integrating employee assistance and behavioural health/wellness issues. An integrated programme focuses on behavioural health benefit management by merging managed behavioural health care and employee assistance services (Steele, 1998:7). This approach could also be viable in a resource constrained environment in that a one-stop service is available.

3.3.3 EAPs in Namibia

As early as the 1990s many Namibian companies, specifically in the private sector, developed workplace support programmes to mitigate the impact HIV and AIDS had on the workplace. The mining sector was the pioneers in the introduction of HIV and AIDS workplace programmes. The Chamber of Mines of Namibia introduced the Occupational Health Education and Assistance Programme (OHEAP) in all major mines in Namibia. According to Phororo (2003), the OHEAP was established to provide the following services:

- Counselling for both employers and employees.

- Peer education programmes.

- Training workshop to sensitise employers on HIV and AIDS.

- Drafting of HIV and AIDS policies to protect employees from discrimination on basis of perceived or real HIV positive status.

- Social marketing of condoms to ensure access to condoms by employees. Correct use of condoms was stressed during training and counselling sessions.

Operating in a country with a high HIV prevalence, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCI) also spearheaded a number of initiatives for the private sector which made them realise that HIV was a serious business concern (Phororo, 2003). The OHEAP has eventually been expanded to also include the non-mining sectors to assist them in establishing HIV and AIDS workplace programmes targeting employees, their families and communities at large (Shigwedha, 2010). However, realising the impact of substance use and abuse as well as other lifestyle conditions such as hypertension, diabetes and obesity on productivity in the workplace, some companies adjusted their programmes from a sole HIV and AIDS focus to include other lifestyle conditions (Shigwedha, 2010). The HIV and AIDS and wellness programmes' emphasis was mostly on health education and did not provide much psychosocial counselling and support. The realisation of the need for psychosocial support led to the gradual shift to EAPs.

The concept of EAP is still relatively new in Namibia, and subsequently little research was available on the subject that has been based in Namibia. The few organisations who have established such programmes have designed it according to the South African models with the macro focus that encompasses counselling, in-house training and education as well as community outreach (Masi, 2000). EAPs in Namibia were introduced and mostly managed by social workers and psychologists of whom the majority received training in the field of EAP in South African institutions. As was the case in South Africa, EAP development in Namibia was also strongly influenced by the transformation issues of the changing political climate, increased focus on managing the impact of diseases, especially HIV and AIDS, occupational health and safety, organisational development,

and other issues outside of the traditional focus of psychosocial issues of the troubled employee (Govender & Terblanche, 2009).

Although there are EAP core technologies that outline the essential components of an EAP, Kenny (2014) noted that EAPs around the world are defined differently in each country depending amongst others on the country's legal system, health care system, culture, resources for mental health and substance abuse. Another precipitating factor is that most work organisations in Namibia are faced with a dire shortage of skilled human resources. It is thus pertinent for organisations to eliminate unnecessary costs related to losses in the human resources productive capability (Ogbokor & Ngeendepi, 2012; Shigweda, 2010). More employers also came to realise that a troubled employee causes financial liabilities to the company as a result of absenteeism, workplace accidents, damage to equipment, lowered productivity and excessive use of medical or disability benefits (Chikukwa, 2008). Emphasis on employee HIV and AIDS, health and wellness programmes, however, still remains perhaps because of the country's high HIV prevalence and available training in the field of HIV and AIDS, wellness and health management. Contrary to EAPs, formal training in HIV and AIDS and wellness/health programmes are offered by various non-government organisations as well as by most tertiary education institutions in the country.

The popularity of health and wellness programmes in Namibia necessitated the following discussion of contextualising the health and wellness concept.

3.4   EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAMMES

Mirabito, Baun and Berry (2011:4) define workplace wellness as "an organised employer-sponsored programme designed to engage and support employees (and often family members) in adopting and sustaining behaviours that reduce health risks, improve quality of life, enhance personal effectiveness, and benefit the organisation financially". Grobler, Warnich, Correl, Elbert and Hatfield (2006:399) introduces wellness programmes as one approach that can be used by employers to address rising health costs and the poor

fitness and health of employees. Wellness programmes are designed to focus on the employee's overall physical and mental health through disease identification, education about health risks but also on lifestyle modification through exercise, good nutrition and health monitoring (Grobler et al., 2006; Nel et al., 2004).

The rationale behind employee wellness and health programmes is that from management's perspective, employees are a company's greatest asset and that their state of health affects their contribution to the company (Grobler et al., 2006:399). According to Mattke, Liu, Caloyeras, Huang, Van Busum, Khodyakov and Shier (2013:xiii), chronic health conditions have become a major burden to workplaces, as they lead to decreased quality of life, premature death and disability and increased health care cost. Although chronic disease was once thought to be a problem of older age groups, "there is a shift toward onset during working age that adds to the economic burden, because of illness-related loss of productivity due to absence from work (absenteeism) and reduced performance while at work (presenteeism)" (Mattke et al., 2013:xiii). Out of concern about the impact of chronic disease on employee health and wellbeing, the cost of health care coverage, and competitiveness, employers are adopting health promotion and disease prevention strategies (Attridge, Herlihy & Maiden, 2005; Mattke et al., 2013).

Employee wellness programmes are aimed at the prevention and/or early detection and treatment of identified health risks. Wellness also focuses on broader health programmes aiming at the development of positive health practices by altering habits and behaviour (Grimes, 1988). According to Mattke et al. (2013:xv), preventive interventions can aim at:

> primary prevention by targeting employees with risk factors for chronic disease (lifestyle management) and at secondary prevention by improving disease control in employees with manifest chronic conditions (disease management). It includes screening activities to identify health risks and interventions to reduce risks and promote healthy lifestyles.

The disadvantage of employee health and wellness programmes is the emphasis on health and physical wellbeing only and very little on psychosocial issues and counselling. Health is now increasingly being understood not merely as the absence of illness or

disability, but rather as a state of complete physical, social and mental wellbeing (Chatterji, Ustün, Sadana, Salomon, Mathers & Murray, 2002). Effective corporate health and wellbeing programmes must thus take the whole person into account, recognising the impact of psychosocial factors on wellness. This view advances the issue of integration of health, wellness and EAP programmes since there is also "a growing evidence of overlap" (Gornick & Blair, 2005:17) between the three.

3.5 THE INTEGRATION OF HEALTH, WELLNESS AND EAP SERVICES

Since the early 1990s "companies have begun to offer more comprehensive preventive services that begun to address the psychological and social needs of employees as their physical health" (Attridge, 2005:44). It was established that EAPs, health and wellness promotion programmes take different approaches to achieve similar objectives in lowering costs related to individual absenteeism, reduced productivity, health care cost and unsafe work practices or behaviours among different target populations in the workplace (Derr & Lindsay, 1999:305). Miller, Shain and McClellan (1988), in researching the synergies between EAPs and employee health and wellness programmes, found that in general EAPs were successful in restoring the health and safe work lives of a number of employees but generally not active in promoting healthy and safe lifestyles for most employees. Research by Erfurt and Foote (1990), cited in Derr and Lindsay (1999), laid the groundwork that linked the collaboration of techniques and competencies already existing between the fields of EAP, health and wellness promotion. Hence the advancement of integration which "involves bringing together, in a synergistic way, the specialized knowledge and trained expertise of professionals in different but related fields to better serve organizations and their employees" (Gornick & Blair, 2005:3). Research also established the importance of the EAP consulting and collaborating with a variety of workplace functions including human resources, occupational medicine, organisational development, legal, security and safety (Frey et al., 2018).

EAPs are ideal for implementing an integrated approach in managing the impact of HIV and AIDS, violence, substance abuse and others, in the pursuit of business objectives

(Maiden, 1999:2). According to Masi (2000) the efficiency of integration is evident in South African EAPs (and on extension Namibian EAPs), where unlike the USA, work-life information and support services such as elder care, child care, spouse care are integral rather than separate. The burden of care of vulnerable family members (sometimes including extended families) culturally has always been on the family in most African communities (Masi, 2000). Hence, the concept of work-life as conceptualised in the US has not been singled out for discussion in this study since it is extended to both EAP, health and wellness programmes. The integration of EAP, health and wellness programmes as underscored by the literature will also be beneficial in the Namibian context where health and wellness programmes are more prevalent.

The notion of "one-stop shopping" is perceived as a benefit, not only for the employer as it simplifies the contracting process, but also for the employee as having one service provider offering a single point of contact for employees wishing to access services (Jacobson & Attridge, 2010:10). Integration also reduces misunderstanding and conflict by unifying assessment, service and benefits management in one group and in so doing reducing administrative overhead and improving efficiency (Steele, 1998). The benefits of integration in resource-poor settings are thus greater.

The ability to adapt is a key strength of EAPs, and in order to remain viable, EAPs need to adapt and change, whilst retaining some fidelity to what it means to be an EAP (Frey et al., 2018).

3.6   MODELS OF EAP SERVICE DELIVERY

Many variations of EAP models are found depending mostly on the characteristic needs of the organisation it is designed for. EAPs, like other human resource services and health care entities, have experienced much change in the past years that resulted in service delivery systems being modified, merged and integrated (Cagney, 1999:59). Irrespective of the model adopted, the NBGH (2008:15) stipulates that the EAP must operate with a

common purpose of optimising employee health, wellness and productivity and ultimately the organisation's performance by:

- Helping employees resolve personal issues that negatively affect job performance and/or health and productivity;
- Discussing with managers and supervisors the effect employees' personal issues have on job performance;
- Consulting with organisational leaders to identify and resolve risk factors that negatively affect the safe work environment.

Mishra and Kar (2003:36) are however of the opinion that the EAP model to be adopted by an organisation should be developed to suit the specific workplace, industry and need. EAPs can be delivered by an internal team of staff, an external provider or a mixed model of both options (Joseph et al., 2018).

3.6.1 Internal EAP model

This is the traditional mode (Cagney, 1999:39) where services are provided solely by an employee or employees of the company or organisation and usually provide on-site counsellor and management consultation services (Frey et al., 2018; Phillips & Older, 1988). The employer maintains a full-service facility and employs EAP practitioners on a full-time basis (Cagney, 1999:39). In-house programmes, as it is also referred to, range from simple assessment, referral and follow-up to more extensive short-term counselling or psychotherapeutic treatment of employees (Sharar, Pompe & Attridge, 2013, Phillips & Older, 1988). Internal EAP models may be an integral part of either the human resources or medical departments or else constitute an independent service directly responsible to senior management (Sharar et al., 2013). The pros and cons of the internal EAP model as outlined by Frey et al. (2018) and Sharar et al. (2013) is tabulated below:

Table 3.2: Pros and cons of the internal EAP model

Advantages of Internal EAP Model	Disadvantages of Internal EAP Model
•Ownership of the program lies within the organization, i.e. "it's our program"; •Knowledge of the organization and its culture; •Greater communication within the organization; •More credible with some supervisors; •Assessments can be made in the context of organizational systems; •Can offer mediation services; •Practitioner can provide multiple roles; •Onsite problem assessment capability; •Greater coordination of treatment and monitoring of follow-up; and •EAP may be better integrated into other HR, occupational and benefit programs.	•Too closely identified with a particular department, group or individual; •Confidentiality of employee problems can be more difficult to protect; •Can be expensive due to salary, administrative support and logistical costs; •Only large organizations can justify full-time staff; •Less diversity in clinical staff; •Possibility of staff "burnout" with one-person EA program; •The practitioner can be more subjective in assessments; and •The practitioner's neutral position in the organization can be compromised. •harder to serve dependants or domesrice partners

The employment of a staff member for the provision of EAP services may not always be feasible for SMEs who, in most instances, operate under financial constraints as discussed in Chapter 2. Besides, the personnel numbers in SMEs could also be a limiting factor. Most EAP experts agree that 200 employees are the minimum number of employees required for an in-house effort and that it may not be financially viable for smaller organisations to establish an in-house EAP (California State University Sacramento, [sa]). The need for services among smaller employers who could not afford to hire an internal EAP professional fuelled the growth of EAP vendors, i.e. external model (Gornick & Blair, 2005:10).

3.6.2 External EAP model

External EAP models are defined primarily in terms of an outside vendor that is contracted to provide most or all aspects of the EAP (Sharar et al., 2013). Employers enter into a contractual agreement with an external EAP provider to provide employees with an EAP at either the facility of the service provider or the facility provided by the employer (Kenny, 2014). The vendor company employs the staff that provides the EAP services to the

organisation. External models come "ready-made" and therefore perceived to be easier to implement (Sharar et al., 2013). The pros and cons of the external EAP model as identified by Sharar et al. (2013) are:

Table 3.3: Pros and cons of the external EAP model

Advantages of External EAP Model	Disadvantages of External EAP Model
• Less costly for small or medium-size organizations; • Confidentiality easier to maintain due to limited contact with people other than clients; • Separate from the corporate politics of the organization; • Offsite counseling offers more privacy and less stigmatized route to access; • Better linkage and referral to community resources in multiple or smaller locations; • May have access to more diverse and specialized EAP staff, and more diverse scheduling options; • Can provide a broad range of related work/life or wellness services; • The organization cannot be held responsible for malpractice of practitioners; and • No need for the employer to hire and manage additional employees.	• Counseling is usually not provided in-person at organization worksites; • May not be able to adapt or tailor the program to the needs of the organization; • Some employees and supervisors may be reluctant to deal with "outsiders" for help; • Lack of knowledge about the organization and its unique corporate culture; • Communication problems can occur between the EAP service center and the organization; • Less "ownership" by the organization of the EAP; • Externals can be "profit" oriented and may not always serve the interests of the organization or client; and • May offer less accessibility for appointments.

Figure 3.3 above shows that the external EAP model provides better accountability, and ease of programme development and implementation (Masi, 2005:159). While the services provided by internal and external EAPs are similar, employees sometimes report feeling more comfortable seeing an external EAP professional as it increases their sense of confidentiality (Jacobson & Hosford-Lamb, 2008). Many employers also embrace the external EAP as an efficient low-cost alternative to the highly integrated internal model (Frey et al., 2018). In addition, if evaluation finds the EAP ineffective it is easier to terminate the contractual obligations of an external service provider (Masi, 2005:159) compared to a staff member employed for the provision of the EAP services internally.

There are some variations to the external model, some of which will be discussed next because of its relevance to this study.

3.6.2.1 Consortium Model

An EAP consortium is "a cooperative agreement among companies and agencies that do not have enough employees to warrant their own EAP. Instead, they pool their resources and develop a collaborative program to maximize the individual resources of each company" (Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee, [sa]:110; Masi, 2005:159). The consortium model offers smaller companies an option of banding together and developing a consortium, subcontracting services from an existing programme or contracting with a preferred provider organisation (O'Hara, 1995:207). An advantage of using the consortium model is that smaller institutions get a cost-benefit of carrying out employee assistance, which they cannot afford on their own (California State University Sacramento, [sa]). However, operating consortium models may be complex and may require a difficult decision-making process (Kenny, 2014). According to Masi (2005:159), consortiums work best in companies with fewer than 200 employees in a single location.

3.6.2.2   EAP located in treatment or social service agency

According to Burke and Sharar (2009) cost is the defining issue and at the forefront of decisions made about EAPs. Services offered by an EAP located in treatment or social service agency are primarily offered to the work organisation at no cost or by contractual arrangement by a treatment or social services agency within the community (Phillips & Older, 1988:137). They further state that EAP services are offered through treatment or a social service agency because assessment and treatment services are not available within the company and no free-standing service centre can be established. Small employers are more likely to opt for a free EAP because "their financial and human resources are more limited and, while they sometimes appreciate value, cost drives their decisions" (Burke & Sharar, 2009:6).

Proponents against free delivery of EAPs expressed concerns about poor quality and a lack of workplace emphasis in free EAPs (Burke & Sharar, 2009:8). The foreseeable

disadvantage of this model is the minimal onsite presence of the EAP that may lead to overreliance on self and supervisory referrals. The overall level of utilisation of the EAP could be affected as a result.

3.6.3 Hybrid Model

Also referred to as the blended or internal/external mixed model, the hybrid model shares elements of both the internal and external models (Sharar et al., 2013). This model features a small staff, employed by the organisation, that directs the EAP and provides some onsite clinical and management related services (Attridge et al., 2009b) with external professionals carrying out some of the functions on a contractual basis (O'Hara, 1995). The hybrid model thus offers the value of an internal EAP manager who can serve as an immediate resource for clinical and consultative service, plus the external EAPs added value of diverse clinical care and the ability to deliver services across vast geography (Frey et al., 2018). This model is especially ideal for organisations with multiple worksites because "it usually has EAP staff that is onsite at the employer's worksite (or at multiple locations within the organisation). It also has external or offsite contract personnel involved in EAP services in many locations" (Sharar et al., 2013:1). Basically, in the blended model, most of the clinical services are typically provided by affiliate counsellors but their activities are coordinated through the internal EAP staff.

There is little evidence to suggest that one EAP model produces superior workplace outcomes (Frey et al., 2018; Sharar et al., 2013). According to Berridge and Cooper (1994), a standardised EAP does not exist because "variations between individual needs, organizational characteristics, providers' capabilities, professional definitions, and even national cultures all combine to ensure that every EAP acquires distinctive features in use, if not at inception". Sharar et al. (2013:1) believe that "regardless of where the EAP counsellor works, the context of clinical contact remains the same: a face-to-face meeting(s) conducted between an EAP counsellor and an employee client". Arguably, the most essential function of a successful EAP is its ability to provide confidential services free of charge to employees and, often times, their families (Jacobson & Hosford-Lamb,

2008). Key to building an effective EAP is understanding the needs of the organisation and exercising a combination of autonomy and flexibility when implementing programmes (Frey at al., 2018)

3.7   THE BENEFITS OF EAPs

The NBGH (2008:8) in developing a strategic value proposition for EAPs state that "an EAP that is aligned with organizational values and vision will measurably enhance business operations, the overall employee experience, and the community perceptions of the company". Langley (1999:48) in Bell (2003:12-13) underscoring the benefits of EAPs to companies, notes that EAPs can be viewed as the maintenance division for "human machinery" and that it is often "more cost effective to repair than discard faulty assets". EAPs can substantially increase profits as well as improve employee health and wellbeing and subsequently more and more employers are establishing EAPs for employees (O'Hara, 1995:207). What sets employee assistance services apart from other mental health services is its focus on providing brief treatment and practical resources that improve the work performance of employee clients (Attridge, Sharar, DeLapp & Veder, 2018).

There has been some evidence relating to the effectiveness of EAPs in enhancing employee and organisational outcomes (Joseph et al., 2018). Reports to date show significant reductions in absenteeism, accident rates, lost production, lower staff turnover, retention of valued employees, higher staff morale and improved productivity due to the availability of EAPs to work organisations (Mishra & Kar, 2003:39). By offering an EAP as a support service to staff, organisations may be seen as meeting the terms of employees' psychological contracts by positively contributing to staff wellbeing (Joseph & Walker, 2017). Investing in an EAP can also mean that employees are better connected with support services, potentially alleviating or managing factors that detract employees from performing optimally (Joseph et al., 2018). The EAP is thus, demonstrating its worth in tackling the complex issues of stressed employees, and the problems of coping inside work, outside work and with the interaction of work and the many other roles which

employees have to play (Berridge & Cooper, 1994). Potential benefits of EAPs are summarised in figure 3.2:

Figure 3.2: Benefits of EAPs

Improvement in productivity	• Reducing absenteeism & presenteeism • Improving morale/motivation • Conserving operating cost • Improving ability to perform & work relationships • Developing higher quality staff
Reduction of benefit costs (through early treatment & prevention)	• Reducing health insurance • Lowering life insurance costs • Reducing workers' compensation costs • Providing welfare benefits
Reduction of human resources development costs	• Recruitment and replacement • Education and training
Image of organisation	• General visibility • Specific association to products and services • Concerned and responsible employers

Source: Dickman et al. (1988), Joseph et al. (2018), O'Donnell & Ainsworth (1984)

However, very few systematic cost-benefit analyses in terms of EAP cost-effectiveness have been conducted. According to Naicker and Fouché (2003), the lack of cost-benefit analyses is because many valuable EAP benefits are intangible and thus difficult to measure and evaluate in monetary terms. Factors such as productivity, job performance level and other subjective data are not easily measurable (O'Hara, 1995:207). An expert in human resources appropriately asked:

> "Do Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) actually provide value for employers and employees? Or, are Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) a way for employers to feel good about doing something positive for employees? - that may or may not provide a value-add for employee wellness and work productivity" (Heathfield, 2015).

Similarly, Maiden (1992) commented that without firm evident based-research to demonstrate employee's improvement in psychological functioning and performance, the future of EAP's seems rather bleak.

3.8 IMPACT OF EAP ON WORKPLACE PERFORMANCE OF EMPLOYEES

Noting the deficiency in the measurement of the impact of EAPs, Drs David Sharar and Richard Lennox, developed the WOS. According to Lennox, Sharar, Schmitz and Goehner (2010) the WOS is designed to "provide an assessment on relevant individual differences that focus on outcomes that are related specifically to EA interventions and are likely to change across time if the intervention works, and not change if it does not". The WOS is an empirically validated measurement tool designed to quantify the relationship between EAP intervention and workplace outcomes (Sharar & Lennox, 2010 & 2011). The WOS focuses on five constructs namely employee absenteeism, presenteeism, life satisfaction, work engagement and workplace distress all critical areas that link emotional wellbeing with performance (Sharar & Lennox, 2011:1; Lennox et al., 2010). In explaining the five constructs of WOS Sharar et al., (2013) state that:

> The *Absenteeism* scale assesses the number of hours absent due to a personal problem that takes the employee away from work. In addition to a lack of physical presence, the WOS includes "absence" even if the employee is on the job site. This is referred to as *Presenteeism*, a scale that addresses decreases to productivity that occurs when an employee is not working at 100 per cent due to unresolved personal problems. In other words, is the employee doing what he or she is supposed to be doing – or is the worker distracted by personal issues? The *Work Engagement* scale refers to the extent the employee is invested in or passionate about his or her job. Workplace problems are likely to diminish when employees are highly engaged or enthusiastic about their work. The *Life Satisfaction* scale is more of an overall measure that addresses the impact of work and life issues on a person's general sense of wellbeing. This outcome is really a perceived improvement in one's quality of life. Finally, the *Workplace Distress* scale looks at the degree of distress at work from any number of sources. Employees usually seek EAP services because they are distressed about something, so the outcome is to reduce the mental state that makes a person less effective at work.

The WOS applies scientific rigour to the process of surveying employees and determines whether they are achieving positive outcomes and whether employers are seeing the benefits of increased staff productivity and other effects.

Various studies have been conducted to test the validity of WOS for the measurement of EAPs effectiveness. One of the notable studies is that of Sharar and Lennox (2014) which was undertaken to examine if the use of EAP services was associated with improved work effectiveness. The WOS was used as a pre- and post-measure on a sample of 3187 employees from 20 different EAP providers. The post-assessment took place 90 days after EAP use. Sharar and Lennox (2014) concluded that the results of the study support the use of WOS to evaluate workplace effects of EAP. The authors, however, cautioned that "in the absence of a non-EAP user control group, this evaluation study cannot prove that the use of the EAP alone caused these improvements among the employees who used the service" (Sharar & Lennox, 2014:5)

Subsequently, a study by Richmond, Wood and McCann (2015), addresses the above concern by Sharar and Lennox (2014). The study used a design that matched and compared EAP users with non-users, where the two groups had "no significant differences in demographics; length of employment; help-seeking behaviour; pre-intervention psychological distress, hazardous alcohol use, absenteeism, presenteeism and workplace distress" (Richmond et al., 2015:19). The findings of the study are tabulated below:

Figure 3.3: Comparison of EAP users with non-users
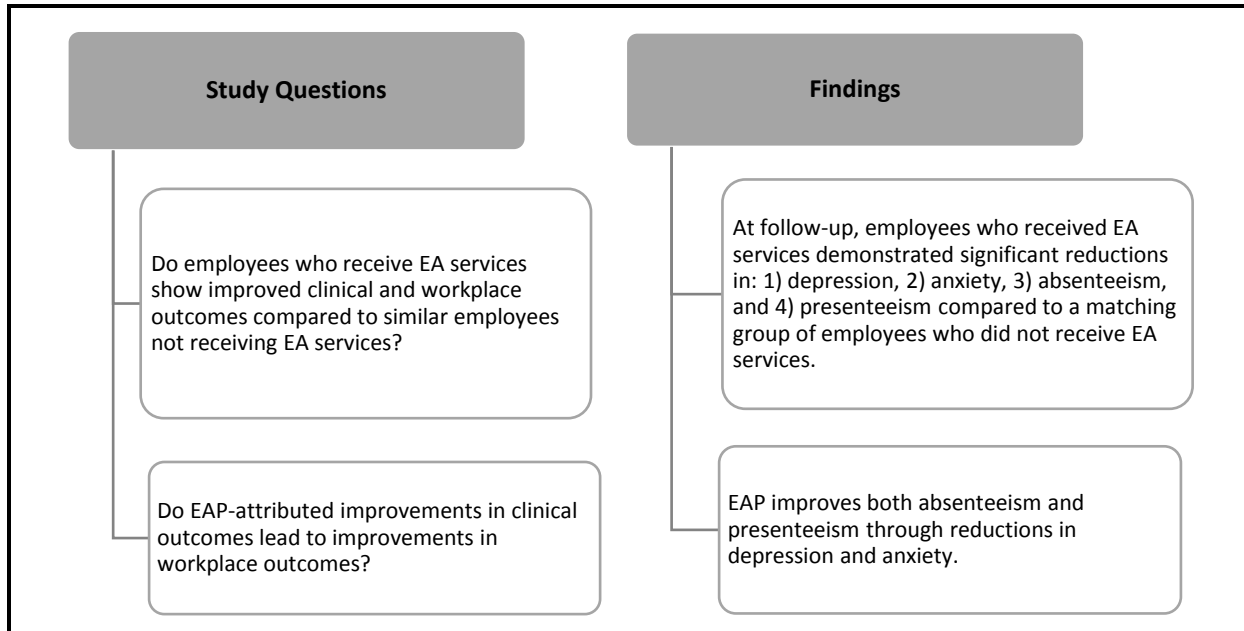
Source: Richmond, Wood and McCann (2015)

The above research findings are of significance to this study as it supports the value of EAPs "to improve and/or maintain productivity and healthy functioning of the workplace … through their application of specialized knowledge and expertise about human behaviour and mental health" (Richmond et al., 2015:27).

3.9   LIMITATIONS AND CRITICISM OF EAPs

EAPs have globally become a standard feature of organisational life (Jacobson & Attridge, 2010; Richmond et al., 2017; Rick et al., 2012; Sharar et al., 2012). It also has evolved significantly since its origin in the US, resulting in a variety of definitions of what an EAP is. Subsequently, there is no consensus on what constitutes an EAP, that is whether EAP refers solely to short-term counselling or a range of services including training, counselling, critical incident debriefing and so on (Joseph et al., 2018). Besides the evolution, the EAP has historically focussed on characteristics of employees, not organisational conditions that may be producing employee stress. This is because EAPs are often conceptualised and presented as a means to help employees resolve "personal

issues" and not necessarily issues related to working conditions themselves (Milot & Borkenhagen, 2018). Hitherto, the EAP still maintains its focus on one-to-one or one-to family clinical counselling which has a personal problem orientation (Du Plessis, 1992). Given the known associations between workplace stress and health/workplace outcomes (also highlighted in Figures 2.2 and 2.3), it is possible that some EAP users are exposed to unfavourable working conditions, producing stress to such a degree that their work engagement, distress, presenteeism, health and life satisfaction are significantly affected (Milot & Borkenhagen, 2018). As a result of this micro-focus, most of the available EAP assessment tools also centres on the measurement of the effectiveness of workplace EAP counselling (Atridge et al., 2018; Sharar et al., 2012; Richmond et al., 2015).

The EA concept that was initiated and popularised within the United States, continues to be a model programme that is duplicated in countries around the world (Jacobson & Attridge, 2010). However, the specifics of how an EAP is defined and used vary based on the country's legal system, culture, healthcare system, resources for psychosocial support, amongst others. The aforementioned micro-focus of the EAP could perhaps also be context-relevant.

The EAP is a multidisciplinary field with a majority of EAP professionals holding qualifications in social work and psychology (Jacobson & Attridge, 2010). There is a general shortage of trained EA professionals due to a dearth in educational programmes dedicated to preparing graduates for the EAP field globally (Jacobson & Hosford-Lamb, 2008) and more so in Namibia. Hence, the EAP Professional mostly use their educational background of either social work or psychology, some in conjunction with a short course in EAP. No accreditation and certification is required to practice as an EAP professional in countries such as Namibia, as long as the person is in possession of a Bachelor's qualification in either social work or psychology. Membership to EAPA-SA, the only EAP accreditation in southern Africa, is voluntary

One of the most common criticisms of EAPs is the low level of employee engagement. The effectiveness of the EAP is measured by its utilisation. The willingness of employees

to utilise the services is often influenced by their trust and confidence in the programme. The EAP should thus strive to ensure optimal utilisation by both the employer and employees for it to be meaningful. The aspect of utilisation was discussed under 4.5.

3.10   CONCLUSION

EAPs are vital to employee wellbeing aiding towards productivity in the workplace. Credible evaluations in the effectiveness of the EAP in enhancing employees' workplace performance have been undertaken using the scientifically validated WOS. The literature reviewed showed that not all EAPs are structured in the same way nor do they offer the same services. The differences in programme design are largely dependent on the goals of the EAP.

There, however, seems to be limited literature on EAPs in Namibia possibly due to the fact that most employers focus on HIV and AIDS and other employee health and wellness issues in the workplace. Nevertheless, the literature study proves the value of the EAP in that it is ultimately giving a work organisation an option to save a good employee and maintain his/her productivity.

CHAPTER 4

AN EAP FOR SMEs - A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

4.1   INTRODUCTION

Many employers realised that assisting employees to cope with their problems could improve employee productivity and may also be less costly than terminating their employment (Cohen & Schwartz, [sa], Richmond et al., 2015). The workplace also offers many advantages as a setting to help employees deal with personal problems because "employees spend a significant proportion of their time at work … [and] workplace interventions can access specific groups that would otherwise be difficult to reach and, because most people are employed, reach large populations" (Ames & Bennet, 2011:175).

Assistance by employers, in most cases, is provided through a formal intervention system, such as the EAP (Frey et al., 2018; Joseph et al., 2018; Joseph & Walker, 2017; Milot & Borkenhagen, 2018; Richmond et al., 2015; Steele, 1998). The EAP identifies and assists organisational members with a wide range of personal problems that might adversely affect their work performance, health and wellbeing (Ames & Bennet, 2011; Cohen & Schwartz, [sa]; Frey et al., 2018; Joseph et al., 2018; Joseph & Walker, 2017; Milot & Borkenhagen, 2018; Richmond et al., 2015). EAPs can be designed to accommodate small and large businesses, professional associations as well as private and public sector employees (Csiernik, 2005:74). However, employee assistance (EA) is mostly available in larger businesses but not in SMEs attributed primarily to a lack of resources and financial limitations (Altshuler, Berry, McIninch & Nayeem, 2014; Hasle & Limborg, 2006).

This chapter will present a discussion of an EAP suitable for SMEs in terms of programme design and implementation taking into consideration the unique characteristics of the SME sector.

4.2   THE NEED FOR AN EAP FOR SMEs

As noted in Chapter 2, SMEs globally, are generating employment, helping to diversify economic activity and making a significant contribution to exports and trade, as well as poverty alleviation (Gerstenfeld & Roberts, 2002; Knight, 2001; Kongolo, 2010; Nichter & Goldmark, 2009). In its quest to address the challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality the Namibian Government fittingly resolved to accord national importance to SMEs for the country's economic development (Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), 1997). In as much as the advancement and subsequent growth of SMEs are ideal and commendable, the creation of SMEs also presents its own challenges (Healthy Workplaces, 2014). Small businesses worldwide face various constraints to their development and growth amongst which is the ignorance around the human factor (April, 2005). No business is however immune to human problems, regardless of size (Healthy Workplaces, 2014). SMEs just like bigger-sized businesses, or perhaps even more so, rely on the productivity of its human resources (Altshuler et al., 2014). Psychosocial pressures, stress and mental health problems among workers in SMEs are common (Healthy Workplaces, 2014; Zeng, Guo, Lu, Han, Chen & Ling, 2014). Even though workplace health, wellness and EA programmes have become a business imperative for many larger businesses globally, the same cannot be said for SMEs (Cocker et al., 2013). However, SMEs with employee problems may suffer the effects of an employee's problems more because decreased performance and productivity will hurt a smaller employer's bottomline faster (Fully Effective Employees, [sa]; Healthy Workplaces, 2014).

SME owners spend most of their time on sales and finance and tend to solve problems related to personnel only on a crisis basis (April, 2005). The negligence of employee problems could subsequently compromise the promotion of organisational health and productivity (Healthy Workplaces, 2014). SMEs are also competing with bigger-sized

companies for human resources and is thus under much more pressure to attract and retain their human resources (Mayson & Barrett, 2006). To that effect, Wagar and Rondeau (2006:3) noted that:

> While the loss of quality employees can be devastating for both big and small firms, retaining key individuals may be particularly important for small and medium-sized businesses - if a high-quality employee leaves the organization, a smaller firm may be less likely to have a suitable internal candidate or lack the resources to selectively recruit on the external market.

By offering EAP as a support service to staff, organisations may be seen as meeting the terms of employees' psychological contracts by positively contributing to staff wellbeing (Joseph & Walker, 2017).

No EA services are offered by SMEs in Namibia, attributed mostly to financial feasibility or lack of knowledge about available programmes (Altshuler et al., 2014). Similarly a study by Attridge et al. (2009a) found that in companies with 1 to 99 in the US, only 52% offered an EAP. For companies with 100 to 499 members of staff, 76% offered an EAP, and for companies with 500 employees or more, 89% offered an EAP. This shows a correlation between a company's size and whether or not they offer an EAP. The finding by Attridge et al. (2009a) further states that small organisations typically operate with smaller profit margins, making it more difficult to support wellness and health programmes (Allen, Lewis & Tagliaferro, 2012). While SME owners must maintain concern about their employees' productivity, they also have a real investment in the personal welfare of the people who works for them (Mayson & Barrett, 2006; Healthy Workplaces, 2014). The informality of SMEs and management having personal relationships with their employees, places SMEs in a position that allows them to address employee problems effectively (Healthy Workplaces, 2014; Mayson & Barrett, 2006; Meggeneder, 2007). According to the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) (2012:4) "small enterprises have unique social, organisational and environmental characteristics (such as approachable top management and easier communication with employees), which can be capitalised on in order to carry out successful workplace health and wellness

programmes". Cocker et al. (2009) also view the flexibility of SMEs as an advantage when it comes to implementing measures to address psychosocial risks in the workplace.

EAPs are viewed as the ideal vehicle for implementing an integrated approach in managing the impact of HIV and AIDS, violence, substance abuse and others, in the pursuit of business objectives (Frey, 2018; Maiden, 1999:2). However, little is known about the most effective EA interventions for small businesses (Breslin et al., 2010). This is attributed to the fact that mental health and psychosocial issues of employees in SMEs are largely neglected in occupational health research and practice (Martin et al., 2009; Zeng et al., 2014)Assumptions about EA in SMEs are mostly informed by literature on larger organisations and without evidence that the findings are influential within SMEs (Holt & Powell, 2014). Martin, Sanderson, Scott & Brough (2009) warn that strategies that are routinely employed by larger organisations are at times difficult to implement in SMEs and are thus infrequently adopted. Therefore, in order for the EAP to provide the expected services, the needs of the organisation, as well as that of the employees, must be known, thus necessitating extensive organisational profiling. The supposition, however, is that the functioning and work performance of employees in SMEs, just like in any employment sector, may be negatively impacted by some human and structural factors (Health-matters, [sa]). Hence, EAPs for the SME market are globally fast becoming the 'must have' employee benefit both appreciated by employees and considered a valuable business tool by employers (Health-matters, [sa]; Healthy Workplaces, 2014).

4.3   NAMIBIAN LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK ON WELLBEING IN THE WORKPLACE

Legislation is important in ensuring that the safety, health and wellness of employees are taken seriously. However, priorities around safety, health and wellness differ substantially in industrialised and developing countries as observed by Sieberhagen, Rothmann and Pienaar (2009:18):

> priorities regarding employee health and safety in industrialised countries include stress, the ageing workforce, the right to know, informed consent and

transparency, work with or exposure to chemicals, ergonomics, allergies, the quality of indoor air, new technologies, management and safety culture, and occupational health services. Priorities regarding employee health and safety in developing countries include agriculture, dangerous occupations, the transfer of hazardous technologies, major accidents and fires, safety, housekeeping and productivity, occupational and work-related diseases, toxic metals and solvents, organic dust, vulnerable groups, child labour, heat stress and heavy physical work.

Sieberhagen et al. (2009) concluded that although some overlap exists (for example in terms of exposure to toxic metals and exposure to chemicals), it is clear that employee safety, health and wellness are given higher priority in industrialised countries as compared to developing countries. The discrepancy in the scope of employee safety, health and wellness could also result in employers equating wellness with physical health only, while psychosocial problems are viewed as arising because of the shortcomings of individual employees (Csiernik, 2005:7).

In most countries, health and safety aspects are covered by occupational health and safety legislation, but legislation regarding employee wellness still lacks to a large extent (Sieberhagen et al., 2009). Namibia is amongst those countries that do not have explicit legislation that covers employee wellness. There are, however, laws and policies that have a vast influence on the implementation of EA services.

4.3.1 The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia

The Constitution guarantees the protection of the rights and dignity of all Namibian workers. Chapter 3 explores this further, addressing fundamental human rights and freedoms, respect for human dignity, equality and freedom from discrimination. Since all eligible persons have the right to choose trades, occupations and professions, employees should be treated equally and in a dignified manner. The workplace could enable this through facilitating employee access to health and psychosocial services, available through the EAP.

4.3.2 The Labour Act

According to Section 39, the Labour Act 11 of 2007 was promulgated to amongst others "ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees". The Labour Act under the same section stipulates that every employer is mandated to, without charge to the employees, provide a working environment that is safe, without risk to the health of employees and has adequate facilities and arrangements for the welfare of employees.

The Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation (MLIREC) is mandated to promote occupational health and safety at all workplaces in terms of the Act. Occupational health in Namibia is aimed at the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social wellbeing of workers in all occupations (MLIREC, 2016), of which SMEs are not an exception. The focus of MLIREC has however been the prevention or management of the following health hazards in the workplace: extremes of pressure; extremes of temperature; poor lighting; electricity hazards; noise and vibrations; chemical hazards; dust, fumes and smoke; liquids, gases and vapours; biological hazards; and bacterial (viral and fungal).

The MLIREC's focus substantiates the claim by Sieberhagen et al. (2009:18) that "psychosocial stressors seem to be a priority in industrialised countries, while issues such as dangerous occupations and heavy physical work are important focus areas in developing countries". Consequently, many workplaces in Namibia's occupational health's emphasis are on physical health and safety, which is the prevention and management of occupational diseases and incidences, rather than on psychosocial health concerns. The resultant is that only physical symptoms of ill-health are attended to at the detriment of other psychosocial issues.

Nonetheless, the MLIREC stress that education and training of both workers and management are necessary in order to address occupational health and safety matters in all workplaces. Since the aspect of education and training is an important component

of the EAP, the MLIREC emphasis on education and training creates room for the incorporation of other issues such as the psychosocial wellbeing that impact on the workplace.

4.3.3 The Employees' Compensation Act

The Employees' Compensation Amendment Act 5 of 1995 calls for the establishment of the Employees' Compensation Fund (ECF) that is being administered by the Social Security Commission. Its objective is to provide for the payment of benefits on a generous scale to an employee injured as a result of an accident arising out of and in the course of his/her employment. These injuries could be of a physical, mental or psychosocial nature.

4.3.4 Namibia National Policy on HIV and AIDS

Namibia's high HIV prevalence has made HIV and AIDS one of the most critical workplace issues (Chikukwa, 2008). Hence, the Namibia National Policy on HIV/AIDS was created in 2007. The Policy encompasses statements related to the prevention; treatment, care and support; impact mitigation and workplace interventions and stewardship and management of the country's HIV and AIDS response. Chapter 6 of the Policy that outlines the response to HIV and AIDS in the workplace states that "Government shall facilitate all public and private sector workplaces to develop and implement an HIV/AIDS workplace policy inclusive of an HIV prevention, treatment, care, support and impact mitigation programme" (Division of Special Programmes, 2007:30). Many workplaces HIV and AIDS programmes were developed as a result of the National Policy on HIV and AIDS. Even though the focus is not on the EAP, the Policy is relevant because it provides the impetus for the implementation of EA services in the workplace due to the multiple effects and impact of HIV and AIDS.

4.4   STRUCTURE OF AN EAP

EAPs have essential components, termed the EAP core technology by Roman and Blum (1985) that describe the basic features of any EAP (Attridge, Herlihy & Maiden, 2005:10). According to Jacobson and Attridge (2010:5), EAP core technologies were developed to "identify the unique characteristics of EAPs that are common to all programs and that define the practices of the field". Stemming from Roman and Blum (1985), Cagney (1999:60) suggested the following essential components in the design of an EAP:

- Consultation with, training of, and assistance to work organization leaders seeking to manage the troubled employee, enhance the work environment, and improve employee job performance; and outreach to and education of employees and their family members about EAP services.
- Confidential and timely problem identification/assessment services for employee clients with personal concerns that may affect job performance.
- Use of constructive confrontation, motivation and short-term intervention with employee clients to address problems that affect job performance.
- Referral of employee clients for diagnosis, treatment and assistance plus case monitoring and follow-up services.
- Consultation with work organization in establishing and maintaining effective relations with treatment and other service providers, and in managing provider contracts.
- Consultation with work organizations to encourage the availability of and employee access to health benefits covering medical and behavioural problems.
- Identification of the effects of EAP services on the work organization and individual performance.

The above components are similar to the core technologies developed by the Employee Assistance Professionals Association of South Africa, EAPA-SA (2015:1-2) which will be adopted by this study because of similarity in the socioeconomic context and relatability between Namibia and South Africa , namely:

- The training and development of, and assistance for work organisation stakeholders (managers, supervisors and unions) seeking to effectively manage the employee who is experiencing behavioural, emotional or

wellness issues; enhancing the work environment; and improving employees' job performance.

- The marketing and promotion of EAP services (availability and guarantees; especially confidentiality) to managers, supervisors, unions, employees and their family members.
- Case management that entails confidential and timely risk identification, assessment, motivation, short-term intervention, referral, monitoring, follow-up, reintegration and aftercare services for employees with personal and work-related concerns that may affect job performance.
- Consultation with work organisations to pro-actively address inherent trends resulting from personal or organisational issues.
- Stakeholder management to establish and maintain effective relations with internal and external role-players and service providers.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the value/success/impact of EAP services relating to the work organisation and individual job performance.

Whereas EAPs are distinct to individual work-sites, there are however certain services and programme tenets that are considered universal to all EAPs (Csiernik, 2005:74). Modelling of EAPs to the core technologies thus becomes vital since "these components combine to create a unique approach to addressing work-organization productivity issues and employee personal concerns affecting job performance" (EAPA, 2011).

It should however be noted that "SMEs need special attention because their knowledge, competence and financial resources to carry out interventions are limited" (Martin et al., 2009:240). Caution should thus be taken not to assume that "small businesses should be managed along essentially the same principles as large businesses but on a smaller scale" (Cassell, Nadin, Gray & Clegg, 2002). The implementation of the number of core technologies may also be affected by the size of the organisation (Martin et al., 2009:240).

4.4.1 Programme design

4.4.1.1   Build organisational commitment

EAPs are there to help supervisors and employees hence "consultation with supervisors about their problems and needs is just as essential to the realization of the organization's and program's success at referring the troubled employee for help" (Mannion, 2006:52).

According to Csiernik (2005:83), the development of successful EAPs begins with stimulating organisational interest in developing a programme. It is therefore absolutely necessary that management, at its highest level, endorse and actively support the EAP (Dickman, 2003:47; Mannion, 2006:55; Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee, [sa]:14).

4.4.1.2 Undertake a needs assessment

If the intention of the programme is to improve the overall wellbeing of employees, then careful consideration needs to be given to how to engage those employees that would benefit the most from the intervention (Davies, 2015). Workforce involvement or direct participation where employees are encouraged to "become involved with the determination of their working environment" (Lansdown, Deighan & Brotherton, 2007:8) is however rare in small businesses. It is therefore imperative that the EAP not only meet the needs of the business but also what the employees want, otherwise employee participation will be low (Davies, 2015). One way to ensure employee participation is to carry out a needs assessment within the workplace before planning the intervention (Bell, 2003).

The examination of a need for an EAP could be carried out in several ways using qualitative or quantitative research methods of data collection (Henderson, [sa]). Despite the method being utilised, the outcome should be that employees are provided with an opportunity to discuss their issues and provide input regarding ways they may be helped. Quite often, key team members, such as department managers, are interviewed about the potential needs of their respective teams (Henderson, [sa]). Employee and organisational needs assessments are "intended to help the organisation determine the most appropriate and cost-effective methods of providing EAP services" (EAP-SA, 2010:4). The needs assessment will also assist in the identification and development of a comprehensive programme appropriate for the needs of both the business and employees (Bell, 2003).

4.4.1.3   Establish an EAP Advisory Committee

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee ([sa]:14) recommends the creation of a steering committee comprised of representatives from both employees and management. The committee should examine the need for an EAP, propose a practical structure and analyse plans to implement the program (Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee ([sa]:14; Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015). Roberts-DeGennaro (1988:217&218) cites the following reasons for employee participation in the planning of the EAP:

- Employees must be approached if their needs and desires are to be correctly described;
- If employees are involved in the creation of a service, the credibility of such a service will likely be heightened;
- The utilization of a service in which employees have played a planning role will be considerably heightened than if elitist planning created it; and
- Employees' sensitivities about being used for ulterior motives may be lessened if fellow employees have helped create, and continue to share in the control of, a service.

Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015:6) provides the following guidelines for the establishment of the advisory committee:

- A small company could nominate a single functionary, i.e. the EAP practitioner/professional, to coordinate the functions of an EAP Advisory Committee;
- The EAP Advisory Committee should be trained on appointment and attend training sessions on EAP-related matters;
- EAP Advisory Committee members should review statistics and trends on utilisation;
- EAP Advisory Committee members should make recommendations on programme enhancement and alignment;
- The EAP Advisory Committee should preferably be chaired by the most senior manager available;
- Members of the EAP Advisory Committee should be appointed in writing by the managing director or head of the business unit;
- The EAP Advisory Committee can also be referred to as the EAP Committee, the Wellness Committee (where such functions are integrated) or the Health and Wellbeing Committee.
- Although proper representation is important, it should be recognised that smaller committees are often more functional.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee ([sa]:14) emphasizes the importance of the selection of a cross-section of employees because it "will ensure the representation of a variety of views and needs, and will, therefore, play a major role in formulating the program and its operations".

4.4.1.4   Develop an EAP policy

Mannion (2006:43) views the policy as "the first and most fundamental of several integrative steps necessary to implement and maintain effective employee assistance programs". EAP policies are valuable in protecting employees' rights but also promote early programme use by enhancing voluntary referrals and protecting confidentiality (Csiernik, 2005:83). The policy also provides a clearly delineated set of provisions that includes specific guidelines for supervisors when they have to confront the performance-deficient employee and refer for help (Mannion, 2005:45). Underscoring the importance of a policy Sonnenstuhl and Trice (1995:11) state that:

> The importance of a written EAP policy cannot be emphasized too strongly. Research shows repeatedly that supervisors willingness to confront troubled employees whose performance is impaired and, if necessary, refer them to counselling is related to the presence of a written policy statement and familiarity with it … Without a clearly written and widely publicized policy, supervisors and managers often do not know how to deal with employees' personal problems constructively.

A clearly written policy will "ensure that the mandates, principles and focal areas of the EAP are fair, consistently applied and balanced in respect of the interests of all the various stakeholders" (EAPA-SA, 2015:4). Mannion (2006: 55-56) highlighted the following components of an EAP policy:

- Expression of management's support for and commitment to the program.
- A clear and comprehensive outline of the nature and purpose of employee assistance.
- The reasons for implementing the program.

- How the program can help further the organisation's and employee's goals.
- Affirmation that it has the same status, standing and significance as any others company policy.

Myers (1984) also suggests that the policy should clearly and unequivocally address the fact that there are troubled employees in the organisation and the significance of that for the realisation of organisational goals. He further states that another aspect of the policy should be an assurance of client confidentiality for the employee and all EAP records. There should also be disclaimers in the policy that "the presence of the EAP does not negate management's prerogative to discipline performance-deficient employees … nor the rights of employees who use the program to continued employment and career advancement" (Mannion, 2006:57). A policy also gains in status when it is signed and endorsed by senior management (Csiernik, 2005:84). The significance of the development of a policy statement preceding EAP implementation can thus not be overemphasised.

4.4.2 Programme implementation

Once an EAP has been designed, it must be introduced to the work organisation. According to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee ([sa]:16) the EAP coordinator's goals are to:

> communicate the benefits of the EAP to various company groups … in terms relevant to each group, developing and understanding of the needs and concerns of each group, identifying influence networks and potential program supporters or resisters, and becoming personally visible and known.

The discussion below suggests the various activities to be executed in the implementation phase of the EAP.

4.4.2.1 Supervisory orientation and training

The supervisor has a pivotal role to play in the EAP. According to Klarreich, Franchek and Moore (1985) active support of supervisors and managers is needed in order to ensure that EAPs flourish and perform at its optimum level. What differentiates the EAP is not only its organisational identity and location but its incorporation of the unique properties of the work environment, which allow a more effective identification and intervention with troubled employees (Googins, 1989). Bruce (1990:117) states that supervisors have three responsibilities for the successful operation of the EAP, namely to:

- know and understand how the EAP works,
- play the role of the primary and best source of information about EAP, and
- be comfortable in referring employees to the EAP both voluntary and involuntary.

Therefore, the training of supervisory personnel is one of the central components of instituting a successful EAP (EAPA-SA, 2015; Mannion, 2006). Supervisors must be offered formal training to create awareness of the EAP and its principles; to clarify the role of the supervisor within the context of the EAP; and to provide adequate procedures for referral (Sutherland & Cooper, 2000). Supervisory training should also include the identification of early warning signs of troubled employees as well as the correct EAP referral procedures (Kenny, 2014:23).

4.4.2.1.1 Identifying a troubled employee

In many organisations, there are employees who exhibit, among others, decreasing productivity, increasing absenteeism, rising lateness, violence as well as alcohol and drug use in the workplace (Matlhape, 2003). Some employees can hide problems for a long time, but those problems will still impact their behaviour, their attitude and their morale (Emener, Hutchinson & Richard, 2003:57). One of the primary functions of management is to be able to identify a troubled employee sooner rather than later (Bruce, 1990). Since this is a critical role for management, it is worthwhile to examine areas in which

supervisors must be alerted to such behaviour changes or appearance of a typical behaviour. Romano (1995:92) identified the following signs of deteriorating job performance that supervisors must look out for:

- absenteeism and tardiness;
- accidents and carelessness;
- conflicts with co-workers;
- a decline in quality and quantity of work;
- inability to concentrate;
- memory problems and confusion;
- mood swings and unusual behaviour;
- poor appearance and poor hygiene;
- unprofessional conduct; and
- on-job-absenteeism (presenteeism).

Supervisors are in a position to motivate employees to do something about their problems (Simelane, 2007). They are also responsible for achieving results for their organisations. Should poor performance threaten those results, the early identification of the problem and referral to an EAP is important in turning the problem around (All Points EAP & Organizational Services, [sa]; Bruce, 1990). It is important to consider that some employees may exhibit job performance problems occasionally but that does not mean they are troubled (Simelane, 2007). Supervisors should thus look for behaviour patterns and not isolated events (Romano, 1995). The ability to see patterns of behaviour, or a recent change in behaviour, and to motivate employees to seek help, are characteristic of effective supervision (All Points EAP & Organizational Services, [sa]; Klarreich et al., 1985). As a general rule, the only time a supervisor have the right to approach an employee who may be having a problem is when there are demonstrable effects on job performance (Klarreich et al., 1985; Emener et al., 2003). According to All Points EAP & Organizational Services, ([sa]) other opportunities refer to:

- when an employee whose work record is fine approaches you for assistance with a personal issue, or
- when you observe behaviour that is unusual or out of character for the employee.

The challenge of confronting troubled employees should, however, be noted (Myers, 1984). Supervisory orientation and training should thus also include ways of undertaking an effective confrontational interview. The size of SMEs and the subsequent informal relationship between owners/supervisors/managers and employees, besides being an advantage for the introduction of an EAP, as noted earlier could pose a threat to referral and optimal utilisation of the EAP. To prevent this, clear guidelines and training for supervisors on when and how to do referrals are required.

4.4.2.1.2   Referrals to the EAP

According to Myers (1984:231) the referral activity determines the EAP's success because without sufficient referrals the programme becomes a dormant expense. Emener et al. (2003) classify EAP referrals into three categories, namely self, informal and formal referrals.

- **Self- referral**

Self-referrals occur when employees initiate their own contact with the EAP (Googins, 1989:295). Self-referrals take place when an employee (or their family) consults with the EAP at their own initiative (All Points EAP & Organizational Services, Inc. [sa]). The decision to refer oneself to the EAP may result from "a complex network of both formal (i.e. supervisory discussions, medical routines) and informal (i.e. cultural triggers, employee network) social controls" (Googins, 1989:296).

In this type of referral, no identifying feedback is given to the supervisor/employer (All Points EAP & Organizational Services, Inc. [sa]). Self-referrals are important to a successful EAP because they help prevent personal problems from coming to work in the first place (Myers, 1984). Supervisors should thus promote self-referrals by reminding employees that the benefit is available and by communicating that seeking help when needed is a sign of wisdom.

- **Informal referral**

Informal referrals occur when supervisors who are uncomfortable with the formal referral process refer employees informally to the EAP (Googins, 1989:295; Cagney, 2006:19). When an employee brings a personal problem to the attention of the supervisor but the work performance and attendance is still within acceptable standards, the supervisor can still encourage the employee to use the EAP (Emener et al., 2003:56). The supervisor can suggest or recommend the EAP to the troubled employee but with this type of referral, the supervisor will not receive any feedback (Simelane, 2007).

- **Formal referral**

A formal referral is made when a supervisor identifies, documents and discusses with an employee specific behavioural or job performance problems and makes a recommendation that the employee contacts the EAP (Corporate Care Works, Inc., [sa]). Googins (1989:295) describe supervisor referrals as a formal arrangement by a supervisor who is not satisfied with an employee's job performance and wants the employee to receive help from an EAP. When used as a proactive workplace tool, supervisory referral of troubled employees to an EAP have resulted in positive outcomes and significant cost savings to the employer (Jacobson & Hosford-Lamb, 2008).

Sonnestuhl and Trice (1995:89) suggested the following when supervisors make formal referrals:

- Identification of changes in work performance.
- Documentation of factual, objective information concerning job performance
- The expectation of work performance that needs to improve
- Timeline for improvement
- Consequences and action to follow through if job performance does not improve; and
- The employee has been given a chance to access the EAP voluntarily.

It should once again be stressed that even though the employer may provide the opportunity for counselling and supervisors may refer employees to the EAP, the decision to participate is still voluntary. Mishra and Kar (2003) also cautioned that if there is a

problem related to the employees' private life and it is not affecting their work performance then it is not the business of the employer. The employer may be concerned but has no right to be involved. However, employers do have the right to set performance standards and establish sanctions against those who do not meet the standards (Carrell, Elbert, Hartfield, Grobler, Marx & Van der Schyff, 1998). It is also important to note that working with the EAP should be regarded a support for employees, not a substitution for workplace disciplinary policies and procedures (Jacobson & Hosford-Lamb, 2008).

Supervisors may, however, not be keen on using the EAP because of not knowing when and how to use the services. It can therefore not be overemphasized that the most effective way to gain supervisor support and at the same time address challenges with regard to referrals to the EAP is through supervisory trainings (Sutherland & Cooper, 2000:224).

4.4.2.1.3   Supervisors' resistance using the EAP

Supervisors, due to their position, have a crucial role to play in the promotion and utilisation of the EAP. However, various reasons for supervisors' reluctance to refer troubled employees to the EAP have been identified by Googins (1989), Klarreich et al. (1985) and Myers (1984); and include:

Table 4.1: Supervisors reluctance to use the EAP

Cover-up	Supervisors may be torn between using—and not using—the EAP. Most supervisors are promoted through the ranks and are likely to be friends of employees; hence they may overlook behaviour and often cover up for employee deficiencies.
Denial	Sometimes supervisors may deny that the employee has a personal problem affecting job performance. This may be reflected by statements such as: "She's a good performer when she comes to work." "Lately, he argues with everyone—but he gets the work done."
Good worker	Supervisors may feel a need to "protect" the individual because the person has been, or still is, a good worker. Also, supervisors feel they might somehow lose the "good worker" if they refer the problem to the EAP.
A misguided sense of responsibility	Some supervisors feel a responsibility to handle and correct the problem themselves. Referral to the EAP is seen as a poor reflection of their supervisory skills.

Guilt	Guilt feelings occur when a supervisor thinks he or she may have handled the situation incorrectly; may be incapable of handling it or particularly when the supervisor has lost his/her temper with the employee. Guilt may cause avoidance of dealing with the situation.
Reluctance to confront	It is not unusual for people to prefer to avoid confronting an unpleasant situation. An employee with a sensitive problem may be among the most difficult to deal with. Supervisors are also reluctant to confront a deficient team member, as this may provoke team hostility towards the supervisor
Fear of losing control	Some supervisors may fear losing control of actions through anger during a stressful discussion.
Ego involvement	Ego involvement between supervisors and employees occurs when the supervisor feels that the employee has been moulded in his/her own image, sees the employee's successes and failures as his/her own, and wants to solve the problem personally rather than request consultation and professional assistance.
Supervisor's own substance use	The general subject of chemical addiction may pose a real threat to a supervisor if he/she abuses drugs or alcohol. This tends to create an unrecognized hostility toward the EAP. To confront the using employee is to confront his/her own anxiety and guilt about his/her own substance use. In cases where the supervisor actually has a problem, referrals are practically nonexistent.

In addition, the supervisors' attitudes towards perceived effectiveness of the EAP, factual knowledge of the EAP, and attitudes towards the supervisor role has been identified as barriers to supervisors referring employees (Googins, 1989:293). The training should thus also provide an opportunity for supervisors to discuss their fears with regard to the EAP.

4.4.2.2   Employee education and orientation

Employee education about and orientation to the EAP is necessary and appropriate and another way to integrate EAPs into the organisation. Delivered individually or in a group setting of no more than 10 - 12 employees at one time, this training educates the staff on all aspects of the programme (Mannion, 2006:117). The Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee ([sa]:16) and Henderson ([sa]) proposes the introduction of the EAP to the employees, first personally through small group orientation meetings and then with written materials. Whichever format is adopted, employee education should take place as soon as possible after the programme is implemented and there should be the opportunity for employees to participate actively in the sessions (Mannion, 2006:119).

Sonnenstuhl and Trice (1995:20) provide the following brief outline of what should be included in employee education sessions:

> At a minimum, employees need to be aware of the company's policy and program, and such information should be widely disseminated. Unfamiliarity with the policy and its scope are likely to prevent employees from using it or lead to inappropriate use. Education programs… might include information about a wide range of personal problems and solutions – for example, information about alcohol and drug abuse, family problems, and stress management, what employees can do for themselves, self-help groups and professional counselling. This selection of subject matter would make employees aware of the scope of the company's commitment to help them and also encourage employees to help themselves.

Mannion (2006) suggests that every employee should receive a copy of the EAP policy at the beginning of the session. He states that "giving every employee a copy of the policy statement and ensuring their understanding of its contents can be very effective ways of integrating the program into the organisation" (Mannion, 2006:119).

Employee orientation is pivotal to ensure utilisation of the EAP and encourage self-referral. A study by Martin et al. (1986) cited in Googins (1989:295) on the relationship between referral types, work performance and employee problems found that the largest referrals to EAPs were self-referrals (85.7%) followed by informal referrals (9.6%) and then supervisory/mandatory referrals (4.7%). Hence, self-referral should be encouraged to the utmost.

4.4.2.3   Marketing and promotion of the EAP

The conception and development of an excellent EAP, although satisfying, is believed not to be sufficient. Tosches ([sa]) noted with concern that besides the great need for EAP intervention, utilization remains at a lower than expected rate. According to Sloan, Gruman and Allegrante (1987:196) unless the programme is sought by employees, it will be an abysmal failure, no matter how smart it is. Therefore marketing plays an important role in the development and acceptance of EAPs (Terblanche, 1992:24). The goal of marketing, according to EAPA-SA (2015:22) is "to ensure that the EAP is highly visible

and is presented in a positive light to encourage targeted beneficiaries to utilise the programme".

For Beidel (1999:92) the objectives of EAP marketing is to

- increase employees' knowledge of the EAP and its services, activities and key components (e.g. confidentiality policy, referral procedures).
- increase familiarity and comfort with the EAP's operations and to enhance the acceptance and use of the service by the employees, managers, labour representatives and the organizations' leadership.
- increase utilization of the program at all levels throughout the organization.
- enhance the integration of the EAP within the host or contract organization and to promote a feeling of ownership for the program on the part of the organization and its managers and employees.
- maintain the visibility of the EAP and its presence as a vital contributor to the organization's productivity and efficiency and to the wellbeing and general work life of the employees and managers.

Employer communication is critical to improving trust and employee participation in EAPs (Tosches, [sa]). Besides the articulation of what the programme wishes to attain, implementation strategies and activities should be carefully identified (Beidel, 1999:92). Beidel (1999:97) further offers four essential components of organisational communication, namely (a) written communication, (b) oral presentations, (c) meetings and (d) interpersonal communication. These four elements of communication could be used in the exploration of the promotional and marketing efforts of the EAP. Tosches, ([sa]) emphasizes that all communication needs to include detailed information about privacy protections to help ease employee concerns.

EAPA-SA (2015:22&23) provides the following guidelines for ensuring the effective marketing of EAPs:

- The marketing strategy should provide for a clear marketing plan, to be revised and adapted annually;
- The EAP should be marketed in employee-orientation programmes, company, newsletters and employee meetings;
- Marketing strategy should target all the levels of the organisation and should be adapted accordingly;

- EAP posters on topics of interest should be displayed for the employee population;
- Electronic media should be considered where appropriate and available, i.e. emails, e-shots, electronic newsletters, social media;
- Promotional material should be designed and distributed, i.e. pens, caps, key-holders, business cards or t-shirts.

The basic rule in any type of communication is to have the intended audience in mind when laying out the format, content and design of the informational piece (Beidel, 1999; Sloan et al., 1987). Likewise, the intent and goal of the material should be specific, targeted and simple (Beidel, 1999:99).

A high level of programme visibility also needs to be established and maintained over the life of the EAP through both programme promotion efforts and organisational networking (Francek, 1985:28). In order to keep an EAP "alive" a system of maintenance activities is needed that will provide for and encourage a level of meaningful activity and will permit adjustments on a regular basis (Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee, [sa]:16). Tosches ([sa]) also suggest highlighting positive experiences with EAPs so that employees become used to the idea of accessing EAP for all types of issues.

4.4.2.3   Case and stakeholder management

Since most of the presenting problems in the workplace require short-term intervention case management is applicable to EAP settings (Roberts-DeGennaro, 1986:63). Case management refers to "the practitioner's managerial activities that facilitate the individual client's progress through the service process" (Emener & Dickman, 2009:85). According to Roberts-DeGennaro (1986:64)

> … is the foundation of case management practice. The case manager focuses on the system within which the employee must function, rather than on the individual's inner thought processes. With an emphasis on changing social systems, clients (employees) are perceived more as change agents than as victims.

Emener and Dickman (2009:90) highlight the following ten roles and functions of case management:

- *Case findings* – activities that facilitate potential clients' awareness of the employee assistance program, as well as the potential utilization of it.
- *Intake* – upon referral, conducting intake interviews with clients and processing their initial contacts with the program.
- *Eligibility determination* – active engagement in the process and activities designed to determine whether or not an individual is eligible to receive assistance from the program.
- *Assessment* - accurately determining the client's problem and establishing a recommended a treatment plan, identifying recommended treatment resources, and determining the client's "readiness" for recommended treatment(s).
- *Counselling* – providing necessary counselling services commensurate with appropriate assessment and referral services and activities.
- *Plan development and implementation* – working with the client in developing and determining treatment plan.
- *Service provision and supervision* – appropriately providing, coordinating, monitoring and supervising all services provided for and to the client.
- *Monitoring service effectiveness* – through systematic follow-up activities, monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of services being provided to and for the client.
- *Closure determination* – via contact with the client, relevant professionals providing services and appropriate others (e.g. the client's family, supervisor, etc.), determining when the case should be closed and the closure status (e.g. successful resolution; incomplete – client refused treatment, etc.)
- *Post services follow-up* – when appropriate following up on a client to evaluate the effectiveness of the services the client received, potential needs for additional service, etc.

Depending on the nature of the EAP and the client's needs, "treatment can be provided either directly by EAP personnel or through a carefully developed information and referral service" (Roberts-DeGennaro, 1986:65). Hence, the importance of stakeholder management.

According to Emener and Dickman (2009:86), there are numerous important attributes of the professional service provider in an EAP, namely

community resource awareness which entails the practitioner's knowledge of both the internal and external community of the employee. The internal community comprise of the company which the EAP serves and in which the employee is employed. The external community is comprised of the community surrounding the company that is the community in which the employee lives.

Stakeholder engagement and management are crucial in EAPs, more so for SME whose operations are already compromised by resource availability.

4.4.3 Monitoring and evaluation

In order to have a reasonable chance to succeed, an EAP should be designed to include specific evaluation plans by monitoring the progress of the programme constantly (Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee [sa]:14; EAPA-SA, 2015:26). According to Dickman (2003) the main reasons for evaluating a programme is the justification of its existence to some external authority (usually the source of funds and/or support); the verification that its objectives are being met; and the improvement of its performance.

Programme evaluation can be achieved through a wide variety of ways. Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee ([sa]:18) identified the following methods:

- *Needs assessment surveys* are used to estimate the number of potential clients and the services required by them.
- *Process evaluation* is used to compare the actual operation of a program with its intended function. Hence, it alerts staff to operational weaknesses of the program.
- *Outcome evaluation* is used to determine the program impact upon the areas of client satisfaction, problem resolution and improved quality of life.
- *Impact evaluation* is used to measure the expected changes brought about in those employees and organization units taking part in the program.
- *Cost-effectiveness analysis* uses economic indicators to measure the efficiency of the program.

In addition, the following evaluation priorities have been cited by EAP counsellors and administrators: assessing the quality of referral sources, client outcome and satisfaction, employee awareness, programme utilisation, job performance changes, supervisory attitudes, cost-benefit and training effectiveness (Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee, [sa]).

4.5   SIGNS OF A FLAWED EAP

EAPs are commonly touted as a valuable cost-management tool, but if the implementation or design of an EAP is flawed, then the purported cost savings of the programme will not be realised (Encyclopedia of Small Business, 2007). Figure 4.1 below presents indicators that may call for a revision of an EAP:

Figure 4.2: Signs of a flawed EAP

General dissatisaction with the programme expressed by employees.

Only a small percentage (less than 5 percent) of eligible employees use the programme

Issues that prompted the initial use of the EAP are not resolved within a reasonable period of time

EAP referrals indicate an unwarranted bias toward one type of care or treatment

Employees view the EAP with distrust, seeing it as a possible management tool for doling out punishment or justifying termination

EAP staff have potential conflicts of interest

Source: Encyclopedia of Small Business, 2007

According to Bell (2003), all of these warning signs can be addressed and possibly averted through the conduct of adequate needs assessments involving relevant stakeholders. The involvement of senior management, supervisors, employees and their labour representatives (union) is necessary for customisation and effective functioning of the EAP. Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015) rightfully calls for the establishment of an advisory committee involving representatives from all segments of the workforce to contribute to the effective design and operation of the EAP. The broad involvement of stakeholders will also ensure buy-in and ownership of the programme by the parties.

Trust is a major issue in most workplaces, especially in SMEs with a flat organisational structure. Continuous promotion of the programme, highlighting the adherence to ethical code of confidentiality through service offerings by suitably qualified persons is another important element for small businesses seeking to maximise the effectiveness of their EAP. Fully Effective Employees [sa] states that:

> employees and dependents must become more aware of the program's existence, the nature of its resources and coverages, and the means of accessing such programs. Employees must develop confidence in the abilities of those providing such services, trust that confidentiality will be assured, and obtain knowledge that their specific needs can be addressed through the resources available from the EAP.

Many employees may be reluctant to take advantage of the services provided by an EAP. According to the NBGH (2007) due to a lack of knowledge about how the programme works, some employees might avoid seeking help from the EAP. On the contrary, employees might not even be aware of the existence of the EAP in the workplace. Reluctance to use the EAP could also arise from concerns about confidentiality and negative perceptions about the value of counselling, in general (Kirk-Brown & Brown, 2013).

Employer communication is thus critical to improving trust and employee participation in EAPs (Tosches, [sa]). The promotion of the programme should be a coordinated approach that is non-threatening in tone and that indicates that the employer truly desires

to meaningfully assist and retain employees; and sees them as a valuable resource (Fully Effective Employees, [sa]).

4.6   CONCLUSION

SMEs contribute significantly to continued global economic growth and the generation of new jobs, making the promotion of organisational health and productivity in this setting is vital. However, employees in both large and small business may experience personal problems that impact on productivity in the workplace. The effect of such problems could be more profound to a small business. The EAP offer businesses of all sizes a powerful, proactive strategy for managing employee psychosocial, health and wellness concerns; and subsequently boost productivity and motivate employees. In order to garner ownership of the EAP, and ultimately boost its utilisation, all stakeholders must be involved in its design and implementation.

This chapter, guided by EAP core technologies, discussed a number of attributes deemed to be critically important to the effective operation of an EAP, in general, but particularly to SMEs. The next chapter presents the research methodology and ethical considerations for the study.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ETHICAL ASPECTS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter is devoted to the research methodology which was employed in this study. Research methodology provides guidelines for how research is to be conducted in a particular context and outlines procedures which are followed to conduct a research study (Daniel & Sam, 2011).

The chapter provides a detailed explanation of the research design, the research population, the research sample and the sampling techniques employed and the methods that were used to collect data. In addition, the procedures which were followed to analyse the data and the measures taken to ensure the validity, reliability and trustworthiness of the research will be presented.

5.2   RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN

This study adopted the two-phase sequential mixed methods research approach which is a methodology in which both quantitative and qualitative approaches, methods and procedures are combined to come up with a more complete picture of the research problem (Delport & Fouché, 2011:434). Creswell (2014:4) asserts that a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches provides a more complete understanding of a research problem than either approach alone. The use of mixed methods enabled the study to "simultaneously address a range of confirmatory and exploratory questions with both the qualitative and quantitative approaches and therefore verify and generate theory in the same study" (Delport & Fouché, 2011:436).

According to Grinnell (2011:198) research designs "provide a set of systematic procedures for producing data pertaining to the development, modification or expansion of knowledge". The exploratory mixed method research design was deemed appropriate for this study because it begins by exploring a phenomenon with qualitative data collection and analysis, and then used the findings in a second quantitative phase to measure or test it (Creswell, 2014:226; Delport & Fouche, 2011:441).

For a more practical application of the intervention model, the six phases of the intervention research model discussed in Chapter 1, was compressed into three phases (Figure 5.1), namely the needs assessment phase, the programme design phase and the programme implementation and evaluation phase.

Figure 5.1: Phases of the research study
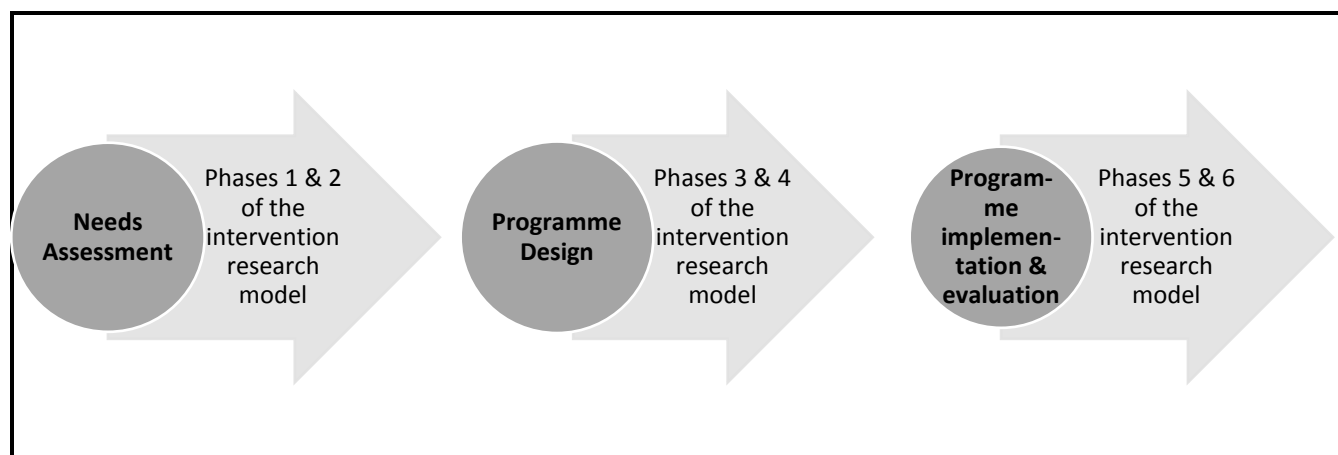
5.2.1 Needs assessment phase

A needs assessment, as part of the intervention research model, is often conducted before an intervention programme is compiled and evaluated (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:475). The needs assessment phase employed a collective case study design in the undertaking of key informant interviews with employers and employees. The purpose of this qualitative phase was to explore the problems experienced by employees in SMEs,

how it was addressed in the workplace as well as assess the viability of and the type of EAP desired by SMEs.

The case study also allowed "the researcher to immerse him- or herself in the activities of a single person or a small number of people in order to obtain an intimate familiarity with her or his social world" (Fouché & Schurink, 2011:320). Hence, the qualitative approach was deemed appropriate because this study first explored the challenges experienced by individual employees and employers in SMEs focussing on "describing and understanding the experiences" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:53) and at the same time emphasising "individual meanings and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation" (Creswell, 2014:4). Qualitative research used in this phase helped the researcher to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribed to a social or human problem as well as the cultural, social, political and institutional context within which projects were designed and implemented (Creswell, 2014; Bomberger, 2000).

5.2.2 Programme design phase

Based on the needs assessment and literature review, an EAP was designed in preparation for the third phase of the study, namely, the implementation and evaluation. The programme design phase basically involved a desk review that entailed the development of an EAP for SMEs.

5.2.3 Programme implementation and evaluation phase

The actual EAP for SMEs was implemented and evaluated in this phase. The quasi-experimental design was employed for the quantitative evaluation in this phase. Specifically, the one-group pre-test/post-test design was used whereby the researcher recorded measures for a single group both before and after the intervention (Creswell, 2014:172). A questionnaire was administered to employees from participating SMEs in Windhoek before utilisation of the services and again 90 days thereafter in order to

examine the relationship between the EAP intervention and specific workplace effects. With its emphasis on the quantification of constructs (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:49), the quantitative research approach in this phase assessed EAP utility during the implementation period in order to determine the impact of the intervention.

5.3   STUDY POPULATION

A study population refers to all potential subjects that possess specific characteristics that a researcher is interested in observing (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Strydom, 2011a). It is "a collection of objects, events or individuals having some common characteristics that the researcher is interested in studying" (Mouton, 1996:134). The research population for this study were owners/managers and employees of SMEs operating in Windhoek, Namibia.

5.4   SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD

For various reasons, researchers usually select only some of the elements with the intention of finding out something about the total population from which they are taken (Mouton, 1996). This process is referred to as sampling whereby a section of the population is taken or selected for the purpose of undertaking research from a larger population (Grinnell, 2001). According to Schöneburg-Schultz & Schultz (2006) the majority (74%) of SMEs in Windhoek were operating within the trade sector (see Table 2.1), focusing on the buying and selling of goods. However, due to their informal set up many businesses in the trade sector were also not registered for Value Added Tax (VAT) with Inland Revenue at the Ministry of Finance and as a result, their value addition to the country in terms of GDP was believed to be minimal (Schöneburg-Schultz & Schultz, 2006). Hence, the sample for this study was drawn from the manufacturing and service sectors only because of the sectors formal set-up and average annual value addition to the country's GDP as well as the perceived potential for growth (Pohamba, 2014; Xoagub, 2014).

Sampling for the two phases of the study was undertaken as follows:

5.4.1 Qualitative phase

According to Bomberger (2000:10) in an exploratory study or where the purpose of the study was to obtain a general understanding of the attitudes or concerns of individuals, the common method was purposive sampling. The qualitative part of the study thus employed purposive sampling whereby interviews were conducted with representatives of each category, stakeholder or group of interest to the objective of the study (Bomberger, 2000:10; Rubin & Babbie, 2013:172).

Two businesses from the manufacturing sector and another two from the service sector were selected using the following criteria:

- The SME business operation must be based in Windhoek, Khomas region.
- Conduct business in the manufacturing and service sectors.
- Registered with the relevant authorities.
- Employ a minimum of 2 fulltime workers in accordance to the national average number of full-time employees (NEPRU, 2003).
- The employer/s should be the owner/s of the business.
- Expression of interest and willingness to participate in study – on a first come, first serve basis but also with a higher number of employees.

Even though employees were the focus of the study, face-to-face interviews were also conducted with the owners/managers of participating SMEs. Besides providing a sense of ownership, the interviews engaged SME owners/managers in the identification of the problem as well as the planning and implementation of the intervention.

Purposive sampling of employees was conducted using the following criteria:

- Employees were to be from SME whose owners/managers participated in the study;
- Employees were from all levels of employment in a given SME;
- Conversant in English and/or Afrikaans;

- Full-time employment with a given SME.

The owners/managers assisted with the identification of the employees that meets the criteria and wanted to voluntarily participate in the study. Equal representation of male and female employees was also encouraged.

The sample for the qualitative study is depicted below:

Table 5.1: Qualitative sample size

Sector	Sample of SMEs owners/managers	Sample of employees
Manufacturing	2	10 - 12
Service	2	10 - 12
TOTAL	**4**	**20 - 24**

The sample size was deemed appropriate because it allowed for examination of a variety of sampling sites as well as diversity in representation of the target population (Baker & Edwards, 2012). A saturation point was also reached (Kumar, 2011) in that no new concepts and information was emerging for the attainment of the research goal.

5.4.2 Quantitative phase

The data for this study was collected from employees who utilised the services of the EAP. Since the researcher had no way of forecasting or guaranteeing that each employee in SMEs was going to make use of the EA services, non-probability sampling, specifically convenience sampling (also known as accidental or availability sampling) was used to select the sample. Convenience sampling involves choosing the nearest individuals to serve as respondents and continuing that process until the required sample size has been obtained (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013). The study's sample is depicted below:

Table 5.2: Quantitative sample size

Sector	Name	Number of employees (2015)	Sample
Manufacturing	SME 1	28	
	SME 2	3	
Service	SME 1	349	
	SME 2	14	
TOTAL		**394**	**59**

The sample consisted of 59 (15%) employees drawn from the total number of employees in the 4 participating SMEs. According to Sharar and Lennox (2010; 2014), a sample of between 50 and 200 participants are large enough for a valid WOS outcomes evaluation study. Challenged with the availability of respondents, the study used Sharar & Lennox (2010; 2014) as reference point in determining the sample size. Equal or proportional representation from the participating SMEs was not sought since the utilisation of the EAP was voluntary.

5.5 DATA COLLECTION

5.5.1 Qualitative data collection

For the qualitative part of the study, 20 to 30-minute interviews guided by semi-structured interview schedules, were used to collect data from employees and SME owners/managers, respectively (Annexure 2). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhil (2003) state that semi-structured interviews enable exploratory discussions that allow the researcher not only to understand the 'what' and the 'how' but also to grasp and explore the internal dynamics of the research topic. Semi-structured interviews require the participant to answer a set of predetermined but mostly open-ended questions, allowing for the probing and clarification of answers (Greeff, 2011:351).

Interviews with the key informants, which were digitally recorded, was conducted until a saturation point was reached in terms of the information being sought (Kumar, 2011). An

introductory letter was provided to the participants explaining the purpose of the study and to also obtain consent for their participation (Annexure 3).

5.5.2 Quantitative data collection

A single system design was chosen as an appropriate design for data collection. Self-report post-intervention instruments were used to evaluate the EAP counsellors and supervisors' training as well as the marketing of the EAP. A 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree was used for the assessments that were conducted immediately after the events were undertaken. The researcher used subjective assessment of the presentation and relevance of the measuring instruments in determining whether the items in the instruments appear to be relevant, reasonable, unambiguous and clear (Haherdoost, 2016) also referred to as face validity.

The study used the WOS to measure the effects of the EAP education. The WOS is a self-report instrument designed to evaluate the effectiveness of EAP counselling from the perspective of the employee user of the service (Attridge et al., 2018). Even though this study focussed on the non-clinical component of EAP education the utilisation of the WOS was deemed appropriate because it measured the same workplace outcomes (absenteeism, presenteeism, work engagement, life satisfaction and workplace distress) like in the case of the clinical component of EAP counselling. The five outcomes measured by the WOS all critical areas that link emotional wellbeing with performance (Sharar & Lennox, 2010).

The WOS is currently the only publicly available instrument psychometrically validated and tested for use in EAP settings globally (Attridge et al., 2018). It has demonstrated a robust degree of statistical sensitivity to change in EAP evaluations with as few as fifty respondents (Mintzer, Morrow, Tamburo, Sharar & Herlihy, 2018). The WOS is copyrighted by Chestnut Global Partners but available for free (www.eapresearch.com) with a signing of a licence agreement. The researcher also familiarised herself with the WOS by viewing a free E-Course called "Using the WOS to Evaluate Workplace

Outcomes" which outlines how the WOS works and how to conduct an evaluation. The WOS training is available from http://www.eapresearch.com/wos-training-free-ecourse.html. The rationale for use of WOS was because it is (1) workplace focussed (and not a clinical measure), (2) it has been validated with demonstrated psychometrics, (3) it is short (25 items with 5 scales) but precise, and (4) it is free with a signed license agreement. In addition, many EAPs from across the globe had begun using the WOS tool as it evolves into a reliable instrument for gaining solid outcome results (Mintzer et al., 2018).

Socio-demographic questions to obtain the demographic profile of the users of the EAP was included in the WOS. The researcher once again used subjective assessment in determining whether the items included for the socio-demographic data appear to be relevant, reasonable, unambiguous and clear (Haherdoost, 2016). The one-group pre-- and post-test design was used to collect data to determine the impact of EAP education on employees and their workplace productivity

It should be noted that no self-report survey instrument is perfect, but the WOS is the best tool to date that EA professionals have to assess whether EAPs can contribute to improving the wellbeing and work performance of distressed employees (Attridge et al., 2018).

5.5.2.1   Process of quantitative data collection

The researcher sought the assistance of the owners/managers to assist with the identification of suitable dates, times and venue for the sessions. The owners/managers were also tasked with informing the employees about the sessions and that those who were interested could participate voluntarily. At the start of each training session the researcher explained the purpose of the sessions, the choice of topics and its origin, the accompanying assessments and the reason thereof. Data for the EAP counsellors' training as well as the supervisors' training was collected upon completion of the training.

The researcher distributed the consent letters to the employees and explained the content thereof upon which they signed the informed consent forms voluntarily.

Since the intervention of the EAP which was developed was changed from counselling to education as explained earlier, the survey data for the EAP education was collected before and after the employee education sessions using the WOS questionnaire. Pre-testing (Annexure 4) was done before the commencement of the first education session, followed by the actual intervention which constituted three education sessions delivered once a week over a period of three weeks per participating organisation. Participants were re-tested 90 days after the third and final EAP education session, using the same WOS questionnaire. For the 90 day follow-up a suitable date was set with the various employers, and the employers were also utilised to remind the employees of the post-intervention survey. Data on the EAP marketing strategy (Annexure 6) was collected jointly with the post-intervention WOS. The questionnaires were self-administered or completed with the assistance of the EAP counsellor at the request of the respondent. The assistance was mostly with the translation of some of the terminology used in the WOS in cases where respondents experienced challenges with comprehension. As indicated under the limitations, no pilot testing of the WOS was done to assess ease of completion. The study however was cognisant of the fact that the WOS was validated using two separate modes of delivery, namely the (1) counsellor administered to subjects over the phone or in-person; and (2) subject self-administered over the internet or by paper and pen; and both modes were found to work equally well (Chestnut Global Partners, 2017; EAPA, [sa]).

The same procedure was followed for the post-test survey.

5.6   DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher analysed the databases from phases 1 (qualitative) and 2 (quantitative) separately.

5.6.1 Qualitative data analysis

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:100) the goal of qualitative data analysis was to summarise what has been seen or heard in terms of common words, phrases, themes or patterns that would aid understanding and interpretation of that which is emerging. The researcher first transcribed all the digitally recorded data verbatim. Next, the data as contained in the transcriptions was examined, seeking to identify similarities and differences within the responses. The transcriptions were re-read continuously in order to examine the data from different angles with the aim of identifying keys in the text that will help in the understanding and interpretation of the raw data (Greeff, 2011). After reading through the transcripts several times, major themes that emerged from the discussions and observations were identified and coded. This coding process enabled the researcher to "achieve greater construct validity" (Thyer, 2010:366) and at the same time to quickly retrieve and combine all text and data associated with a specific thematic idea so that these data could be examined together, and different cases compared (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The constant comparison analysis was used as a qualitative analysis technique, to generate a set of themes.

The researcher first transcribed (Annexure 7) the recordings from the interviews as well as the field notes. The data that was contained in the transcripts was examined next, seeking to identify similarities and differences within the responses. The transcriptions were re-read continuously in order to examine the data from different angles with a view to identifying keys in the text that will help in understanding and interpretation of the raw data (Greeff, 2011). The researcher then identified and coded the major themes that emerged from the discussions and observations. This coding process enabled the researcher to "achieve greater construct validity" (Thyer, 2010:366) and at the same time quickly retrieve and combine all text and other data associated with a specific thematic idea so that these data could be examined together, and different cases compared (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Once the coding has been completed, the pre-set codes were turned into categories and themes into which the data that have been collected was sorted. When interpreting, the analysed data was "brought into context with the existing

theory to reveal how it corroborates existing knowledge or brings new understanding to the body of knowledge" (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:111) as well by using narratives obtained from the interviews.

5.6.1.1   Trustworthiness of qualitative data

According to Lietz, Langer and Furman (2006:444) trustworthiness of qualitative data is established when findings as closely as possible reflect the meanings as described by the participants. The researcher established trustworthiness by:

- *The use of reflexivity* which is the "active acknowledgement by the researcher that her/his own actions and decisions will inevitably impact upon the meaning and context of the experience under investigation" (Lietz et al. (2006:447). The researcher examined herself and acknowledged her own pre-conceptions and assumptions that may influence data gathering and processing (Thyer, 2010). She further had face-to-face meetings with peer researchers in order to engage in reflexivity. Other persons who may have had a specific interest in the research was allowed to comment on or assess the research findings, interpretations and conclusions (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:114). The researcher also stated the limitations of the study upfront in order to help the reader to better understand the conclusions of the study (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:115).

- *The use of audit trail* whereby the researcher kept a record of the research methods used and decisions made during the research process to ensure that every aspect of data collection and analysis can be traced and verified by others (Thyer, 2010:368). Even though replication is not a primary focus of qualitative research, the ability to critique research is an essential part of any research process (Lietz et al., 2006). Hence, the researcher kept all the information (hard and soft copy) pertaining to the study for verification purposes. An audit trail allowed the researcher to follow his/her own research procedures consistently and also opening the qualitative project for critique by the research community as the research procedures were fully described (Lietz et al., 2006). An audit trail also

ensures dependability and conformability in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

- *The use of member checking and prolonged engagement* involves allowing participants to review findings from the data analysis in order to confirm or challenge the accuracy of the work (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Preliminary findings were discussed with the participating SMEs who were asked written comments on the report (Nieuwenhuis, 2010:114) and in the process also identify topics for discussion through the EAP education. This was deemed an important strategy to establish trustworthiness as it gives authority to the participants' perspectives, therefore, managing the threat of bias (Lietz et al., 2006:449). Prolonged engagement allowed the researcher to gain adequate understanding of the organisation and to establish a relationship of trust between the researcher and the participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) by spending time to observe various aspects of the work organisations and speaking with a range of people. Caution was however taken not to generalise findings across the SMEs but to seek insight into participants' perspectives, experiences, attitudes and behaviours (Nieuwenhuis, 2010:115) which is the ultimate purpose of qualitative research.

5.6.2 Quantitative data analysis

The researcher performed the statistical analysis with the help of SPSS Version 21.0 using descriptive and inferential statistics to analyse the data. Mouton (1996:163) states that descriptive statistics are concerned with "organising and summarising data at hand, to render it more comprehensible". The results obtained from the pre- and post-test data were compared to see whether there was a change in workplace effects due to the intervention. Each participant's pre-test results were compared to the same participant's post-test results and then comparing the participant's overall results to determine whether the intervention made a difference.

The researcher employed the following three steps adopted from Vithal and Jansen (2004:27) in the analysis of the data obtained:

- *Cleaning and scanning* which involve the reading of the data, checking for inconsistencies, inaccuracies and incompleteness;
- *Organising the data* which entails making sense of the data by arranging them in a manageable form utilising an Excel spreadsheet; and
- *Re-presenting the data* which included conducting a statistical analysis; in this case, using the SPSS Version 21.0, and placing the data into summaries of tables and graphs. The researcher sought assistance from persons with experience in the use of the SPSS Version 21.0.

5.6.2.1   Validity of quantitative data

The field of EAP has not produced outcomes research that has been published in peer-reviewed articles (Sharar et al., 2012). The WOS used in the collection of quantitative data in this study was specifically developed for EAPs, is short, psychometrically tested and validated, workplace focused and easy to administer (Sharar et al., 2012). EAPA endorsed the WOS as an EAP Best Practice for measuring and evaluating work-related outcomes of services provided by EAPs (EAPA, [sa]).

EAPA has endorsed the WOS as an EAP Best Practice for measuring and evaluating work-related outcomes of services provided by EAPs. With access to thousands of EAP professionals across the globe and a deep commitment to the highest standards of EA practice globally, EAPA believes the WOS, when properly implemented, can bring clarification to our field's value proposition and need for greater evidence of effectiveness (EAPA, [sa]). In addition, the WOS is currently the only publicly available, free instrument that has been psychometrically validated and tested for use in EAP settings (Chestnut Global Partners, 2017).

In this study, the WOS was further assessed through pilot testing that involves revision by persons with similar traits but not forming part of the main study. The pilot study necessitated the inclusion of demographic data, as well as constructs to measure the marketing and training components that formed part of this study. The use of the mixed

methods research as is in this study further "eliminates a different kind of bias, explains the true nature of a phenomenon under investigation and improves the various forms of validity or quality criteria" (Delport & Fouché, 2011:436).

5.6.2.2   Reliability of quantitative data

Results of the psychometric analysis of the WOS provides support for its reliability, structural validity, and construct validity. According to Lennox et al. (2010) and Lennox, Sharar and Miller ([sa])

> two separate validation studies of the suite, one with a paper-and-pencil modality (N = 220) and the other with a telephone interview modality (N = 228), tested the reliability of the scales, the structural validity of the items, and the construct validity of the unit-weighted scale scores. The effect-indicator scales were found to have moderate (coefficient alphas in the range of .75) to excellent (coefficient alphas in the range of .90) levels of internal consistency.

The results support the general fit of the 25-item scale to the hypothesized structure of the four effect-indicator latent variables namely Presenteeism, Work Engagement, Life Satisfaction and Workplace Distress.

On the contrary, the Absenteeism scale is based on a formative measurement model that does not support coefficient alpha as an index of reliability or factor analytic procedures. The formative measurement model contains different items that combine linearly to create a broad construct (Lennox et al., 2010). The focus of the study was simply counting the number of hours missed from work irrespective of the cause of absence.

5.7 PILOT STUDY

5.7.1 Qualitative phase

The interview schedule was piloted with four participants; two owners/managers and employees of SMEs, not necessarily from the manufacturing and services sector. There are however similarity in work conditions of all SMEs irrespective of the sector in which it operates. Participation in the pilot was based on the expression of interest. Participants in the pilot test were eventually not part of the main study. The pilot study helped the researcher understand some of the practical aspects of establishing access, making contact and conducting the interview, as well as becoming alert to her own level of interviewing (Greeff, 2011). As an outcome of the pilot study, the initial plan of conducting interviews in English only had to be changed to accommodate Afrikaans that some participants preferred.

5.7.2 Quantitative phase

Since the WOS is a standardised test no pilot testing of this survey instrument was undertaken. According to Sharar and Lennox (2014:2), the results of two separate validation studies support the use of the WOS to evaluate workplace effects of EAP counselling and provide evidence that the WOS does indeed measure the intended set of five constructs. No pilot testing of the WOS was undertaken and it became apparent during the study that some participants did not comprehend some of the statements in the WOS. The researcher and EAP counsellors thus acting as translators during the quantitative data collection process.

Questions around the education and marketing offered by the EAP were piloted with the research work colleagues.

5.8   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics refers to the appropriateness of researchers' behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become the subjects of their research or affected by it (Saunders et al., 2003). Ethical concerns in any research are vital because "they are important codes, values and standards that are used to regulate scientific investigation" (Grinnell, 2001). The essential principle of ethics is that the study should be considered from the standpoint of the participants so that foreseeable threats to their psychological wellbeing, health values or dignity should be eliminated. Similarly, researchers owe their allegiance to the discipline of science to be accurate and honest with information generated for public consumption (Strydom, 2011c).

The following ethical issues were considered in this study:

5.8.1   Voluntary participation

This principle demands that research participants freely opt into taking part in a research exercise. No coercion or any form of enticement shall be used to lure participants into participating in this research (Strydom, 2011c:116). In both the qualitative and quantitative studies, the researcher and research assistants, respectively, explained to the participants at the start of the process that their participation in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any stage of the research without any negative consequences.

5.8.2   Informed consent

Informed consent requires that participants be given adequate information about the purpose of the research, expected duration of the research process, pros and cons, as well as related risk implications of the research (Strydom, 2011c:117). The researcher and research assistants informed participants in writing about the research, its purpose, procedure to be followed as well as the credibility of the researcher before the start of the

qualitative research. The same procedure was undertaken by the researcher for the quantitative research. They were also requested to sign a letter of informed consent in which the research process was described. The researcher and research assistants informed the participants about the use of a digital recorder during interviews for which they gave explicit consent.

Permission to conduct the study was also sought from the management of the particular SME. In the absence of a regulatory body/entity for SMEs in Namibia, permission for the study was sought from NCCI and Healthworks Business Coalition Namibia (Annexure 1). Permission for the study was also obtained from the Research Committee Ethics of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria (Annexure 8).

5.8.3 Confidentiality, anonymity and privacy

Confidentiality implies that the researcher can identify a given person's responses but essentially promises not to do so publicly (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:524). Hence, the researcher, research assistants and EAP counsellors gave the participants confirmation that the information and responses shared during the study would be kept private. Participants in the study were not required to provide any information that would reveal their identity. Code numbers were used on the data collection instruments. Participants were however at liberty to provide identification information if so wished.

The researcher, however, acknowledged that anonymity was not possible in the interview context as well as during the education session but ensured that identifying details was not recorded during the actual interviews. The researcher also gave assurance that in the compilation of the research report the results will be presented in an anonymous manner in order to protect the identities of the participants. For heightened privacy, the interviews were conducted in secluded rooms and the training sessions in boardrooms. Before any engagement with the participants the researcher and research assistants first ascertained the participants' level of comfort with the venue.

The participants were also informed that all the raw data; that is recordings and transcripts of the interviews as well as the questionnaires, would be stored in the Department of Social Work and Criminology, University of Pretoria, for a period of 15 years.

5.8.4 Avoidance of harm

Researchers are implored to take due diligence not to expose participants to any undue physical or psychological harm (Strydom, 2011c). If by any chance there was a likelihood of some form of risk, the researcher would inform the participants beforehand, which might be helpful in allowing them to decide between the opportunity for participation or withdrawing from the process. For some of the participants, this study might have been the first time that they would talk about their problems in a "workplace" set-up and may make them feel uncomfortable. The researcher therefore looked out for subtle dangers and guarded against them (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:522). During the study the researcher and research assistants were honest, respectful and sympathetic towards all participants and provision was made for referral to social workers at the Ministry of Health and Social Services should a participant require any psycho-social assistance.

5.8.5 Debriefing of participants

Debriefing sessions provide an opportunity for subjects to work through their experiences and its aftermath after the completion of the study (Strydom, 2011c). It is a way by which the researcher, once a certain activity is accomplished, makes a series of progressive questions in this session, with an adequate sequence that let the participants reflect what happened, giving important insights with the aim of that project towards the future, linking the challenge with the actions and the future (Krysik & Finn, 2007). It also entailed participants sharing their reactions to and feelings around the study and its procedures. An opportunity for debriefing was available immediately after the conclusion of each interview session. Some employees used this opportunity to seek assistance with their problems upon which the necessary referrals were made pending the development and implementation of the EAP. The researcher and research assistants also probed for

further clarifications that participants may require and provided the researcher's contact details for participants' future questions and concerns.

5.9   CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a detailed discussion of the approaches and processes used to collect and analyse data in order to generate findings for the study. It also presented an in-depth survey of the various measures and criteria which were employed in order to ensure both reliability and validity of the findings. The chapter further provided an overview of the ethical considerations that were adhered to during the research process.

To ensure that a programme meets the needs of all stakeholders, a needs assessment must be undertaken before the development and implementation of an EAP, as will be discussed next.

CHAPTER 6

AN EAP FOR SMEs IN WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA - FINDINGS OF A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

6.1   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher will present an analysis of the data obtained from interviews that explored the type of problems experienced by employees in SMEs and how these problems are resolved. The interviews further assessed the need for and the type of EAP desired by SMEs in Namibia. Data was collected by means of face-to-face interviews from SME owners/managers (employers) and employees using semi-structured interview schedules. All the interviews were conducted during working hours at the respective workplaces and were digitally recorded.

The chapter will conclude with a discussion of findings presented using theme and subthemes generated from the data that was collected.

6.2   DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

6. 2.1 Employer characteristics

A descriptive analysis of the demographics from the interviews with employers yielded data that are similar among several domains. The majority of participants (75%) were male and married, with over half (75%) being in business for 15 years or more. The mean age of participants was 45 years and the mean for their business ownership 13.5 years. There was a diversity in the sample with regard to the total number of employees in the participating businesses. The manufacturing sector had a variation between 5 and 349 employees whereas the service sector had between 14 and 28 employees.

Table 6.1: Characteristics of employers

Sector	Participant	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Number of years in business	Number of employees
Service	P1	Male	47	Married	15	28
Service	P2	Male	45	Married	17	14
Manufacturing	P3	Female	39	Married	16	5
Manufacturing	P4	Male	49	Married	6	349

6.2.2 Employee characteristics

Descriptive analysis of the demographics of the employees showed that there was an equal representation of male and female participants. There was equal representation within the manufacturing and service sectors. The majority of the participants were however single (85%) with the rest either being married (10%) or widowed (5%). The mean age of participants was 30.5. The duration of the participants' employment ranged from 3 months to 11 years across the 2 sectors. An indication of the sector was omitted as it posed a risk of exposing the identities of the employees from smaller-sized businesses that participated in the study.

Table 6.2: Characteristics of employees

Participant	Gender	Age	Marital status	Period of employment
P5	Male	38	Single	8 years
P6	Male	26	Single	4 years
P7	Male	23	Single	9 months
P8	Male	30	Single	8 years
P9	Female	34	Single	5 years
P10	Female	27	Single	5 years

P11	Male	21	Single	3 months
P12	Female	31	Single	10 months
P13	Female	26	Single	2 years
P14	Female	34	Married	3 years
P15	Male	25	Single	3 months
P16	Female	32	Single	1 year
P17	Male	27	Single	3 years
P18	Male	20	Single	1 month
P19	Male	35	Single	6 years
P20	Female	26	Single	1 year
P21	Female	30	Single	6 years
P22	Female	37	Married	5 years
P23	Female	36	Single	11 years
P24	Male	52	Widower	1 year, 6 months
P25	Female	unknown	Single	1 year, 1 month

As noted above in Tables 6.1 and 6.2 above, there was diversity in the sample with regard to gender, age, marital status and years of running the business or employment.

6.3   FINDINGS

This study used thematic content analysis for the analysis of qualitative data. The following themes were generated (i) types of employee problems, (ii) how these problems are addressed, (iii) type of support offered by workplace, (iv) benefits of EAPs, (v) EAP service provision, and (vi) utilisation of EAP. Since varying responses were obtained from the employer and employee categories, sub-themes for each of the main themes were

developed for the two categories as presented in Table 6.3 below. Direct quotes from data have been used to augment emergent themes and subthemes.

Table 6.3: Outline of the themes and subthemes

THEME	SUBTHEME	
	EMPLOYERS	**EMPLOYEES**
Theme 1: Types of problems experienced by employees.	Subtheme 1: Substance use and abuse. Subtheme 2: Health and related concerns. Subtheme 3: Violence at home and in society. Subtheme 4: Absence without leave.	Subtheme 1: Work pressures/demands. Subtheme 2: Remuneration/low wages. Subtheme 3: Relational issues with employer and/or colleagues. Subtheme 4: Family problems. Subtheme 5: Substance use and abuse.
Theme 2: Problem-solving strategies used.	Subtheme 1: Talk to the employee. Subtheme 2: Provision of financial and material support. Subtheme 3: Institution of formal disciplinary measures.	Subtheme 1: Ignore problem/do not talk about it. Subtheme 2: Share problem with employer. Subtheme 3: Talk to family members and acquaintances.
Theme 3: Benefits of EAPs	Subtheme 1: Provision of professional helping services. Subtheme 2: Return on investment. Subtheme 3: Opportunity for learning and training. Subtheme 4: Employee management tool.	Subtheme 1: A business necessity for SMEs. Subtheme 2: Availability of professional helping services. Subtheme 3: Access to confidential counselling services. Subtheme 4: Presenting opportunity for training and development.
Theme 4: EAP service provision	Subtheme 1: EAP model preferred. Subtheme 2: Site of service provision. Subtheme 3: Funding.	Subtheme 1: EAP model preferred. Subtheme 2: Site of service provision.
Theme 5: Utilisation of EAP	Subtheme 1: Enhancement of employee welfare.	Subtheme 1: Utilisation of EAP pending availability.

Each of these interrelated themes, accompanied by subthemes with supporting quotes/exemplars, will be reported in the subsequent section.

6.3.1 Theme 1: Types of problems experienced by employees

6.3.1.1 Employers

Employers were asked about the typical problems, whether personal or work-related, that employees experience that impact on work performance. The problems mentioned were, amongst others substance abuse, illness, absence without leave, violence outside the workplace and relational issues amongst employees. Substance use/abuse and ill-health topped the list.

6.3.1.1.1 Subtheme 1: Substance use and abuse

The use of substances especially alcohol, by employees was noted as a matter of concern by all employees who participated in the study. P1 when probed on the major problems in the workplace, indicated "*alcoholism or excessive intake of alcohol*" as a challenge. P2 added that even though employees do not share their problems with him, he "*thinks their [employees] alcohol use is a problem*". P3 also indicated that the employees' alcohol use was a concern to her "*not that they drink on duty but yesterday they may have a good evening or they might have a good weekend and then they come smelling alcohol. They do come to work but their productivity is definitely influenced by that.*"

At times employee spouses would contact employers with concern over their family member's excessive alcohol use. This was narrated by P2 when he stated that "*one of the employee's wives told me that 'my husband, once he uses alcohol, he doesn't want to stop*".

6.3.1.1.2   Subtheme 2: Health and related concerns

Illness by employees and/or their family members has been highlighted as impacting on workplace productivity. The impact of ill-health is experienced either through absenteeism or presenteeism. P22 who also deals with the company's Human Resources (HR) matters, stated *"sickness, sickness, yeah. You find that a person who is going to be absent for like five days a week".* P4 noted that *"people are sick and you know I was just coming from the floor now and looking at the heap of sick leave notes that are there and they are all related to health".*

It was not only employee health that had an impact on workplace productivity but also the health of employees' relations. To this effect, P4 noted "*some of us may not be sick …. but people who are related to us, is sick. So when you come to work your mind is elsewhere and you are not productive".* In addition, P1 stated that "*extended family extends far out…..where one will want to actually participate in the funeral arrangements*" that results in absenteeism.

6.3.1.1.3   Subtheme 3: Violence at home and in society

Gender-based violence is a societal concern in Namibia and it also has an impact on the workplace. P4 noted that "*we have [employ] a lot of women… They support children and when we hear children are raped, children are killed. When you come here you always think 'is my daughter coming home from school safe?*". This results in employee absenteeism. P4 further stated that violence in society affects "*the wellbeing of a person; you know your concentration at the workplace that decrease productivity*".

P1 reported that the previous year they "*recorded 6 incidences of violence out of the workplace that resulted in man-hours lost*". This was due to absenteeism as a result of the violence experienced in society. P22 noted that some employees have "*problems with their boyfriends, their husbands at home. Somebody was beaten maybe by the husband and couldn't come to work*".

6.3.1.1.4 Subtheme 4: Absence without leave

Employees not presenting reasons for their absence has also been noted a concern by some employers. P2 stated that sometimes employees "*just disappear from work without reason*". Similarly, P24 who doubles as a workshop supervisor noted "*mense hulle se ook nie vir jou nie dat ek more ek sal nie kom nie, hulle bly net weg [van die werk]*" (people do not inform you that they will be absent from work, they just stay away). Absence without leave could also be linked to substance use and abuse. This was illustrated by P2 who noted that when he once confronted an employee who is habitually absent from work, the employee said that "*he would rather stay away from work when he is under the influence of alcohol because he does not want to be seen by others that he used alcohol*". P2 further noted that "*absenteeism in this company, I can only relate it to alcohol because it mostly happens from the 30th up to 03rd of each month, not each month but mostly that time. During the month there is no absenteeism. I think it is more when they get paid*".

6.3.1.2 Employees

Not all participants were keen on talking about their problems stating they do not experience problems that affect their work performance. Responses such as "*I have never really experienced something I would say is like a big problem, like it can like affect my performance or the way I do my job*" (P15), "*there is no problem*" (P18), "*I cannot really think of any problem that I would say have hindered my performance*" (P15), "*I am a person who really tries, tries hard to keep my personal problems mine, so unfortunately as I told you now, I never had any problems with work*" (P19), "*I haven't really had something to call a problem*" (P20) were testimony to that. However, the following concerns presented in the subthemes below were highlighted by participants.

6.3.1.2.1   Subtheme 1: Work pressures/demands

Participants indicated that the demands of the workplace are stressful and a concern for them. P17 stated that "*in my line of work, I come across many incidences [work-related and personal problems] sometimes driven by pressure*". P6 bluntly stated that he does not have problems other than "*just the pressure of the work*".

Trying to keep up with work demands are also stressful as expressed by P16 who stated that "*when things [work] are not finished, you get stressed*". Due to work demand and in an effort to keep abreast of what is expected by the workplace, P11 noted that "*we are not going to lunch on time. We are supposed to go at one but sometimes we just work from morning to night*".

In addition, employees indicated that it was a challenge to find a balance between their personal and work-life as expressed by P13 who stated that "*I have a problem of studying and working at the same time and at work, I'm expected to work from 7 to 5*". The participant's studies are being affected because *"sometimes if we have a lot of work and if we have an order that have to go, we have to work during the night"* (P13). P22 indicated that even during her official leave of absence such as sick leave she has "*to take my things, my laptop home to work in bed so that my work is completed*".

P24 indicated that he cannot afford to take time off work and rather rely on family members for assistance in undertaking some of his parental duties "*Ek gebruik maar net ander mense miskien my familie laat hulle vir my iets gaan doen as ek nou iets nodig het, soos kinders hospital toe vat of so iets dan sal ek iemand gebruik laat julle my kan help daarso*" (*I seek assistance from other people such as family should I need help with for example taking my children to hospital*).

It was also noted that demands by the workplace also jeopardises employee request leave of absence as narrated by P21 "*I was having a personal problem, it was a death for my mom and by that time, let's say that it was not a death, it was she was sick, she was*

in the hospital and by that time we were having a lot of work here in the floor … Then I went to the office, I wanted to put my leave, then the MD said 'yes I do understand your problem, but you know', and even me I was knowing that this work, without me it's just a big gap that is, if I went by that time, it will also affect the company. By the time that we finished the thing, they give the leave on Wednesday around this time, it's the time my mum passed away...So by that time I was very stressed, stressed like nobody's business".

6.3.1.2.2   Subtheme 2: Remuneration/low wages

Participants indicated low wages, which are incommensurate with their duties as a factor that affects their work performance. A sentiment of dissatisfaction was expressed by P8 who stated "*doing a lot of work, uh doing maybe three people's work but you is just alone in the salary*". P5 noted a drop in work performance because "*I didn't put much effort like I used to [because of] low salaries*". Salaries are seemingly so low that participants are not able to meet their basic needs such housing as experienced by P7 who had problems finding affordable housing due to the low salaries.

The low salaries made P5 felt like "*we are not appreciated*" despite "*always putting extra effort*" (P5). P21 continued to say "*you know the work of [Company name omitted] but me myself I know, how to work, it's the time we get to work, we work hard. But I was very angry, we work up to, like seven to twelve o'clock, … but that time you have being told there is no money, you work overtime, and overtime for that month that we work, we did not get paid*".

6.3.1.2.3   Subtheme 3: Relational issues with employer and/or colleagues

Employees spent about eight hours of the day at the workplace and during that time engages with employers and other colleagues which in effect also pose problems. Employees could develop stress as a result of factors in or outside the workplace. These stressors could lead to possible tension in the workplace. To this effect, P20 noted that

"*there are many times that you get in a disagreement with your managers or bosses or fellow workers*".

A lack of effective communication has been identified as a contributory factor to disagreements in the workplace. P12 noted "*you know normally when there is a bit of breach of communication, and then normally you don't know what it is your boss expects from you and that is where friction a little bit comes in. The boss feels like you are not performing to your optimum and you feel like you are not treated very well*". P12 further stated, "*sometimes you are not given the whole information and then you end up doing something…..then at the end of the day the boss might not like what you have done, but it's always lack of information that might have been passed onto you*".

Communication amongst employees was also highlighted as a concern. P6 stated "*I think the only problem that I have is that, I think, maybe it's just the communication with the employees".* He further stated, that *"the communication lacks … we don't help each other"* (P6).

Disagreements within the workplace were noted as a concern as expressed P20 who stated that "*there are times that you get in a disagreement with your managers or bosses or fellow workers*". In some instances, the language barrier has been identified as a contributory factor to the breakdown in communication that ultimately leads to disagreements in the workplace. This was highlighted by P23 who stated that "*people are from different backgrounds…I think the issue of the language barrier with my fellow workers it's really… sometimes it's just something very simple that can be sorted within a few minutes but the person doesn't get what you are trying to convey to him or trying to say and it becomes an issue and you guys end up arguing and it just spoils the whole day*".

P23 was further dismayed by the differential treatment of employees by the employer requesting that "*we have to be treated equally … you can't stay away from work but other people can stay away and they just come the next day and nothing is being done about*

it. It's a bit unfair". Disagreements may also emanate from perceived unequal and unfair treatment of employees by the employers as expressed in the following statement *"…if we finish like one site, he [employer] used to give us something. As a, 'thank you, my people, you get this one' but that's something also sometimes brought the problem because he doesn't give it equally to us as workers but when we started the project, we start it together and finish it together. Why some must get less and some like this?"* (P8). P8 added that *"… he [employer] used to give us bonus and the way we know bonus, it's like a double pay, but he doesn't do that. He only gives maybe half of your pay or something like that"*. This issue could also be linked to the discussion on wages under subtheme 2.

6.3.1.2.4   Subtheme 4: Family problems

Similarly to the sentiments expressed by the employers, employees also stated that family problems and concerns affect their work performance. P9 stated *"…family problems and then you come here at work and then you cannot perform as much as you can"*. An emotional, P10 narrated how the death of her grandmother affected her *"… she [grandmother] passed away suddenly"*. She further stated the consequences of the incident and subsequent action by the employer when she stated *"they [the employer] gave me the Friday so we went from here the Friday and the funeral was the Saturday. But Monday I had to come to work again. So, I just came back and work. I didn't tell them [the bosses] how I was feeling. Maybe they saw how it has affected me but they didn't ask but I didn't also…because it's like whenever I talked about it I get emotional. So I didn't talk about it, I just kept it to myself"* (P10). It can be noted that the participant was present in the workplace but acknowledge that her performance was affected by her emotional state.

Similarly, P23 stated that "*you know I am a mother and as a mother your child is sick and yet you are forced to come to work because you have no other option and if I have to take the child to the hospital you have to drop her off at home and still come back to work. It really affects one at work*".

P14 also shared how marital problems impacted on her productivity in the workplace, when she stated "*I have a problem with my marriage … my husband is a bit abusive*" She further narrates *"once my husband beat me up and, I feel like I need to go to work. Now he is doing that to me, I'm staying and I came in to work and I have a big blue eye and I'm like, my goodness if it affects my work because I'm working with different people coming in and out*" (P14). The impact of domestic violence on the workplace was also noted as a concern by the employers earlier on. P21 also narrated her encounter with the effects of domestic and gender-based violence in the workplace when "*a person came to me and say, you can see that a person was beaten but the time you are asking her that, what happened to you, why your eyes are swelling, why your mouth are swelling?. I fell down, you fell down?... Then later she comes to you and says, I was having a problem with*".

6.3.1.2.5   Subtheme 5: Substance use and abuse

In agreement with the employer assessment, P23 indicated that "*people come to work drunk*". In affirmation P23 also indicated that employees *"are not serious because some of them they even come to work, they are under drugs. Alcohol is not accepted in a workplace*". P24 in affirmation also noted, "*daar is mense [werknemers] wat dronk kom by die werk*" [there are people [employees] who come to work under the influence].

P6 further stated that at times employees take an advance on their salaries to spend on alcohol "*sometimes in the middle of the month we supp [borrow money from employer]… for alcohol and those things*".

6.3.1.3   Discussion of Theme 1: Type of problems experienced by employees

The findings of this qualitative study indicate that employees in SMEs experience personal and work-related problems that impact productivity in the workplace. These problems range from employee substance use/abuse, health-related concerns, work

pressures/demands, low wages, relational issues amongst employers and employers as well as work colleagues, amongst others. These findings corroborate those of recent studies that postulate that, employees no matter the size of the organisation face a variety of problems that may impact on their productivity (Altshuser et al., 2014; Chikukwa, 2008; Van Wyk, 2011; Zeng et al., 2014). The problems identified by the employees were found to typically cause people to be distressed at work (Lee et al., 2016).

The problems by employees mostly manifest itself through absenteeism and presenteeism in the workplace as was also established by Burton et al. (2006); Fraser et al. (2002); Hansen and Andersen (2008); Islam and Tedford (2012); Schultz et al. (2003).

6.3.2 Theme 2: Problem-solving strategies used

Noting the type of problems by employees, participants were asked how they deal with the problems that they have indicated.

6.3.2.1   Employer

Since it is a given that their employees experience problems, whether personal or work-related, employers were asked what they do when they become aware that an employee has problems that affects their work performance. The general feedback was that there are no policies that guide the support offered by the employers but that issues are dealt with in an ad hoc manner as it arises. The support offered by employers was summed up by P1 as "*we have a more reactionary way of dealing with it [problems]. We try to deal with it case-by-case but in terms of assistance the onus will be on the employee to highlight what assistance he requires be it financial or time off or you name it. We don't have a set policy in place as to how we would handle such cases*".

Hence, the assistance offered by the employer mostly ranged from talking to the employees, providing financial and material support and to conducting formal disciplinary hearings.

6.3.2.1.1   Subtheme 1: Talk to employees

P22 noted that once he notices that an employee has a problem he "*tries to talk to them [the employees] person by person, individually. Sometimes I used to ask them even if you are having a problem you must report it to me first before we engage you in our factory, in our company so that I know even though tomorrow if the supervisor comes complaining to me, this person was off for many days I know she gave me a report and this is how it was supposed to be*". Similarly, P2 indicated that once he notices unacceptable behaviour on the part of the employee, he calls "*the individual in and try to find out why is it like that, why is he behaving like that. And sometimes I went to such an extent to also contact those with wives or girlfriends, contact their spouses to find out what is really, really wrong*".

However, most of the participants felt they were not competent to address employee problems effectively, especially those pertaining to their emotional and psychological wellbeing. Highlighting the challenges employees face in terms of their competency to effectively deal with employees psychosocial concerns in the workplace, P3 noted that "*it's sometimes very difficult to discuss that kind of personal problems with them because many factors could contribute to the fact that he is drinking a lot*".

P4 referred to talking to employees about issues as "*counsel[ling] the person and try[ing] to expose the person to what is happening with other people in the world and that it is not you alone*". Pep talk such as "*be strong, get there and we are all going through the same thing*" (P4) is also amongst the strategies employed under the auspices of counselling.

6.3.2.1.2   Subtheme 2: Provision of financial and material support

Financial aid is one common form of support offered to employees. P22 noted that in addition to the talking "*if they [employees] are having a death in their family, especially their mother, father, sister, brother we give a contribution to their family to help them*

financially". Upon enquiry on how the employer knows that an employee would have financial difficulties, P1 noted that his "*PA or workshop foreman will come and tell me that he feels someone is acting up on cash and he can see that they are having problems. Then I will take it upon myself to call the employee into the office and just have an open discussion to try and get to the bottom of what's bothering him. Ninety per cent of the time it's financially based …its aah some family problem that requires finance*".

P3 also indicated that in addition to talking to employees about the problem "*where need be I support financially*". Similarly, *P4* stated that besides talking to employees, if it is a medical condition, they *"are able to search for doctors and assist where it is practically possible*". It could however also be because of employees not being able to afford medical care due to the low wages mentioned in 3.1.2.2.

Employers could also feel more comfortable providing financial assistance as a sign of support to employees as expressed by P1 who stated: "*we [employers] are actually more receptive to financially-based problems because it is a lot easier for us to deal with*".

6.3.2.1.3   Subtheme 3: Institution of formal disciplinary measures

Some employers undertake formal disciplinary measures in order to deal with employees' non-performance in the workplace. P3 noted that "*currently what I [do] is to provide warnings, up to 3 warnings. The first 2 are verbal warning and the third a written warning and the final one would be dismissal or suspension*".

Similarly, P2 noted that "*I always give maybe three verbals [warnings], one written before we come to a conclusion [of dismissing the employee]*".

6.3.2.2   Employees

Employees also have their way of dealing with their problems. Their problem-solving strategies mostly include ignoring the problem, talking to the employer and to family members.

6.3.2.2.1   Subtheme 1: Ignore problem/ do not talk about it

Some employees who experience problems seem to keep problems to themselves due to ignorance on whom to consult. This has been noted by P24 who stated "jy *los maar net en dan bly jy net stil met jou eie problem" (You just keep the problems to yourself).* Upon enquiry as to why he chose to do that P24 replied that is was mostly due to lack of knowledge about whom to approach for assistance, *"van Januarie tot nou ek het probleme maar ek weet nie met wie praat ek nie. Ek het ook gedink met wie kan ek praat. Ek was besig om te dink waar sal ek gaan met hierdie probleem met wie sal ek praat"* (*From January till now I have problems but I do not know whom total to. I was also thinking where can I go, who can I talk to concerning my problem*). The unavailability of the employer was noted as amongst the reasons for not knowing whom to talk to. P24 continued to state that "*ek het ook probleme wat ek wil praat met hom [employer] maar hy is altyd besig. Nou ek dink nou met wie sal ek praat. Dit lyk vir my hy [employer] het nie tyd nie*" (*I also have problems that I would like to share with him [employer] but he is always busy. I was thinking whom do I talk to. It seems like he [employer] does not have the time*).

P10 indicated that he "*just kept it [problems] to myself" whereas* P5 "*solve it on my own*". Similarly, P19 indicated keeping "*my personal problems mine*". Keeping problems to oneself could be as a result of fear for gossip as noted by P6 who stated "*Yah, gossip there and there, what is a why, why is it like this, you know those rumours*". The sentiment of trust was also highlighted by P21 who stated that "*the moment that you talk your personal problems and someone hears, you heard that it will go to somebody else*".

In as much as it is not about ignoring the problem, P17 indicated that he adopts serenity as a problem solving strategy in that he tries "*to take time off. What helps me a lot is that I take time away from the office … I think it helps me cool off a bit and overlook things. Not overlook things but what do you say, think through*". In addition, P23 stated that when facing problems "*I try not to make it an issue. I try to stay calm as possible as I can because if it affects your work it's just going to spoil your whole day so I really try my best for it not to get to me*".

6.3.2.2.2   Subtheme 2: Share problem with the employer

Most employees affirmed sharing their problems with their superior, be it the supervisor, manager or employer depending on the structure of the organisation. Employees felt comfortable talking to their employer about their problems. P12 stated "*I regard him [the employer] as just an employee of the company although, you know there is always that respect that he is the boss. The way I approach my fellow employees, we do approach him as well*". According to P25 access to the employer was also easy because "*we don't have a hierarchy, we don't have a lot of channels*". However, concern was expressed over employers not being readily available. P23 indicated "*I do consult my boss when he is available and we do sort things out and it does help*". Similarly, P9 indicated "*sometimes our boss is not always here [available]*".

P20 indicated that their workplace have procedures to follow when experiencing problems and narrated as "*here at our workplace we have procedures, you experience your problems with your fellow employees, you go and talk to your foreman, then the foreman will try to solve it himself or if he sees it's a major problem or it needs the management involvement, then he takes it up to the management*". P12 added that "*he [the employer] really comes in and sometimes advise us that 'Why don't you do it this way, it might be easier for you*".

Sharing problems with the employer at times yield positive results Expressing appreciation for the material support provided by the employer, P19 noted that

"*sometimes like I got a problem with my car or my four wheels, a [car] part or something and its middle month or so, I say please boss can you hook me up with something like four grand or whatever I ask from him, if he got half of it he can offer me but eighty per cent he use to cover, to me I really take my head off for him*". P6 further stated that "*sometimes it's just financial … [if] I want to buy my goods, yah he helps me out*". P12 expressed that the assistance received from the employers "*makes me feel at home; you know I feel I am at the right place*"

In addition, employers also try to resolve disagreements through dialogue. In this regard, P23 indicated that "*he [the employer] most of the time call us and ask what has transpired...he isn't really biased, so he doesn't take sides but then he's like 'guys you have to work this out. ABC you were wrong. Can you apologise to the other want and I really want you guys to work together'. Yeah, it helps sometimes*".

Contrary to what some participants indicated in terms of the unfair and unequal treatment by employers (see 3.1.2.3), some participants noted the good nature and approachability of employers. P20 indicated that "*our employer, he is a man of few words, very, very few words. So if he calls you in his office, he will tell you what he thinks. And give him your part also, but most of the times if someone goes in the office, you don't really know what was going on in there. So, we don't need to know…The fact that he [the employee] is still working here, we think that whatever was going on there was solved*".

It could be noted that, in general, employees expressed appreciation for possible help with problems from employers summed up by P18 in this statement "*I will just feel well because they are helping me out*". P17, however, felt it was important to keep professional boundaries when he stated, "*I try to remain professional as much as throughout my work duties or as long as I'm on the company's clock I try to keep that professionalism there so there is boundaries when it comes to me*". He continued saying "*I don't really like to reflect my personal problems to work. But if its work related sometimes I do air my views with, with my seniors*" (P17).

6.3.2.2.3   Subtheme 3: Talk to family members and acquaintances

Many participants indicated that they would share their problems with family, friends and acquaintances. To this effect, P19 stated, "*I would also ask advice from my girl [partner/girlfriend] or so then we together go out for dinner and whatever, take a walk in the park then we sort that out*". In addition, this participant also values serenity as was also cited by P17 earlier on (in 3.2.2.1).

Prayer has also been noted as a way of dealing with problems by P19 who stated, "*I used to pray as hard as I can to overcome this problem, that's my big thing yah, so problems face me I pray as hard as I can*".

The perception of the severity of the problem also determined whom employees contacted with their problems. P18:L30 for example, viewed his problems as minor and that it did not warrant professional intervention. If he is to experience any problems P18:L24 indicated that he would share "*just [with] my mother*". Similarly, P20:L50&51 noted that "*some minor things, you talk to your friends or parents at home or anyone you can trust. But I did not encounter something major that I have to talk to a social worker or something like that*". It became evident that social relations with individuals and trust also plays a major role in determining who problems are shared with. P10 related that "*I have got a good friend which I really share everything with and that's my boss wife… she's the only person I'm actually sharing things with if I have a personal problem or she's also always there for me, she listens to me, give me advice 'try this, why don't you do this and that'. She's the only one*".

6.3.2.3   Discussion of Theme 2: Problem strategies used

Employers are quite aware of the important role that SMEs play in the growth of the country's economy as also found by Breslin et al. (2010); Dangayach and Deshmukh (2005); Gerstenfeld and Roberts (2002); Ipinge (2010); Kongolo (2010); Mead and Leidholm (1998); NYC (2012); OECD, 1997; Zeng et al. (2010). Employers also realise

the importance of the contribution of a healthy, happy and thriving workforce for the development of their businesses. Besides the acknowledgement of the importance of attending to their employees' welfare; resources, especially financial resources, was cited as a major reason why SMEs are not able to offer psychosocial support services to its employees (Allen et al., 2012). Since SMEs are under constant threat of survival, the focus has been on other operational issues in order to secure the economic survival of the businesses. Subsequently, employers address employee problems that impact productivity on an ad hoc basis as was found in a study by April (2005). Due to inexperience on how to deal with the psychosocial concerns of employees, it was found that the most common form of support provided by employers was financial.

Employees, on the other hand, rely on their social networks for problem resolution.

6.3.3 Theme 3: Benefits of EAPs

Most participants did not know what an EAP was. As a result, an EAP was explained to the participants as a confidential programme available to assist the employee when he/she needs help to deal with life events, workplace issues and other personal problems and challenges. After the explanation participants were probed on their thoughts of such a programme in their workplaces. P10 summed it up for both employers and employees when he stated that the EAP will "*benefit the employees and the employer… for the production of work*".

6.3.3.1   Employers

6.3.3.1.1   Subtheme 1: Provision of professional helping services

Participants believe that the EAP would be a great service available for the workplace. This fact was expressed through sentiment such as "*I think that programme will be fantastic*" (P1), "*an EAP is a nice programme*" (P2), "*they might assist them [employees]*

in a professional way compared to us or me [employer] here just talking to them while I am not a professional in that line" (P2).

P10 who mostly have male employees noted: "*I think we must also get a structure like that, because I think that just because the employees are most of them are guys, it doesn't mean that maybe they don't have problems".* According to P10 the consequence of not having someone to talk to could result in employees *"start bunking, they don't come to work. Maybe they are having personal problems and they don't have anyone to talk to so they just stay at home and then they drink and then they don't come to work, two, three days they don't come and the next day they come and it's only a problem and then the thing is if you don't come, and you don't have a reason why you didn't come and you don't have a doctor's certificate you don't get paid for the days… maybe the person might be a personal serious problem at home*". The multifaceted statement by this participant highlights the relationship between personal problems, substance abuse and absenteeism from work as was expressed earlier on by several participants.

Emphasising the prevention services that the EAP could offer P2 mentioned "*employees could go there [to the EAP] whether they have problems or not. You can't wait mos until a person has a problem*"

6.3.3.1.2   Subtheme 2: Return on investment

On the value of the EAP for a business, P3 noted: "*believe me if your productivity is affected, influenced or jeopardised, it influence your income and your profitability so looking at the long run, it [the EAP] will be useful*". P4 noted that "*wellness programmes has been key*" to any business.

6.3.3.1.3   Subtheme 3: Opportunity for learning and training

Summing up the importance of an EAP for SMEs, P1 responded: "*Absolutely, absolutely, absolutely there is some time where we have to play parents, play a parents role in a*

leadership role in a company and sometimes we are not trained to deal with some of the psychological problems people face". Recognising the benefits of an EAP to the employer P1 further stated: "*It's also educational to employers because people take it for granted that employers are conscious and aware of the needs of the workers*" and by extension, how to deal with it.

6.3.3.1.4   Subtheme 4: Employee management tool

Noting the value of the EAP in the management of the business, P1 stated: that the EAP "*will give us a better understanding of our workforce and their needs because we have never ever had an opportunity to individualise needs and see if there is a common denominator. If anything it can only give us tools to manage our business better*".

The benefit of the EAP as a management tool was further highlighted by P22 who indicated that the EAP will be good for management "*because I don't like it every time or every week you have people coming to your office maybe they were fighting or the way they were talking to each other is not really good and I don't really like it or the person is coming to you crying. You know I am also not that kind of person I am also … I can cry easily also so it is not really easy. Maybe somebody who is trained, maybe it will help*".

6.3.3.2   Employees

The employees also thought of an EAP as a vital programme to cater for the wellbeing of employees in any size business.

6.3.3.2.1   Subtheme 1: A business necessity for SMEs

Expressing a need for EAPs for SMEs, P24 noted "*Die small company hulle het ook help nodig vir daai……aah…..ek het ook gedink daar is mense wat kom dronk by die werk. …… maar ek sien dit is small company mos ons sal miskien nie kan sê ok hierdie een person moet iewers gevat laat hy getrain word laat hy ook gese word die drank is*

probleem. Ek weet nie waar sal ons help kry vir hierdie small business nie. Dus net nie hierdie company nie maar baie van die companies hulle het help nodig". [Small businesses also needs help…I was thinking there are people who comes to work under the influence … in small companies we will not be able to refer such people to places where they can be trained or be told to quit drinking alcohol. I do not know where we will get help for small businesses. It's not only this company but many other companies need help]. In addition P6 noted that the introduction of an EAP for SMEs is "*a good idea because that thing [EAP] is now happening worldwide".*

According P25 here is "*always a conflict*" in the any workplace and the EAP will "*be there for the workforce [to function] as a unit*" because "*sometimes is not that big of a problem, sometimes is just a communication error that happens, so those things can also be solved*" through the EAP.

6.3.3.2.2   Subtheme 2: Availability of professional helping services

According to P23 the advantage of an EAP is that it provides a specialist "*that can listen to you and provide you with necessary counselling".* P6 noted *"those people [EAP service providers], they study for it, they know their jobs. Sometimes they advise you, you are open with them… they can read you, they can study you*". P25 stated that she would approach her employer only for work-related issues and material support because "*they are not really as professional as that you can talk about your personal issues*".

P17 stated that the EAP is "*a good initiative, very much needed. Talking to somebody helps. Even though most of the times you don't want, you choose not to. But I think opening up really it helps. I think it's a very good programme*". P20 further provided a fascinating description of how he views an EAP, that it is something "*like an insurance, for example, I can say that we did not encounter a problem, maybe I think that we do not need it but sometimes, it's like you never know when you need it. You never know when you will encounter a problem and you don't have someone to talk to, you don't have someone to help you. I think it's very important*".

Underscoring the importance of an EAP, P13 mentioned that "*a person would be benefiting in such a way that whenever she has a problem, there is a person there to listen to … a shoulder to cry on. I know that if I have a problem I have to go to this person, this person will just listen to me*". P13 further pointed out that the availability of an EAP will provide an alternative "*unlike now, you have a problem, you have to go to your supervisor*". According to P13 if there is an EAP, "*your supervisor [will] then refer you to the other person because she thinks that I only have the power to let this person go or to, let me say to comfort her or something. So if then there is a problem like that, because this person is just employed because of that, to listen to people. Meaning that this person should be a social person he can understand any kind of problem so a person will be really benefiting from that*".

P24 postulates that "*daai program [EAP] sal baie mense help. Daar is baie mense wat help nodig help in Namibia. Daar is baie companies, mense het probleme maar hulle weet nie waar om te gaan nie*" (*That programme [the EAP] will help the people [employees] a lot. There are many people in Namibia that needs help. There are a lot of companies where people experience problems but do not know where to go for help*).

On a personal level, P20 is of the opinion that the EAP will "*benefit me because most of the things that we encounter in life are at work, they don't just affect our work here, they also affect our relationship at home also, or with friends and relatives. So when you have someone to talk to, it helps also to make you understand the type of life you are living in. that you have to encounter problems and you need help just like everybody else*". P23 indicated "*I am sure at the end of the day things will be improved instead of now you are just there having a problem. Sometimes you are not even comfortable going to that person [employer] because you are like will he even be able to help me. Yeah, so I think we need somebody specialised in counselling*" that the EAP provides.

Some of the participants were not sure of the benefits of the EAP but were open to the idea of their workplaces introducing such a programme. This is echoed by the P13 who

said "*I think it is a good idea … I'm not sure, but I think maybe it will benefit me positively. I'm not sure, I can't give an exact answer… I hope it will benefit me positively … like even [providing] solutions to my problems or positively advising me or anything positive*".

There was also the realisation that the services provided by the EAP could be beneficial to an employee's family, directly and indirectly. Considering the benefits of the EAP when extended beyond the employee to his/her family, P19 said *"…I don't have a doubt there, just a very big yes, you can introduce it. It is going to benefit my younger boy, my daughter, my sister or something*".

6.3.3.2.3 Subtheme 3: Access to confidential counselling services

Noting the concern with trust in the workplace, P14 noted that "*once you have a problem with the working environment, you are afraid to discuss with someone or your colleague then you think now he is going to tell the boss and anything can happen to me. I could maybe be thrown out, get fired, you just don't know what's going to happen".* P21 echoed the sentiment stating, *"in [company name omitted] we are suffering, because the moment that you talk your personal problems and someone hears, you heard that it will go to somebody else*". P21 experience was that "*people in [Company name omitted], don't have secrets. You go and raise your problem with your friend, you heard that somebody's friends heard that somebody's friends heard, then it will come back to you and say I was hearing it from, they say I was having this problem, what, what, then you say 'Who told you?', and you try to investigate, just the simple stories that you create".* Expanding on the issue of trust P25 further noted that "*they [the employers] are not really as professional as that you cannot talk about your personal issues*".

The assurance of confidentiality that comes with the EAP was thus appreciated by many. In this regard, P23 states that "*as an employee … there are issues that you cannot discuss with your boss. You need someone you can trust or someone who is specialised in counselling people*". P14 further confirmed that if "*there is someone seating out there,*

who doesn't know you, who doesn't know who the other people are we keep everything
confidential.

For P14 the EAP will provide a safe environment where a professional will "*listen to your*
problem cause once you have a problem with the working environment, you are afraid to
discuss with someone or your colleague then you think now he is gonna tell the boss and
anything can happen to me. I could maybe be thrown out, get fired, you just don't know
what's going to happen".

The potential services offered by the EAP was perceived to be more reliable then
approaching the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation for
labour dispute resolution. In this regard, P14 noted "*I hear people talking about labour*
and labour and I feel like why do I go to labour if I am dealing with someone [employer]
having money? And nowadays everything is just full of corruption. When you go and I go
and open up a case against my employer and say he is doing this and that to me, is it
fair? And then you are being called as a boss, as an employer if you have money and
then you bribe and everything is gone. That was no use but if there is truly people who
are doing this from their willingness, they are going to help you out and this will come far
cause in Namibia there are the, they are in that situation and they will help lot of people,
lot of employees with that".

6.3.3.2.4   Subtheme 4: Presenting opportunity for training and development

In appreciation of the training and education that comes with the introduction of an EAP,
P21 noted that "*we will also learn more. Learning that even if I'm having a problem here*
to whom must I face it".

Supervisors' lack of problem solving skills was also seen as a premise for the introduction
of an EAP. In that regard, P21 noted that "*my supervisor is not good at solving problems,*
he is not good, he will say that just solve it, just try to solve it and see how best you can
solve it… the moment that he is taking action to do those things is the time he will just

end up firing a person because he is getting too much angry on the person". P22 further noted that "*our supervisors need to be trained, they must also know how to talk to people. They must really know how to deal with people because people are difficult, not all people are easy… All of us [employees and employers], I think, we need to be trained*".

Training would also address the scepticism expressed by some participants, mostly due to the unfamiliarity of the EAP. Uncertainty around the EAP was illustrated by P19 when he noted "*honestly speaking I never came across it or dealt with it before, so I don't, I just can't say if I put on those glasses, they are going to benefit me, I didn't try it before, I can't just be positive about something that I didn't try before, that's why I'm positive with is something that I have tried, so I can't say yes, it's going to benefit me but hopefully it's going to"*. In the same vein, P15 noted "*I can't say I wouldn't benefit because you know circumstances or let me say things that we go through. Maybe one day I might find myself in a situation where I need that sort of help so it can, it can be useful*".

6.3.3.3 Discussion of Theme 3: Benefits of EAPs

The study found that the introduction of an EAP was welcomed by most participants. The climate and culture in SMEs were found to be ideal for the introduction of an EAP (Business Case Studies, 2016; Mayson & Barret, 2006; Meggender, 2007) besides the concern over the cost of such a programme. It was, however, not clear who should bear the responsibility of the introduction of the programme but some participants were of the opinion that the Government has a role to play in the provision of psychosocial support services to employees, in general, and the SME sector in particular.

6.3.4 Theme 4: EAP service provision

The three types of EAP models namely the internal, external and hybrid models were explained to the participants. Thereafter, participants' indication of preference for a specific EAP model was sought.

6.3.4.1   Employers

6.3.4.1.1   Subtheme 1: EAP model preferred

The provision of services by persons not employed by the beneficiary organisation was preferred by most employers. P1 indicated "*I think such programmes if it is done by independent people who are not seen to have no an interest or a direct interest in the topic, it makes it a lot easier*". Employers also expressed awareness of trust issues in the workplace that was alluded to by employees under 3.3.2.2. To highlight this matter P1 further stated that "o*ne must understand that between an employee and employer there is a small element of distrust especially when it comes to issues of distribution of wealth and, and, and so certain messages communicated through an employer to an employee will be misconstrued as being to the advantage of the employer*".

Subsequently, the provision of services by external services providers, and by extension, the external EAP was preferred by most participants. P1 noted, "*I think such programmes if it is done by independent people who are not seen to have an interest or a direct interest in the topic, it makes it a lot easier*".

6.3.4.1.2   Subtheme 2: Site of service provision

The general observation was that besides the services being provided by external service providers, it also had to be off-site. P22 noted that off-site service provision "*could make it a conducive environment*". The referral of employees to off-site centres was also suggested because it was perceived to create room for greater confidentiality. P4 suggested the establishment of an off-site *"service centre where an employee can be taken to be counselled*".

Work in most SMEs are of a labour-intensive nature and relies much on the manual labour of its employees. Hence, the absence of an employee for whatsoever reason has an impact on business operations and output. In as much as the EAP was viewed as

important, time for the provision of the services was noted by P3 as a concern when she stated "a*t the moment the only space that we have on our programme is during lunch time. They even don't get any tea breaks or so on. I don't know what the best possible time will be for them. Yes, me say that we really have a need to have such a programme, I will make time, maybe give one day off or half a day off for the programme to be introduced to them*". For the provision of training to employments under the umbrella of the EAP, the participant suggested an alternative which is the training-of-trainers (ToT) model; "*it can be like you know train one of my people and he can then train the rest*" (P3). The ToT involves training of some employees within the workplace who in turn continues to train others.

6.3.4.1.3   Subtheme 3: Funding

Notwithstanding the benefits of EAPs, employers were sceptical about the EAPs availability in SMEs due to the cost factor. P4 noted that "*to employ a wellness officer is at a cost and moreover to employ a competent wellness officer is at a cost and most of us in this industry, in this sector, in this category do not have, even if you value it, even if you want to do it, do not have the necessary resources to do that. Therefore we might compromise and neglect [the EAP] as one of the non-core functions of our operations*". Echoing this sentiment, P2 noted that "*it is only big companies which can have it [the EAP] but if it is an institution [resource] for everyone whether small or big we are prepared to send our people there but we cannot afford to employ an individual to solve problems or work on problems of our employees because we are a very small group*".

Recognising the importance of an EAP for SMEs but being cognizant of the cost factor, P4 cautioned against the establishment of individual company-based programmes and suggested that "*Government could set up centres that small and medium enterprises at whatever level are able to send their people*". P1 was in agreement that the Government should provide financial support for programmes such as the EAP for SMEs when he stated "*I think some of these programmes should actually be funded by government because, I think it goes above and beyond work-related. A lot of these issues can alleviate*

a lot of social problems we read in the newspapers daily, you know. I would want to believe that through the Ministry of Labour and Employment Creation such programmes can be funded".

6.3.4.2   Employees

6.3.4.2.1   Subtheme 1: EAP model preferred

Employees expressed preference for an external EAP model whereby services should be provided by persons not employed by the same organisation through sentiments such as *"we coming out should go there"* (P6)*; "I'm a very personal [person], I'd prefer it outside"* (P6); "*Outside, yah. I think that will work*" (P8); "*I prefer an outsider"* (P5).

Highlighting the importance of persons other than management providing helping services, P24 noted "*daar moet iemand, nie eienaar van die company nie maar daar moet iemand anders wees wat genoeg tyd het om vir my te luister en iets opskryk en dan kan ek daai ding vir die baas gaan gee mos*" [*there must be somebody else, not the owner of the business, somebody that has enough time to listen to my concerns, and then write a note to be submitted to the employer*].

The choice of EAP model was mostly influenced by the level of trust it presents because according to P22 "*people don't trust each other. Maybe they will think maybe after there they will start talking .You know whenever you have a lot of people, especially women they talk too much*". Trust was thus perceived to be more pertinent in the external EAP as indicated by P5 who stated that "*I don't think the social worker should be employed by this company"….., it's the one management…..I don't think there will be positive, assistance or results coming from them…..Because there'll always be influence maybe by big bosses ...Yah so I prefer an outsider*". P20 also preferred "*help from outside. Because like, how often do we get someone that we trust with our problems at our workplace, with our fellows, not really. And most of the times it's even more comfortable talking to someone you don't know*".

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Preference for an external service provider for P24 was because "*die company wat nou net een….ah hoe moet ek se, person het, hy het iemand nodig buite kant. Maar as die company hy is groot en het iemand nog, hy is nie eienaar nie maar hy is manager ook van die company, hy run die company dan iemand met daai person kan praat en daai person sal mos nou vat by die eienaar*" [*a company that only has one person needs somebody from outside. But bigger companies that has additional persons in management other than the owner, has people in the company that employees can talk to and such a person could then inform the employer about the problems that the employees are facing*].

Speaking figuratively, P19 further explained why an internal model would not be the best in terms of objectivity "*I will tell you one thing, once I'm doing bad things, most of the people here, they are under me, so my treatment to them for him that's present, that is working with us, maybe I may be in his favour or so, he won't be able to report to your office, but the one from outside, he will try and be as honest as possible*".

6.3.4.2.2   Subtheme 2: Site of the service provision

A dominant view amongst the participants was that besides adopting an external EAP model, the service provision should take place at the respective workplaces and not necessarily that the employee goes to the EAP offices. In this regard, P21 stated "*the one which is coming from outside, coming and going, maybe it's also best".*

Other sentiments that indicated the preference of service provision to be undertaken at the workplace were "*It will be better if the person is here [in the workplace]*" (P10) "*…if it is needed maybe for us to have this, it probably maybe if they used to come here maybe like once in a month*" (P9).

The preference for the EAP visiting the workplace for service provision was amongst others due to the cost factor as stated by P7 who said: "*I'd prefer the person to come,*

placed here in the office". The reason provided for this choice was *"because to get to the person it's also transport and money and costs"* (P7).

Accessibility was another reason cited for the preference of onsite service provision as articulated by P10 who stated "*it will be easier for them (the employees) to go in and talk to the person whenever they are having a problem.* Participants also felt that service providers visiting the workplaces will give them insight into the employees' workplaces and work conditions. This has been echoed by P17 who indicated "*I would say onsite. It would give you, it would give that person first-hand experience because you are literally in the company, you are involved. You are part of the system. So when somebody comes speaks to you, you actually relate more. I would say the first option. I would recommend the first option*".

Even though most of the respondents preferred an onsite EAP, there was also some indifference with regard to the site of service provision as noted by P15 who indicated "*I think it doesn't really matter as long as they offer the service that somebody needs*".

6.3.4.3   Discussion of Theme 4: EAP service provision

Since the issue of trust was a concern, many participants preferred an external EAP model. Participants also stressed that the EAP service providers should not be in the employment of the participating SMEs. There were, however, divergent views on whether the external service providers should be based on- or off-site. Some of the employers were of the opinion that service provision should be off-site whereby those employees who seek the services of the EAP should visit the services providers' offices. This, some participants believed, would operate on the same basis of visiting a medical practitioner and was perceived to enhance privacy and confidentiality. Other participants, however, preferred that the external service provider should visit the companies regularly to facilitate referral to off-site service providers. On the other hand, some employees preferred the on-site delivery of services by an external service provider citing financial reasons in terms of transportation cost to the site of the service provider.

6.3.5 Theme 5: Utilisation of the EAP

All participants from both the employer and employee groups were in agreement that they would make use of the services of the EAP should it be on offer, albeit for different reasons.

6.3.5.1   Employers

6.3.5.1.1   Subtheme 1: Enhancement of employee welfare

Employee wellbeing was seen as pivotal to any business and hence the utilisation of the EAP should it be available was recognised as vital. To this effect, P1 noted "*worker welfare is really important and we as employers we tend to shy away from it because everything related to worker welfare is always a cheque and a number but not always… So let's look at the human element, let's look at the mental state of our workforce and it is not always a cheque*".

P5 indicated that he had had psychological counselling in the past; "*I was also having my own, what do you call them, psychologists*". He thus likened the services offered by the EAP to that of the psychologists and indicated that he would utilise the services of the EAP because he had learnt a lot from his past engagement with the psychologist.

6.3.5.2   Employees

6.3.5.2.1   Subtheme 1: Utilisation of EAP pending availability

Participants were of the opinion that the EAP is a must-have for any business. They also had positive affirmation on the possibility of the utilisation an EAP should it be available as expressed by P14 who indicated "*Oh but we are going to [use the EAP], lot of people will use this to be honest. They need it, they need it*". P15 simply stated, "*it is a necessary*

programme". P13 also noted "*if I have a problem, I know that there is a person that I can talk to and have to listen to me because this person is trained for that. So I should be used to*".

Having an EAP in the workplace and using the service it offers was likened to having medical services which are at the disposal of a person when needed. In this regard, P15 said "*I would use it if I were to run into like a situation where I need the service… Yeah just like a hospital you don't go all the time to the hospital but when you get sick you go there*".

Providing a futuristic outlook, P19 noted "*I can't say it's bad to implement the programme, what you are talking about now, so for my benefit and the younger ones benefit I will recommend you to, to introduce it, cause I don't know what is going to happen in the future, you understand what I'm trying to say, so to me it's just a big yes*".

6.3.5.3 Discussion of Theme 5: Utilisation of the EAP

Nevertheless, all the participants saw the EAP as beneficial to SMEs in the dealing with employees' personal and work-related problems which will ultimately enhance employee welfare and productivity in the workplace. Participants also pledge to the utilisation of the EAP should it be available to employees in SMEs.

6.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented an analysis of the data obtained from the interviews exploring the type of problems experienced by employees in SMEs. It further assessed the need for and the type of EAP model suitable for SMEs in Namibia. A needs assessment, as part of the intervention research model, is often conducted before an intervention programme is compiled and evaluated (De Vos & Strydom*,* 2011:475). Findings of the needs assessment lead to the development and implementation of an EAP for SMEs as

described in the next chapter. The EAP that will be developed will be adapted to the EAPA-SA Standards.

CHAPTER 7

DEVELOPMENT AND PILOTING OF AN EAP FOR SMEs IN NAMIBIA

7.1   INTRODUCTION

EAPs have demonstrated to be highly successful, both in human and cost-effective terms, benefiting employers, employees and the community at large (Joseph et al., 2018; Csiernik, 2005:73). It should also be noted that not all EAPs are structured in the same way nor do they all offer the same services (Jacobson & Hosford-Lamb, 2008). Discussions in preceding chapters highlighted the peculiarities of SMEs when it comes to the provision of EA services. EAP services must thus be customised to meet the clients' needs (Frey, 2018; Jacobson & Hosford-Lamb, 2008). Therefore, each EAP must be uniquely designed for its workplace, taking into consideration the distinct requirements of both labour [if any] and management interests (Csiernik, 2005:73). Jacobson and Hosford-Lamb (2008) stressed that regardless of the different services, all EAPs should strive to be impartial in addressing the wellbeing of the employee and workplace productivity while working within the boundaries of workplace policies, procedures and organisational culture.

According to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee ([sa]:14) "the beginning of an EAP deserves special recognition, yet it is difficult to outline the beginning process because each work situation is unique". In that regard, SMEs are unique with differing capacities and resources, and as such their needs for health and wellness promotion programmes are also diverse (Fraser et al., 2002). Caution should thus be taken not to assume that "small businesses should be managed along essentially the same principles as large businesses but on a smaller scale" (Cassell, Nadin, Gray & Clegg, 2002). Hence, the implementation of the number of core technologies will also be affected by the size of the organisation (Martin, Sanderson, Scott & Brough, 2009:240).

Even though EAPs are distinct to individual work-sites, there are certain services and programme tenets that are considered universal to all EAPs (Jacobson & Hosford-Lamb, 2008). It is therefore essential that every organisation implementing an EAP prepare a formal, structured plan for programme development, following a series of key steps termed EAP core technology (Csiernik, 2005:74). The phases of development, implementation and evaluation are all central to intervention research (Goldenhar, LaMontagne, Katz, Heaney & Landsbergis, 2001:616). The chart below presents an outline of the main EAP activities, emanating from the core technologies, which were employed by this study:

Figure 7.1: Sample EAP flowchart for SMEs

1. Build organisational commitment
- Meet with management to discuss proposed EAP and get buy-in.

2. Introduce concept of EAP to employers & employees
- Orientation sessions with with employers and employees.

3. Identify needs of employers & employees
- Interviews with employers and employees to assess needs and determine what is being done, what can be done and how.

4. Establish an EAP Advisory Committee
- Involving representatives from all segments of the workforce.
- Train committee on roles and responsibilities

5. Develop an EAP Policy and procedures
- Draft policy and operational procedures.
- Test consensus with relevant parties
- Finalise policy & procedures
- Ratification of policy by management

6. Service delivery and costing models
- EAP staffing
- EAP Professional consultation

7. Implement programme
- **Implement activities**:
- Supervisory orientation and training
- EAP professionals orientation/training
- Case management
- Employee orientation
- Develop & implement marketing and promotion strategies

8. Monitor and evaluate programme
- Identify process, outcome & impact evaluation criteria
- Identify sources of information required for evaluation purposes
- Develop & implement evaluation strategy

7.2 PROBLEM ANALYSIS AND PROJECT PLANNING

Intervention research commences with the identification of a population and conversations with key informants to "help researchers understand what they have to offer and how to articulate the benefits for potential participants" (De Vos, 2011:396). Hence, this study commenced with preliminary discussions at the identified businesses to garner support for the EAP (step 1 in Figure 7.1). The discussions focused on the:

- Introduction of the EAP concept, including its objectives and examples of activities that may be implemented.
- Benefits of the programme to the organisation.
- Benefits of the programme to the employees.
- Estimated resources required to organise and drive the programme.
- Anticipated overall outcomes.
- Case studies of how an EAP has been successfully implemented elsewhere.

7.3 INFORMATION GATHERING AND SYNTHESIS

The expression of interest by management culminated in the undertaking of a formal needs assessment (step 2 in Figure 7.1). This entailed consultation with the work organisation leadership and employees (Masi, 2011). The needs assessment was geared toward proactively addressing inherent trends resulting from personal or organisational issues (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015:2). The needs assessment was also "intended to help the organisation determine the most appropriate and cost-effective methods of providing EAP services" (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015:4). The consultation was based on a formal assessment of organisational and employee needs, how problems are resolved, the possibility of an introduction of an EAP and the type of EAP preferred. This information was obtained through qualitative interviews with employers and employees.

7.4 PROGRAMME DESIGN

The development of a draft EAP policy was undertaken as part of programme design. According to Maiden (1999:5), a written policy statement is an essential component of an EAP as it describes important parameters for the entire operations of the EAP. The clearly written policy statement "define, among other things, the logic behind the program, its objectives and authority, the roles and responsibilities of the various personnel in the organization and the commitment to confidentiality" (Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee ([sa]:15).

The involvement of employees at all levels of employment will ensure buy-in but will also ensure that the policy is adopted and supported by all the role-players (Sonnenstuhl & Trice, 1995; Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015). However, in the absence of an EAP Advisory Committee, as will be discussed in 7.4.1, individual consultations were undertaken with randomly selected managers and employees from each participating organisation. This was done to ensure that the draft policy was discussed with different stakeholders/role-players and adapted based on the feedback obtained (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015:5).

Programme design also in part involved a desk review of relevant literature.

7.4.1 EAP Advisory Committee

Advocacy for the involvement of various role players in policy development as discussed above calls for the establishment of formal structures such as an EAP Advisory Committee (Atlantic Evaluation Group, 2011; Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015). Persons that will serve on the EAP Advisory Committee was sourced from all levels of employment and representatives from across the different SMEs involved but kept small for more functionality (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015:7). The identification of the committee representatives was jointly done with the persons responsible for human

resources issues and constituted one person from each of the participating four SMEs. The following functions of the EAP advisory committee as outlined by the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015:6) was adopted for this study:

- formulating policy and strategy;
- advising on the implementation procedure;
- assisting with the marketing and promotion of the EAP;
- acting as a sounding-board for EAP Professionals/professionals;
- providing the necessary support; and
- contributing to the monitoring and evaluation procedure.

The researcher, however, experienced challenges in setting up a committee due to the work schedules of the participating SMEs. In order to solicit the input of various stakeholders, hard copies of the draft policy were given to the identified employers and employees from each participating SMEs. They had a week to provide their written comments which were to be collected by the researcher in person but since no written feedback was obtained verbal feedback was sought from the individuals after about a month. The only concern that was noted was that the document was too lengthy. Hence, the researcher shortened the policy as indicated.

In the absence of a committee, the researcher was seeking individual comments and input from the EAP counsellors, employers and employees on aspects around the marketing and promotion of the programme. The same persons within the SMEs also assisted in arranging meetings for employee orientation. The services of these individuals were sought to ensure the adoption of the most effective model of service delivery that will enhance services to both the organisation and its employees resulting in the best possible application of financial resources (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015). The frequency of contact with the individuals was on an ad hoc basis, as the need arises.

According to the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015), the involvement of organised labour/unions in the development of the EAP is crucial. There was, however, no union involvement in the process of establishing this EAP due to the non-unionisation of most

employees in the SME sector. Most workers in the informal economy in Namibia, including SMEs, are not members of any labour union (Jauch, 2018; Sibeene, 2007). Subsequently, most employees of SMEs participating in this study also confirmed that they did not belong to any union.

7.4.2 Service delivery and costing models

There are many variations of EAP models depending mostly on the characteristic needs of the organisation it is designed for. The main models were discussed in Chapter 3. There is no dominant model but the choice depends on the particular attributes of the organisation. According to the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015:7)

> service delivery and costing models of an EAP should be based on sound financial principles. To ensure the most effective model of service delivery, which will enhance the services to the organisation in terms of both the individual and the corporate client, resulting in the best possible application of financial resources.

The needs assessment revealed that an external EAP as the most appropriate model for SMEs. However, in a resource constraint environment in which SMEs operate, it was not possible to contract the services of an EAP provider. Provision of case management services by professional social workers in the public sector, namely the Ministry of Health and Social Services, was pursued.

The EAP that was offered was external and located in a social welfare agency because it was not viable to implement free-standing services at that point. Since finances are a major concern for SMEs, the programme was offered at no cost to the participating businesses and employees. The study noted the statement by the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015) that the type of model adopted is not primary but that the adopted model must be guided by the characteristic needs of the organisation it is intended for. The study is also in concurrence with the NBGH (2008:15) in its stipulation that, besides the structure adopted by an organisation, the EAP operates with a common purpose of

optimising employee health and wellness; and ultimately the organisations' productivity by:

- Helping employees resolve personal issues that negatively affect job performance and/or health and productivity;
- Discussing with managers and supervisors the effect employees' personal issues have on job performance;
- Consulting with organisational leaders to identify and resolve risk factors that negatively affect the safe work environment.

7.5   EARLY DEVELOPMENT AND PILOT TESTING

Findings of the needs assessment guided and constituted the content of the programme. As stated earlier, some of the supervisors, employees and EAP counsellors fulfilled the task of the EAP advisory committee by proposing a practical structure and analysing plans to implement the programme (Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee ([sa]:14). The following aspects were undertaken as part of programme implementation:

7.5.1 Training and development

7.5.1.1   EAP counsellor training

Compared to HIV and AIDS, health and wellness programmes, EAPs are not so common in Namibian organisations. Besides, a global lack of standardisation in the type and training of professionals selected to lead and support EAPs was noted by the NBGH (2008). This lack of training equally applies to Namibia. In order to ensure a common understanding around the EAP and its operations, a 3-hour training session with EAP counsellors was held on 18th of August 2016 focusing on the following:

- Introduction to the EAP.
- Role of the supervisor.

- Case management process using Emener and Dickman's (2009) ten roles and functions of case management as described in Chapter 4.

- Record keeping.

- Orientation to intake.

- Feedback to work organisation.

- Maintenance of professional and ethical conduct.

Eight social workers from the Ministry of Health and Social Services, Khomas District office expressed interest and participated in the training. Eventually, only two social workers were actively involved in the programme due to their language ability. All of the participating SMEs indicated that most of their employees preferred the use of the Oshiwambo language, a local vernacular, in addition to English and the two social workers were proficient in the use of the Oshiwambo language.

The researcher being an academic for about 10 years is also a qualified social worker and has over six years of experience in the field of employee health and wellness, part of which was at the managerial/supervisory level. Besides different trainings on HIV/AIDS, employee wellness, occupational health and safety, she also has theoretical knowledge on the EAP having attended a short course on EAPs offered by the University of Pretoria.

In addition, the trained EAP counsellors maintained the following credentials:
- A minimum of a bachelor's degree in human services from an accredited institution of higher learning. In this respect, all participating EAP counsellors graduated with a four-year social work degree from the University of Namibia.

- Registration with the Health Professions Council of Namibia (HPCNA).

- Appropriate credentials and/or sufficient experience in activities such as individual assessment, short-term problem resolution, crisis intervention, the threat of violence and related EAP tasks.

- Willingness and availability to participate in the programme.

- Willingness to receive on-going consultation and/or supervision by the researcher.

7.5.1.2   Supervisory training

The EAP core technology calls for training of and assistance to work organisation leadership seeking to manage troubled employees, enhance the work environment and improve employee job performance (Masi, 2011). Noting the importance of management and supervisory training, 3 one-and-a-half-hour training sessions for supervisors of the participating organisations were conducted by the researcher with the assistance of the two EAP counsellors. The businesses could only avail one-and-a-half hours for training hence the presentations had to be tailored accordingly. The presentations were in English translated in Oshiwambo by the EAP counsellors since the majority of attendees expressed confidence in the use of the Oshiwambo language. Hence, questions and discussions emanating from the discussions were also accommodated in both English and Oshiwambo for ease of expression and understanding.

The training included an introduction to the EAP, in general, but also covered topics such as effective supervisory skills, performance-based identification of troubled employees, the EAP management referral process and consultation with the EAP (Jorgensen, 2005:4). Constructive consultation and referral of a troubled employee to the EAP which is perceived to be among the most challenging tasks of a manager/supervisor (Jacobson, 2008). Constructive consultation which "relies on the presence of the supervisor who is: (1) knowledgeable, (2) ready to exercise the role of supervisor/manager in confronting poor job performance, and (3) constructively offers the rehabilitative assistance provided through the EAP" (Googins, 1989:291) was also highlighted in the training. Due to the limited time available for training, the planned simulation activities and roles plays around constructive consultation could not be undertaken. Supervisors were only introduced to the theoretical process of constructive consultation but since it is something that perfects with time, on-going support was pledged to the supervisors by contacting the researcher or EAP counsellors directly for coaching.

7.5.1.3   Employee orientation

Four 30-minute orientation sessions for employees were held by the EAP coordinator with the assistance of the two EAP counsellors between the 05th and 12th October 2016. Three sessions were conducted in English, with translations in Oshiwambo and one session was wholly in Oshiwambo. The meetings promoted active participation by employees to meet its objective of educating the staff on all aspects of the EAP. The orientation sessions entailed:

- Introduction to the EAP.
- Information about a wide range of personal problems and how it can be resolved.
- How to access the EAP.
- The emphasis on confidentiality and privacy protections of the EAP.
- Provision of contact details to the EAP.
- Awareness of the EAP policy, and how it relates to other company policies and practices.

The sessions' aim was to make employees aware of the scope of the companies' commitment to help them and also encourage employees to help themselves. It also provided an opportunity to clarify possible employees' misconceptions about the EAP. The introduction of the EAP to the employees personally through group orientation meetings was followed up with written materials in the form of brochures provided to each employee as well as posters placed on noticed boards throughout the organisations.

The employee EAP orientation plan was developed in partnership with the participating organisations. Besides experiencing problems with the identification of suitable times, the study strived to conform to the call by Mannion (2006:119) that "employee education should take place as soon as possible after the programme is implemented and there should be the opportunity for employees to participate actively in the session".

As a way of re-orientating the employees to the EAP, informational brochures (Annexure 9) that were developed by the researcher for this study was distributed to the employees in February/March 2017. Meetings were also held with supervisors/managers from the participating organisations to inform them of the change from EAP counselling to education. Arrangements on suitable dates on which the employee sessions was to be conducted were also made.

7.5.2 Case management

In the initially envisaged counselling-based EAP, employees could access services via referral by the respective supervisors or by contacting the EAP counsellors directly. The case management practice model which emphasizes short-term treatment and/or intervention (Roberts-DeGennaro, 1986:63) was adopted. The model entailed:

Assessment, Short term Counselling and Referral
- An EAP counsellor will provide confidential and timely problem identification and assessment services, help develop an appropriate plan of action, provide short-term counselling and when appropriate refer the client to an appropriate resource for problem resolution.

Follow-up and Case Monitoring
- On-going follow-up of cases by the EAP counsellor to determine if the situation is being properly addressed, if the matter has been resolved, or if there is a need for additional services.

A total of six (6) face-to-face counselling sessions per employee/dependent was planned. This counselling was to be available from Monday to Friday, 08h30 - 13h00 and 14h00 - 16h30 preferably by appointment. Since counselling services were offered by social workers in the public sector, prior appointments were advised and promoted in order to cut down on waiting times and prevent loss of work hours. A cell phone that was kept by the two EAP counsellors on a weekly rotational basis was acquired for the sole use of the programme. The contact number of the cell phone (+264 818584380) was communicated

to the SMEs and their employees in the training sessions as well as through the various promotional activities. Telephone counselling sessions during working hours were also available.

Regular updates were sought from organisational management and EAP counsellors with regard to the utilisation of the services, challenges and needs. Through these consultations the under-utilisation of the EAP for therapeutic services became evident, after close to a year of programme implementation. The diminishing time for the completion of the study as well as possibility to test the utilisation of WOS to measure workplace effects of interventions other than the clinical component, prompted a change from EAP counselling to education. The change also led to the subsequent 6 month extension of programme implementation. The issues identified through the needs assessment were thus addressed through the systematic provision of a series of convenient onsite educational sessions of psychosocial-emotional, financial and health issues identified in the needs assessment.

7.5.3 Marketing and promotion of the EAP

Marketing is vital to the success of the EAP and involves the active promotion of the availability of EA services to employees, their family members and the work organisation (Jacobson & Attridge, 2010; Francek, 1985). Promotion of the programme is a vital element for especially small businesses seeking to maximize the effectiveness of the EAP (Carney & Knoepke, [sa]). A general informational brochure on the EAP (Annexure 9) was produced to ensure that employees become aware of the programme's existence, the nature of its resources and coverage, and the means of accessing such programmes (Beidel (1999:92). The brochures were developed by the researcher and the draft circulated to stakeholders, in the same way as the draft policy, to solicit input. Translations of the brochures were done by the two EAP counsellors and the final draft submitted to the Head of the Oshiwambo Language Section at the University of Namibia, for proofreading and editing. The English and/or Oshiwambo versions of the brochures were handed to each employee after the orientation session and again in February/March 2017

as part of the re-orientation. Employees were encouraged to share the information with their dependents.

Three different types of EAP posters (Annexure 10) were also developed to serve as additional visual marketing aids. The posters, with contact details of the EAP clearly spelt out, were displayed at different locations throughout the participating SMEs.

The marketing of the EAP, especially through presentations, also encompassed all aspects around the EAP. This sentiment is echoed by Tosches ([sa]) who stated that "advertising less intrusive services such as work-life balance, stress management can draw employees into the program without fear of incurring negative attention".

7.6   PROGRAMME EVALUATION AND MONITORING

To ensure the EAP adds value to the organisation and its beneficiaries, the effectiveness of the EAP should be continually monitored and evaluated (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015:26). Hence, a number of monitoring and evaluation activities were undertaken for the purposes of this study. The study commenced with a needs assessment (De Vos, 2011:371; Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee ([sa]:18) to get an understanding of the type of problems that employees' experience, the current problem solving and strategies as well as to explore the need for an EAP for employees in SMEs.

Evaluations focussing on the effectiveness of the interventions were also done after the training of the EAP counsellors as well as EAP orientation sessions for supervisors and employees, respectively. Since there were multiple sessions for supervisors and employees, feedback obtained from the initial sessions allowed for modifications to be made for subsequent sessions and also before full implementation began.

As soon as programme implementation began, programme process monitoring was undertaken to ascertain how well the programme is working and the extent to which the

programme is being implemented as designed (De Vos, 2011:377). The following criticism levelled against EAPs offered for free or at no cost as identified by Burke and Sharar (2009:8), was noted during programme implementation as a concern:

- no management consultations or referrals,
- few or no utilization reports, leaving the organization unable to decipher employee needs and actual EAP activity,
- face-to-face counselling is offered but rarely provided.

These observations provided an early warning that compelled the change in the focus of the programme from EAP counselling, one of the programme tenets (core technologies), to EAP education.

Eventually, outcome evaluation to determine the degree to which the programme was having an effect on the target population's behaviours was undertaken (De Vos, 2011:381; Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee ([sa]:18). This evaluation provided input in terms of programme effectiveness in meeting its objectives. The impact evaluation also provided evidence for use in policy decisions and future research.

Cost analysis which requires estimates of the benefits of a programme, both tangible and intangible, and the costs of undertaking the programme, both direct and indirect (De Vos, 2011:383) was not a consideration of this study. This was due to the fact that it takes at least two years for a company to see a significant increase in cost savings (Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee ([sa]:16). The programme was developed and implemented for doctoral studies that had time limitations. The implementation period for the EAP focusing on face-to-face counselling was for 12 months (August 2016 – July 2017) but after marked under-utilisation due to the factors discussed section 7.5.2 as well as under limitations in Chapter 1, the programme focus was changed to education only and extended to July 2018. However, the belief that an organisation that sticks to its original commitment and retain its EAP will reap long-lasting

benefits (Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee ([sa]:16), provided the impetus for this study.

In the absence of the EAP Advisory Committee, the researcher coordinated the monitoring and evaluation procedures of the programme (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015:6).

7.7   CASE RECORDING AND DOCUMENTATION

According to Emener and Dickman (2009:92) case recording and documentation involve three sets of professional activities namely:

> (a) keeping client records; (b) reporting on client progress to appropriate persons within the employee assistance program, the union, and within the community of professionals providing client services; and (c) preparing summary reports to describe aspects of a client's progress to professionals involved in a client's treatment.

In the event of a supervisory referral, no clinical information was to be shared with supervisors for the sake of confidentiality. Only information pertaining to the following will be provided:

- Attendance: Is the employee attending their scheduled sessions.
- Compliance: Is the employee following the counsellors' recommendations.
- Investment: Is the employee devoted to making changes to rectify their workplace issues.
- Recommendations from the EAP clinician.

Records keeping separate from that of the Ministry of Health and Social Services was emphasised and the researcher provided a filing system to be kept by the EAP counsellors for clinical case information of this EAP. Besides the clinical case information, the capturing and maintenance of records on the following matters, as identified by the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015:15), was done by the researcher:

- Documentation on meetings;

- Corporate client information;

- Evaluation data;

- Marketing and promotional material;

- Training material;

At the conclusion of the study, participating companies were provided with a summary of services provided, the number of employees who utilised these services, as well as the presenting problems addressed by the EAP.

7.8   STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

Roberts-DeGennaro (1986:66) stats that the EAP practitioner needs to develop

> a formal network of resources that s/he can access for and with the employee. By coordinating with caregivers, service providers and gatekeepers within a community, the EAP practitioner can assure both continuity of care and a network of concern that can address the employee's problems.

The EAP counsellors will be using their already established formal networks as social workers for the purposes of this programme. Social workers are trained to form working partnerships with the local community, and this process of building a referral network is a natural function for them (Jacobson & Hosford-Lamb, 2008). The researcher also established additional networks and maintained effective relations with treatment and other service providers. Where necessary, referrals were made to relevant services providers. During the referrals, employees were provided with options from the researcher and EAP counsellors' network of referral resources within and around the workplace (Jacobson & Hosford-Lamb, 2008).

7.9   CONCLUSION

SMEs due to some special characteristics, as was discussed in Chapter 2, have a high need for EAP services. Hence, Carney and Knoepke ([sa]) refer to small businesses as

an untapped EAP market. The goal of this chapter was thus to develop an EAP for SMEs in Windhoek, Namibia taking into consideration their peculiarities. The EAP core technology outlined by the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015) provided the framework for the programme that was developed, coupled with the feedback obtained through the needs assessment.

The next chapter presents the evaluation of the EAP that was implemented in SMEs in Windhoek, Namibia.

CHAPTER 8

EMPIRICAL DATA ON THE IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF AN EAP IN SMEs IN NAMIBIA

8.1   INTRODUCTION

The intervention research design, as described in Chapter 5, was the most appropriate design for this applied study (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:475). The aim was to establish an EAP that will link employees with personal problems to appropriate resources in order to correct or prevent a deterioration in job performance (Du Plessis, 1991:20). The phase of evaluation and advanced development in intervention research applies to this chapter.

8.2   THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EAP INTERVENTION

The intervention process commenced with the training of social workers who expressed interest in serving as EAP counsellors as well as the training of supervisors from the participating SMEs. An assessment of the effectiveness of the training was due upon completion of the various training sessions.

An EAP that focused on employee education was implemented in participating SMEs. Focus areas of the education sessions were determined by the outcome of the needs assessment that involved employers and employees of participating SMEs. A needs assessment was undertaken as part of the process of the development and implementation of the EAP. The three areas that the education sessions focused on were identified by participants as the main issues that impact on their productivity in the workplace. The issues of concern were substance abuse, financial literacy and gender-based/domestic violence. The education sessions ran over 3 weeks on Wednesday and Friday mornings. Each topic was presented weekly on the two days in the two organisations over a period of three weeks during October and November 2017. The

education sessions that lasted between 3 - 4 hours each were presented in a workshop format consisting of lectures, question and answer session as well as practical applications.

The training sessions were facilitated by various professionals established as part of the researcher's network of resources, two of which participated in the EAP training that was offered by the researcher. Details on training sessions are as follows:

- The session on substance abuse was presented by a social worker from the Etegameno Resource and Rehabilitation Centre for Substance Abuse, Ministry of Health and Social Services on 25 and 27 October 2017.
- The session on Financial Literacy was presented by a Finance Executive from the Government Institutions Pension Fund on 01 and 03 November 2017.
- The session on gender-based/domestic violence was presented jointly by a social worker and police officer from the Gender-based Violence Protection Unit, Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare on 08 and 10 November 2017.

Refreshments were served at all the sessions.

Fifty-nine pre-test questionnaires were administered at the first session and respondents were informed that the researcher will contact them again after 90-days to complete the same questionnaire. A unique identifier was entered by the researcher at baseline and the same identifier was then used by the client during the post-test follow-up to ensure comparability (Lennox, Sharar & Burke, 2010). The aim was to evaluate the effectiveness of the training programme in order to establish whether the training under the EAP is the best way to address the stipulated needs. Participation in the evaluation was voluntary and accompanied by a guarantee of confidentiality. There was hundred per cent participation in the post-test even though some items on the questionnaire were left unanswered.

8.3 EVALUATION OF THE EAP INTERVENTION

The analysis of data was divided into four sections: (1) analysis of the EAP Practitioner training; (2) analysis of the supervisors' training; (3) analysis of the marketing and promotion; and (4) analysis of employee education.

8.3.1 Analysis of the EAP counsellors' training

The Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015) stipulates that an appropriate number of suitably qualified EAP professionals must be available to achieve the stated goals and objectives of the EAP. There are currently no certified EAP professionals in Namibia and hence social workers were used to serve as EAP practitioners for this study and was referred to as EAP counsellors. Seven social workers from the Ministry of Health and Social Services attended the training that was presented by the researcher. All seven respondents (n=7) completed the questionnaire that aimed to assess the training that was offered. It was important that the EAP counsellors and researcher had a common understanding of the EAP and its operations; the importance of the maintenance of confidentiality as well as generally around the SME sector in Namibia. Some of the social workers who received the training assisted the researcher with the delivery of the supervisory training and employee orientation sessions. The EAP counsellors were also to provide case management services in this study.

Table 8.1: EAP Counsellors training

Category	1. Strongly Agree	2. Agree	3. Neutral	4. Disagree	5.Strongly Disagree
1. The objectives of the training were clearly defined.	7 (100%)				
2. Participation and interaction were encouraged.	7 (100%)				
3. The topics covered were relevant to me.	7 (100%)				
4. The content was organised and easy to follow.	7 (100%)				
5. The materials on EAP that was distributed were helpful.	7 (100%)				
6. This training experience will be useful in my role as an EAP practitioner	7 (100%)				

		7 (100%)				
7.	The trainer was knowledgeable about the training topics.	7 (100%)				
8.	The trainer was well prepared.	7 (100%)				
9.	The training objectives were met.	7 (100%)				
10.	The time allotted for the training was sufficient.	4 (57.1%)	3 (42.9%)			
11.	The meeting room and facilities were adequate and comfortable.	6 (85.7%)	1 (14.3%)			

The results in Table 8.1 above shows the effectiveness of the EAP training that was offered to EAP counsellors in this study. The Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015:12) highlights the importance of EAP professionals to engage in professional development activities "to ensure that EAP professionals' knowledge and skills are continuously updated and are in keeping with the highest levels of professional standards".

8.3.2 Analysis of the supervisors training

Supervisors and managers are pivotal to any EAP. It is thus expected that supervisors support the programme and provide information where necessary to the employees as to the appropriate use of the service (Wright, 1985:17). This expectation on the part of the supervisors necessitates that they have a good understanding of the EAP and their role in it. Hence, supervisory training was offered by the researcher together with two of the EAP counsellors who had also undergone the EAP training in two groups. Supervisory training consisted of defining programme policy, emphasising the degree of management support for the EAP, explaining the supervisor's role in implementing the programme, and demonstrating how the programme can be integrated into supervisors' existing responsibilities for employee job performance (Sonnenstuhl & Trice, 1995:18). The ultimate of goal of the supervisory training sessions was to familiarise participants with the newly developed EAP-related policies and procedures and to make them aware of the benefits of using the EAP as a tool to assist in supervising troubled or problem employees.

Seventeen supervisors from the four participating small businesses attended the training. Upon completion of the training, the respondents were requested to complete a satisfaction survey. Seventeen respondents (n=17) completed the questionnaire aimed at assessing the training that was offered, of which results are depicted in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2: Supervisors training

Category	1. Strongly Agree	2. Agree	3. Neutral	4. Disagree	5. Strongly Disagree	No response
1. The objectives of the training were clearly defined.	12 (70.6%)	5 (29.4%)				
2. Participation and interaction were encouraged.	9 (52.9%)	8 (47.1%)				
3. The topics covered were relevant to me.	9 (52.9%)	8 (47.1%)				
4. The content was organised and easy to follow.	11 (64.7%)	5 (29.4%)				1 (5.9%)
5. The materials on EAP that was distributed were helpful.	10 (58.8%)	7 (41.2%)				
6. This training experience will be useful in my role as EAP supervisor	7 (41.2%)	8 (47.1%)	2 (11.8%)			
7. The trainer was knowledgeable about the training topics.	10 (58.8%)	7 (41.2%)				
8. The trainer was well prepared.	10 (58.8%)	7 (41.2%)				
9. The training objectives were met.	8 (47.1%)	8 (47.1%)	1 (5.9%)			
10. The time allotted for the training was sufficient.	4 (23.5%)	4 (23.5%)	3 (17.6%)	4 (23.5%)		
11. The meeting room and facilities were adequate and comfortable.	5 (29.4%)	5 (29.4%)	5 (29.4%)	1 (5.9%)		

Similar to the EAP counsellors, the supervisors from the participating businesses confirmed the effectiveness of the EAP training as displayed in Table 8.2.

Due to workplace demands and deadlines that had to be met, the researcher was only granted between 30 - 45 minutes per training session. The time which was allocated was found not to be sufficient by some respondents. Table 8.2 indicates that contrary to the

24% of respondents who strongly agree and agree, respectively, that the time allocated for the sessions was sufficient, an equal number of respondents (24%) indicated that it was not. The researcher, therefore, requested for a longer time period for the employee education sessions from the management and was granted 3- 4 hours for each education sessions.

The analysis on the adequacy and comfortability of the meeting venue also yielded some ambivalent responses, with 29% of respondents indicating strongly agree, agree and neutral, respectively. Since the physical environment in which training is conducted has a significant impact on the effectiveness of any training (ACE Project, nd) the researcher engaged with management on the identification of a conducive venue in the respective workplaces for the education sessions as well as days with least possible interruptions.

8.4   ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYEE EDUCATION

The employee education sessions were facilitated by various professionals and dealt with the concerns highlighted by the employers and employees during the needs assessment. The issues addressed in the education sessions were substance abuse, financial literacy and gender-based/domestic violence. The survey tool used for the analysis of employee education was divided in three sections. Section A included demographic information, Section B the analysis of employee education using the WOS; and Section C the analysis of the marketing of the EAP.

8.4.1   Demographic information

Demographic information was gathered to determine the typical profile of the respondents in the study. A limited number of demographic items were included on the survey to enhance the preservation of anonymity of respondents. This section contains demographic data of fifty-nine (59) employees of two (2) SMEs in Windhoek. Table 8.3 shows the univariate distribution of each variable depicting the characteristics of the respondents ($n = 59$):

Table 8.3: Demographic profile of respondents

ITEM	CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Gender	Male	37	62.7%
	Female	22	37.3%
Age	20 years or younger	2	3.4%
	21 - 30	14	23.7%
	31 - 40	25	42.4%
	41 - 50	13	22%
	51 – 60	5	8.5%
	60 years or older	0	0%
Marital status	Single	26	44.1%
	Living together	12	20.3%
	Married	17	28.8%
	Separated	1	1.7%
	Divorced	1	1.7%
	Widowed	2	3.4%
Education level	Below Grade 8 (Standard 6)	11	18.6%
	Grade 8 -10 (Standard 6 – 8)	27	45.8%
	Grade 11- 12 (Standard 9 – 10)	16	27.1%
	Certificate or Diploma	5	8.5%
	Undergraduate Degree	0	0%
	Postgraduate Degree	0	0%
Years of employment	Less than 2 years	6	10.2%
	2 – 5 years	24	40.7%
	6 – 10 years	14	23.7%
	11 – 15 years	9	15.3%
	More than 15 years	6	10.2%

Table 8.3 shows that males comprised 62.7% of the sample and females 36.3%. This commensurates with national employment statistics of men and women which stands at 56% for males and 44% for females (NSA, 2015).

The ages of the respondents varied from younger than 20 to 60 years of age, with the majority of respondents (42.4%) being in the age group of 31-40 years. Most of the respondents (44.1%) were single and the least (1.7%) divorced. With regard to education, 45.8% of the respondents had a qualification between Grades 8 – 10 (Standards 6 – 8). These results are similar to those of Ogbokor and Ngeendepi (2012) who in their study found that about 45% of SME operators in Namibia have attained formal education to Grades 8-10. These findings to a certain extent contradict the conclusion from an ILO

study of 1993 cited in Hansohm (1997) which maintained that the educational and training levels were generally very low among the SME operators.

The length of service in the various companies varied between less than 2 years and more than 15 years, with the majority of respondents (40.7%) being employed in a particular organization for between 2-5 years. The variation in the length of employment was also noted by Schöneburg-Schultz and Schultz (2006:8) whom in their study found that the duration of employment varies greatly between a few months to ten years or more, with the average duration being between 1 to 2 years. Namibian SME workers are also said to be in the sector because of a lack of alternative employment (Schöneburg-Schultz & Schultz, 2006:8) coupled with the country's high unemployment rate may explain findings around job retention in SMEs.

8.5   ANALYSIS OF THE WOS ITEMS

Paired t-test analyses were performed to compare the pre- and post-intervention mean and standard deviation scores. Table 8.4 presents the means and standard deviation of the 25 items in the WOS. In addition to the mean and standard deviation, the mode was calculated for presenteeism, work engagement, life satisfaction and workplace distress enabled by the categorical nature of the data. The four WOS scales for which the mode was calculated was measured using the categorical ordinal measure on a 5-point Likert scale. The mode thus provides a better measure to determine the most frequently occurring score in the distribution (Gravetter & Forzano, 2009: 424).

Table 8.4: Mean, mode and standard deviation of the 25 WOS items

ITEM	ITEM DESCRIPTION		PRE-TEST			POST-TEST		
		N	MEAN	MODE	SD	MEAN	MODE	SD
Absenteeism	1. A personal problem caused you to miss work altogether.	51	17.45	n/a	38.172	3.27		7.239
	2. A personal problem made you late for work.	51	15.76	n/a	58.249	13.10		58.614
	3. A personal problem caused you to take off early.	51	17.71	n/a	38.213	5.33		17.945
	4. A personal problem pulled you away from your normal work.	51	5.71	n/a	17.749	1.16		3.036
	5. A personal problem required… phone, e-mail, or internet.	51	57.55	n/a	177.05	8.73		19.460
Presenteeism	6. I had a hard time doing my work because of my personal problems.	59	2.79	2	1.361	2.73	2	1.229
	7. My personal problems kept me from concentrating on my work.	59	2.88	1	1.463	2.71	2	1.260
	8. Because of my personal problems I was not able to enjoy my work.	59	2.75	3	1.226	2.47	3	1.072
	9. My personal problems made me worry about completing my tasks.	59	2.36	3	1.283	2.24	3	1.023
	10. I could not do my job well because of my personal problems.	59	2.59	3	1.131	2.32	2	1.025
Work Engagement	11. I feel stimulated by my work.	59	3.14	3	1.106	3.05	3	1.007
	12. I often think about work on my way to the worksite.	58	3.02	4	1.207	3.14	3	.955
	13. I feel passionate about my job.	59	3.10	3	1.155	2.93	3	.888
	14. I am often eager to get to the worksite to start the day.	59	2.88	3	1.146	2.81	3	.919
	15. I often find myself thinking about my work at home.	59	3.22	4	1.131	2.98	3	.861
Life Satisfaction	16. My life is nearly perfect.	59	2.66	3	1.124	2.71	3	1.068
	17. I am not very satisfied with my life as a whole.	59	2.71	2	1.287	2.56	3	1.103
	18. So far, my life seems to be going very well.	59	2.78	2 and 3	1.018	2.56	3	.836
	19. There isn't anything about my life that I would change if I could.	59	2.24	2	1.119	2.14	2	.973
	20. I am very disappointed about the way my life has turned out.	59	2.81	2 and 3	1.306	2.54	3	1.072
Workplace Distress	21. I often feel anxious at work.	59	2.31	1	1.235	2.05	1	.955
	22. Thinking about being at work makes me upset.	59	2.10	1	1.125	1.97	1	1.050
	23. I am unhappy most of the time at work.	59	2.00	1	1.160	1.78	1	.984
	24. I dread going into work.	59	2.17	1	1.036	1.88	1	.892
	25. I can't wait to get away from work.	59	2.54	3	1.277	2.22	1	1.131

8.6   PRE-EAP AND POST EAP COMPARISONS ON THE FIVE WOS SCALES

Table 8.5 presents the pre-test and post-test statistics for the five summary scores of the WOS. The data were analysed using t-test statistics which is an indicator of whether or

not the difference between two groups' averages most likely reflects a "real" difference in the population from which the groups were sampled (Statwing, n.d). The t-test was the most appropriate statistical measure to use in the analysis because it enabled the researcher to demonstrate perceptual differences between the pre and post EAP effectiveness of the 5 WOS scales.

Table 8.5: Summary of Pre-EAP and Post-EAP comparisons on the 5 WOS items

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Improvement		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pre-/Post-test	Standard deviation	2-tailed Statistical Significance
Absenteeism	22.84	40.54	6.32	17.48	73.3%	23.07	0.001
Presenteeism	2.66	1.09	2.50	0.98	5.8%	0.10	0.435
Work Engagement	3.039	0.89	2.97	0.71	2.2%	0.18	0.695
Life Satisfaction	2.63	0.58	2.50	0.56	4.9%	0.02	0.245
Workplace Distress	2.24	0.99	1.96	0.87	12.2%	0.12	0.165

Besides the Absenteeism item, all the other WOS items show standard deviations that are substantially lower than their respective means on the pre-and post-intervention scores. This suggest that the distributions are at least symmetrical if not technically normal.

The results shows little statistical significance in the 5 WOS scales, except for absenteeism where an improvement has been noted as a result of the EAP education. According to the findings, absenteeism improved by 73.3%. Reduction in absenteeism can produce cost savings through productivity enhancements that frequently exceed the expense of the EAP itself. It should however be noted that employees were also subjected to other aspects of the EAP core technologies that could have possibly influenced the improvement in absenteeism. Through the marketing and promotion of the EAP, awareness was created on the importance of seeking help for psychosocial concerns and employees were provided with information on the available services where they could seek help in addition to the EAP. The qualitative research that explored the problems of

employees also facilitated debriefing and referrals, where necessary. A much smaller change for the other 4 WOS items (presenteeism, work engagement, life satisfaction and workplace distress) has been noted. This change is not large enough to support the ability of EAP education intervention to impact the constructs.

Following is an analysis of the pre-and post-EAP values on the five WOS constructs:

8.6.1 Absenteeism items

Figure 8.1: Comparison of pre-and post-EAP values on Absenteeism
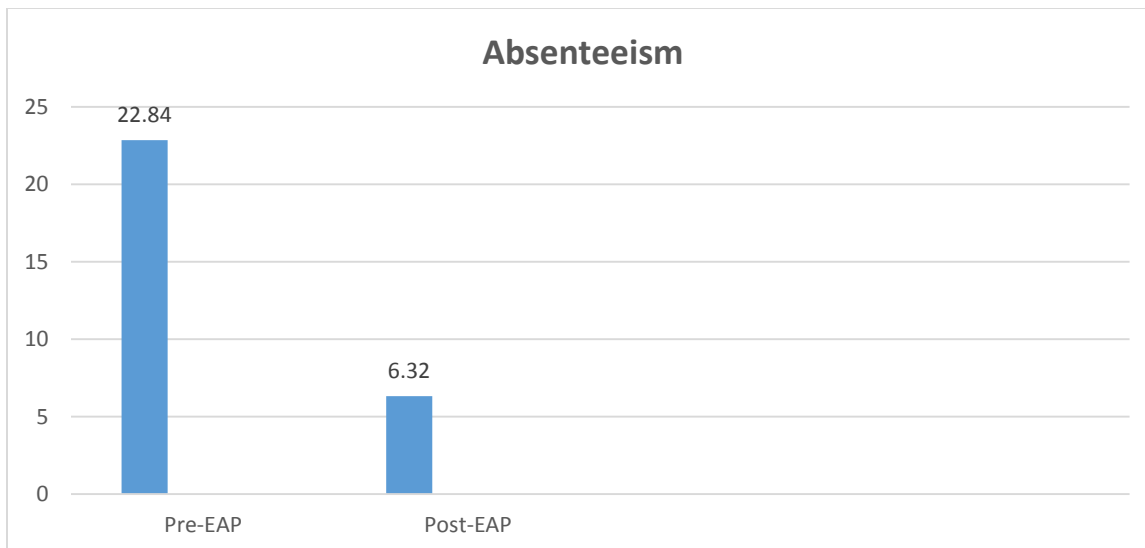
Figure 8.1 illustrates the pre-test and post-test change in Absenteeism. With a pre-EAP mean of 22.84 hours and post-EAP mean of 6.32 hours there is a clear decrease in hours of missed work across the measurement phase. In order to determine the size of the effects of the intervention on absenteeism, the Wilcoxon test was applied.

Unlike the other WOS items, the Absenteeism item is measured in hours characterised by the creation of a skewed distribution (Sharar et al., 2012). In order to facilitate the interpretation of the substantive, as opposed to the statistical, significance of the result the effect size (Cohen's d) was calculated. The effect size of the Absenteeism item was

0.53 which is a medium effect but big enough to be discerned with the naked eye (Thalheimer & Cook, 2002).

The results also show a significant change ($p = 0.001$) for absenteeism that is large enough to support the ability of EAP education intervention to impact the construct.

8.6.2 Presenteeism items

Figure 8.2: Comparison of the pre- and post-EAP values on Presenteeism
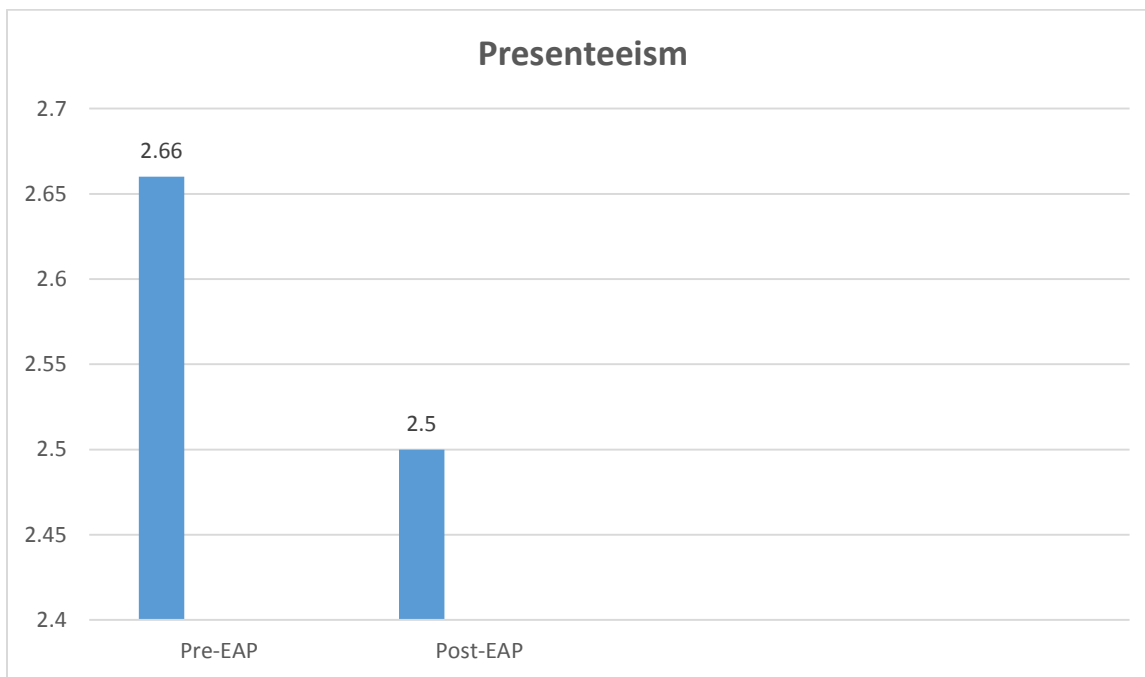
Figure 8.2 shows the pre-test and post-test means on Presenteeism. The pre-EAP mean was 2.65 and the post-EAP mean 2.50. Even though the average Presenteeism score dropped from 2.65 to 2.50, it is not a significant reduction ($p = 0.435$) in the average amount of diminished productivity caused by the presenting personal problem.

8.6.3 Work Engagement items

Figure 8.3: Comparison of pre-and post-EAP values on Work Engagement
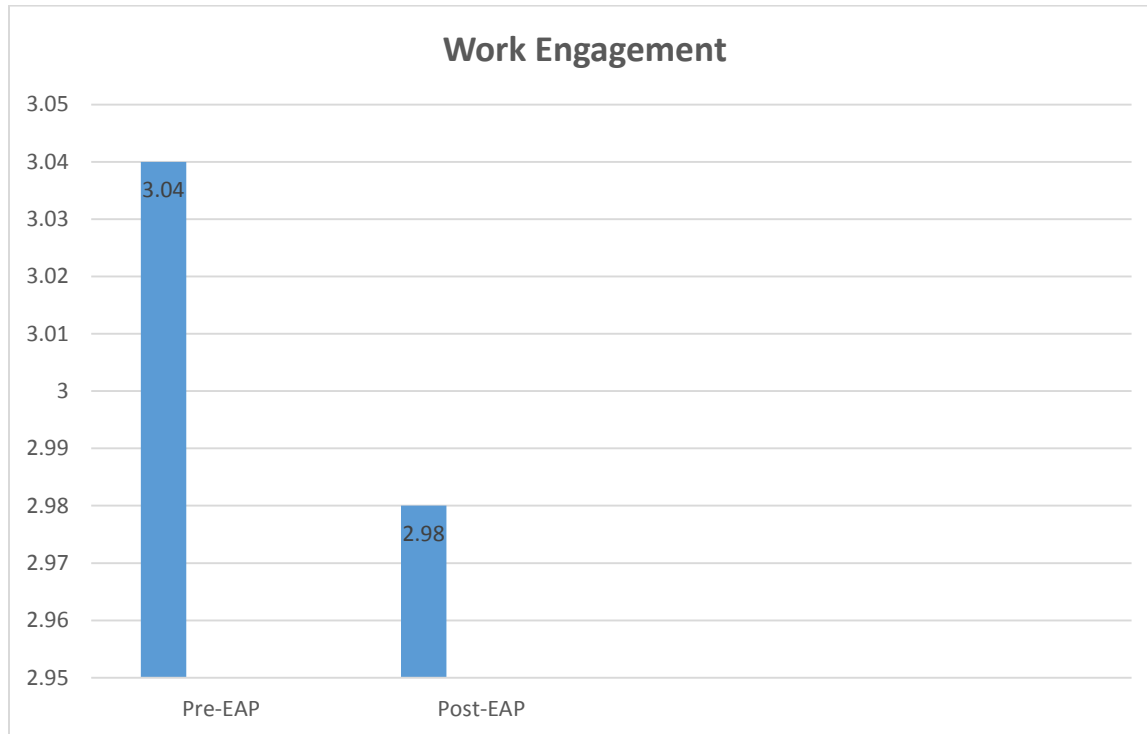
Figure 8.3 depicts the pre-EAP mean (3.04) and post-EAP mean (2.97). The results did not show a significant increase (*p = 0.0695*) in Work Engagement score as the score has dropped from 3.04 to 2.97, suggesting a decline in the degree of involvement of employees in their job.

8.6.4 Life Satisfaction items

Figure 8.4: Comparison of pre-and post-test values on Life Satisfaction
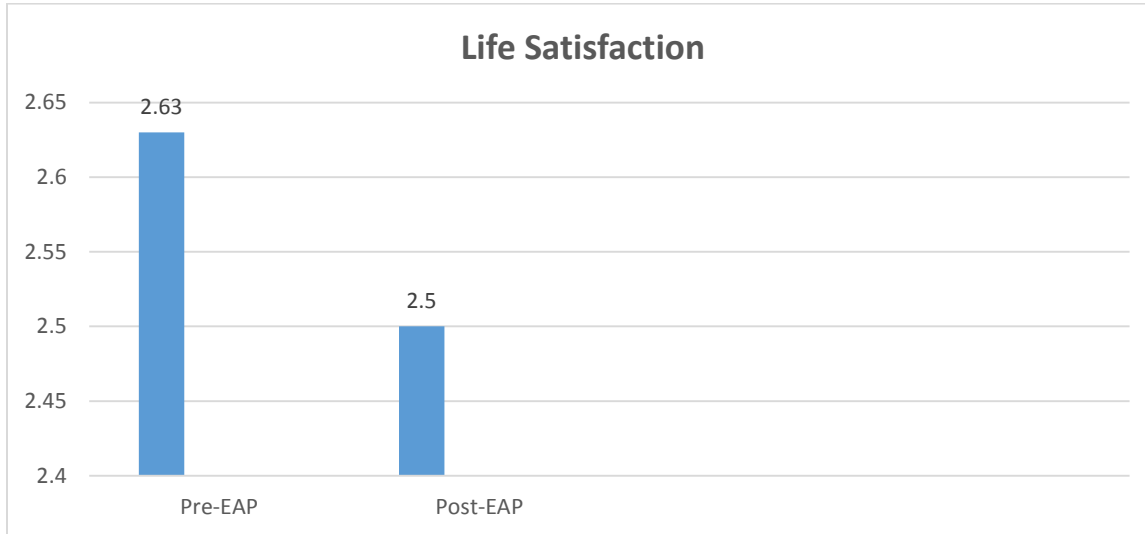
Life Satisfaction

Figure 8.4 illustrates the pre-EAP mean (2.63) and post-EAP mean (2.50). The results found a significant decrease (*p = 0.245*) in the Life Satisfaction scale scores, indicating a decrease in the employees' quality of life or sense of wellbeing after the intervention.

8.6.5 Workplace Distress items

Figure 8.5: Comparison of pre-and post-EAP values on Workplace Distress

Workplace Distress
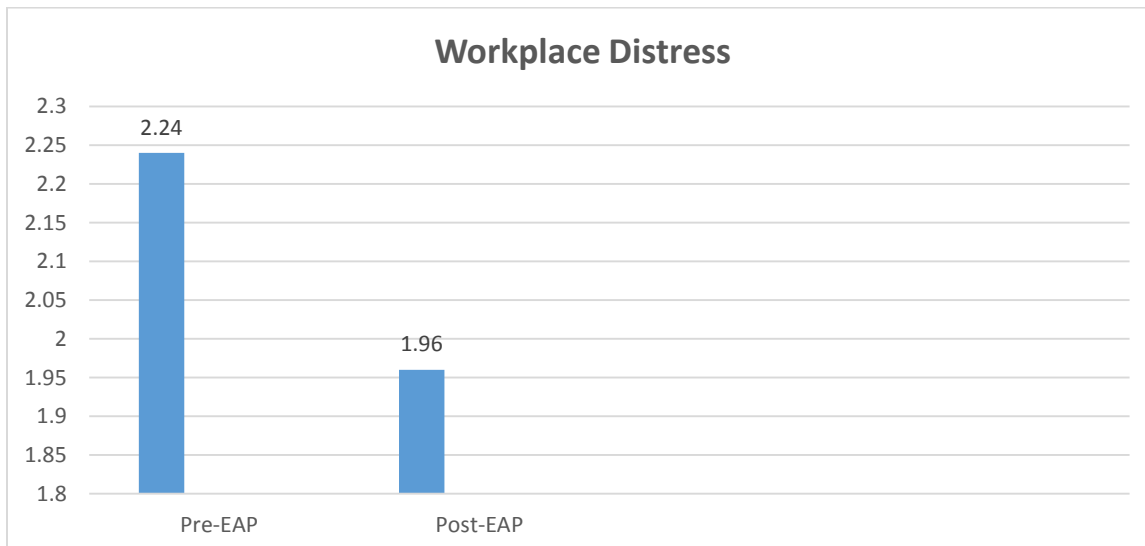
Figure 8.5 shows a reduction in Workplace Distress from 2.24 to 1.96. The reduction was however not statistically significant (*p=0.165*), besides the indication of a slight decline in the degree to which subjects experienced aversive feelings about the workplace.

8.7   ANALYSIS OF THE MARKETING AND PROMOTION OF THE EAP

Marketing aims to ensure that the EAP is highly visible and is presented in a positive light to encourage targeted beneficiaries to utilise the EAP (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015). A questionnaire on marketing was part of the WOS post-test and was completed by 59 employees (*n = 58*). The mean and standard deviation of the marketing and promotion items are presented in Table 8.6 below:

Table 8.6: The mean and standard deviation of the marketing and promotions items

Item	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. EAP marketing material was easy to understand	59	1.93	0.848
2. Attending EAP presentations were useful in obtaining information on the programme.	59	1.75	0.779
3. Topics presented by the EAP was relevant to employee needs.	59	1.98	0.799
4. Marketing activities addressed confidentiality.	59	1.95	0.818
5. EAP marketing assisted in understanding the benefits of utilising the EAP.	59	2.15	0.925

8.7.1 EAP marketing material was easy to understand.

Figure 8.6: Ease of understanding

EAP marketing material was easy to understand
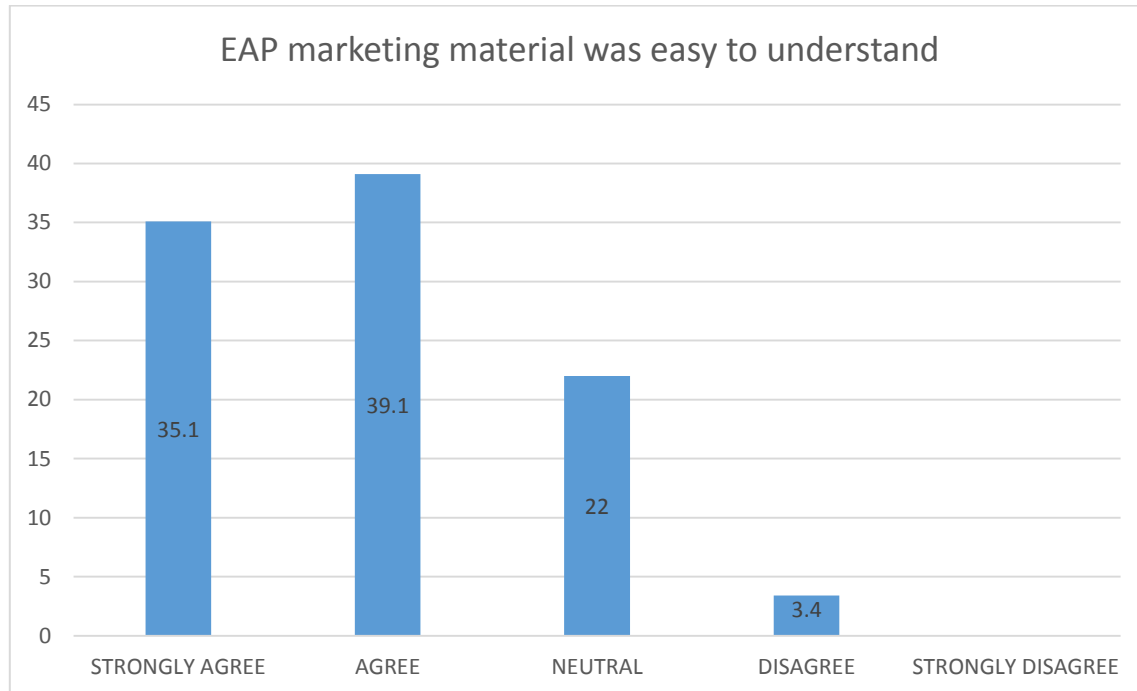
Based on the high percentages for 'strongly agree' and 'agree' as depicted in Figure 8.6, the assumption can be made that the marketing material complemented the marketing process.

The information on the brochures and posters that were developed under the marketing strategy was both in English and Oshiwambo. This measure probably attributed to the high positive response in this category.

8.7.2 Attending EAP presentations were useful in obtaining information on the programme.

Figure 8.7: Information on the effectiveness of the EAP
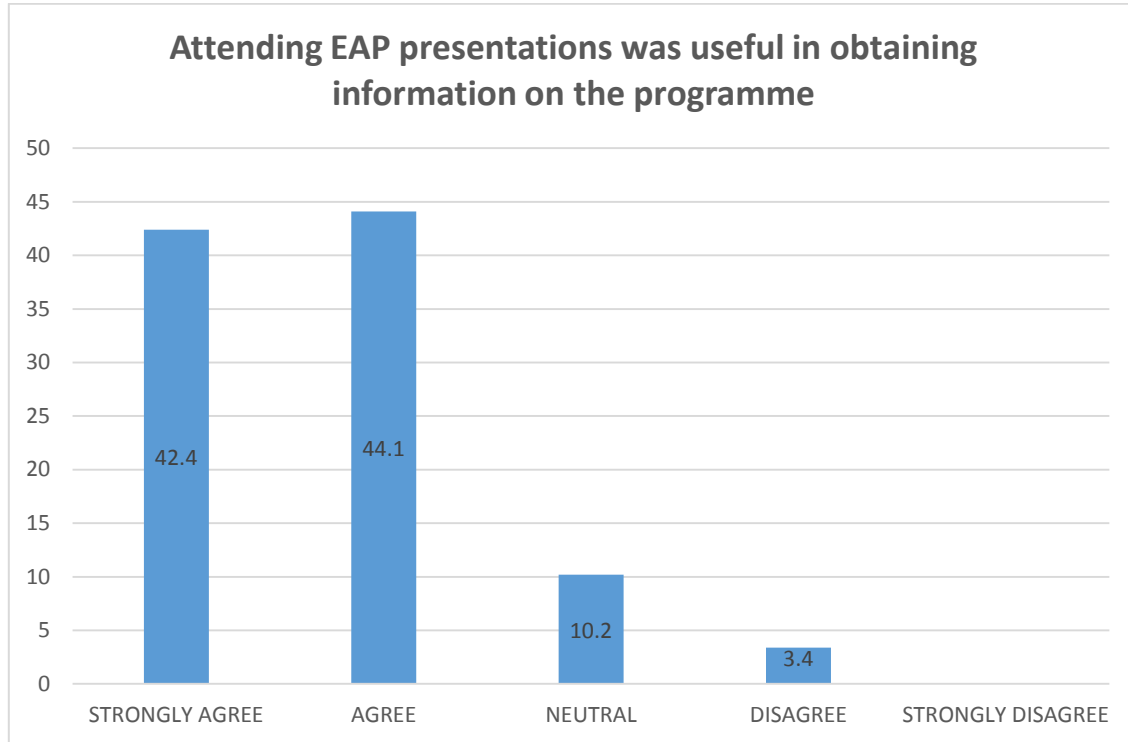
There was overwhelming consensus around the usefulness of the presentations on the EAP in the comprehension of an EAP. This result can be seen graphically in Figure 8.7 above.

Even though the information sessions and educational workshops were conducted in English, translations were also done in Oshiwambo. All sessions were interactive and respondents were at liberty to communicate in any language of choice where translation was possible. Supervisors were also urged to encourage employee attendance of the educational workshops. The high response to this category could be ascribed to all these efforts.

8.7.3 Topics presented by the EAP was relevant to employee needs.

Figure 8.8: Relevance of topics presented

Topics presented by the EAP was relevant to employee needs
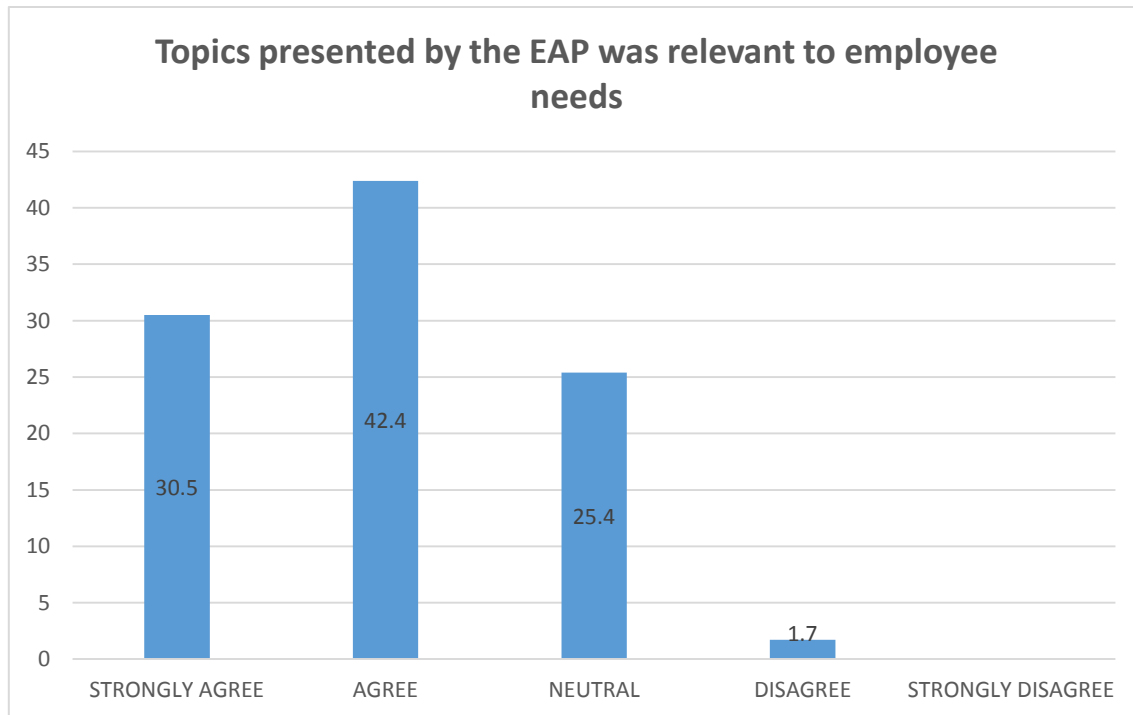
Figure 8.8 above supports the level of confidence of respondents with the topics addressed by the education workshops. The topics addressed through the education workshops were identified by the employers and employees through the needs assessment that was undertaken part of the research process. The indication by the respondents that the topics were relevant to their needs could be attributed to that.

8.7.4 Marketing activities addressed confidentiality.

Figure 8.9: Promotion of confidentiality
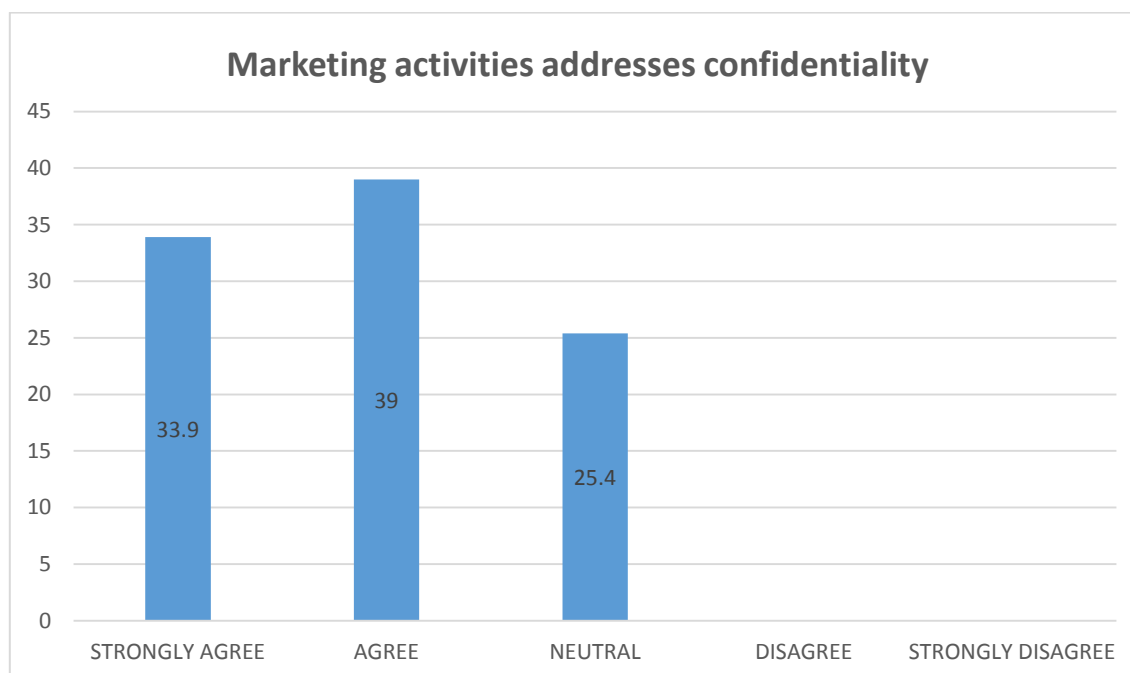
Confidentiality is the cornerstone of the EA profession (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015) and of the social work profession in general. Figure 8.9 above shows that 40% of the respondents agreed that the marketing activities addressed confidentiality whereas 34% strongly agreed.

Assurance of confidentiality was communicated through the EAP policy, the printed marketing material as well as re-emphasised in all the oral presentations. The EAP professional provided their contact details, as well as a database, of organisations employees could contact should they wish to seek further assistance in private. These efforts could be the reason why the majority of respondents were strongly in agreement that the issue of confidentiality was addressed through the marketing strategy.

8.7.5 EAP marketing assisted in understanding the benefits of utilising the EAP.

Figure 8.10: Understanding the benefits of utilising the EAP
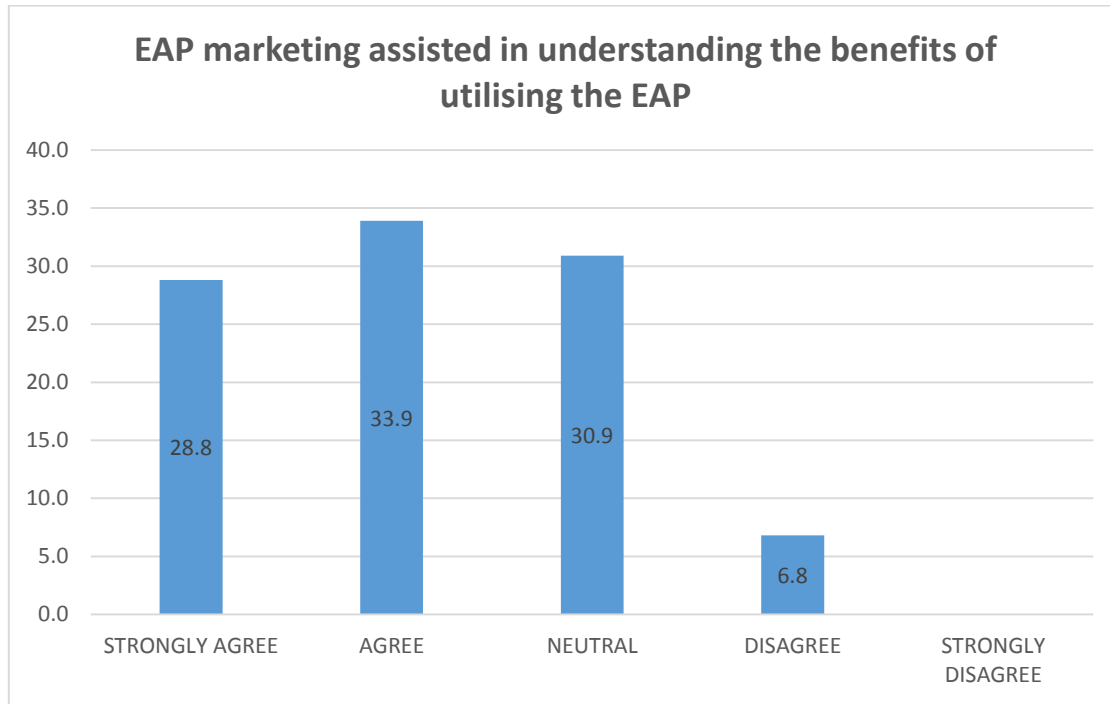
Even though to the positive spectrum, there were divergent views on whether the marketing strategy assisted with the understanding of the benefits of the EAP. Figure 8.10 shows that 34% of the respondents agreed that EAP marketing assisted in understanding the benefits of utilising the EAP, 31% were unsure and 28% strongly agreed. These results are of particular interest since the respondents under point 8.6.2 overwhelming indicated that information sessions were beneficial in their understanding of the EAP. It could be that the marketing strategy had an over-emphasis on fostering the understanding of what an EAP is and not so much on the understanding of how the EAP benefits the employee, his/her family and the work organisation. The non-provision of counselling support to employees and their families, which is after all part of the core technology of EAPs might also have contributed to the uncertainty. This may point to the importance of the incorporation of all the relevant EAP core technology in the development of EAPs.

8.8   DISCUSSION

Supervisory training is essential in the identification and constructive confrontation of troubled employees and is central to their supervisory duties (Maynard & Farmer, 1985:31). Hence, the orientation session for supervisors and managers that aimed at familiarising the supervisors with the EAP as a tool to assist with the troubled employee. The general feedback obtained from the respondents points to the fact that the supervisory training was needed and very helpful in understanding their role within the EAP.

Even though visual promotional items were produced, the researcher found that the most effective strategies for promoting the EAP and the acceptance and use of its services involved some form of oral presentation (Beidel, 1999:100), perhaps due to the heightened interaction between the EAP professional (researcher and EAP counsellors) and the targeted population. Oral presentations fulfil one of the intents of communication, which according to Olson and Olson (1993:6) is to establish and enhance a relationship which in this study commenced with the orientation sessions, formal training and then the educational workshops. The various oral presentations also provided the researcher with the opportunity to hear the kinds of concerns the employees have about the programme and to address major issues, either on the spot or at later opportunities (Maynard & Farmer, 1985:37). In this study, brochures with the EAP contact details as well as other informational material was distributed to the employees during the trainings and workshops to promote the EAP services.

The researcher views the importance of educational workshops, to emphasise the importance of prevention of problems, educate employees about early warning signs, and the availability of referral to professional help when problems arise. A significant improvement has occurred in absenteeism. The results indicate that EAP educational workshops produced positive changes albeit to a small effect in some of the WOS items. Moreover, these changes persisted 90 days after the employees received the education.

It should however be borne in mind that the study having employed a correlational research design with one intervention group, was able to only identify if employees improved at work after the EAP intervention but cannot prove that the EAP intervention was the most important causal factor in this improvement. .

The study once again highlighted the importance of multi-faceting EAPs based on the EAP core technology and the significance of other EAP intervention such as counselling and continued marketing and promotion.

8.9   CONCLUSION

The study explored the efficacy of the EAP focusing on educational workshops as an intervention strategy to enhance employee and organisational resilience (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015). The procedure undertaken to test the effect of workplace education using the WOS was similar to that followed by Sharar, Pompe and Lennox (2012) in their study that evaluated the workplace effect of EAP counselling in companies in the United States. Subjects were pre-tested with the WOS before introducing EAP education and then after the intervention, about 90 days following the pre-test (Sharar, Pompe & Lennox, 2012). The education series covered three topics and was presented weekly, a topic per week, over three weeks in the participating companies. The study showed changes in the expected directions, indicating greatest improvement and largest effects in absenteeism after attendance of employee education sessions of the EAP. However, the realities of the influence of the application of other EAP core technologies such as the awareness created through the marketing and promotion of the EAP cannot be overruled.

In addition to the WOS-analysis, this study analysed the effectiveness of training provided to EAP service providers and the supervisors in SMEs. An analysis of the effectiveness of the marketing of EAP that was employed was also assessed.

The next chapter will present the conclusion and recommendations emanating from this study.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1   INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to explore the personal and work-related problems that employees in SMEs experience and how the problems are dealt with. Furthermore, the study explored the type of problems employees in SMEs faced, the need for and type of EAP suitable for SMEs. Based on the aforementioned activities, the study also developed, implemented and evaluated an EAP for the SME sector.

This chapter presents a consolidation of each chapter as well as conclusions pertaining to the study followed by recommendations.

9.2   CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

9.2.1 Summary

Chapter 1 provided a general overview of the study by providing the background to the study and a presentation of the objectives of the study. The chapter also discussed the significance of the study and the theoretical framework which guided it. The chapter concluded with an outline of the chapters which provided the study with its structure.

This study is the first of its kind designed to explore the need of an EAP for SMEs in Namibia in an effort to add to the limited research in that area as well as explore ideas for future research and programme design and implementation.

9.2.2 Conclusions

Chapter one highlighted the importance of employees as the most important resource in a work organisation, irrespective of the size of the organisation. The importance of businesses to look after the wellbeing of their employees for enhanced productivity was highlighted.

From this chapter, it became clear that there was limited research on EAPs in Namibia and particularly within the SME sector, hence the necessity of this study.

This study laid a foundation for the EAP profession in Namibia where the focus has been on employee health and wellness without necessarily losing focus on employee holistic wellbeing. It also highlighted the need for an EAP for employees within the SME sector.

9.2.3 Recommendations

It is recommended that the findings of this study be utilised to inform the development of EAPs suitable for SMEs.

9.3 CHAPTER 2: SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES – A THEORETICAL STUDY

9.3.1 Summary

The aim of this chapter was to give the reader a greater understanding of the role and function of the SME sector globally and within the Namibian context. It presented a global overview of an SME and its significance to the economic development of a country. The chapter furthermore highlighted the challenges that SMEs face and how these challenges may impact on its owners and employees. It also introduced Namibia as a country as well as provide a brief on SME development in the country.

9.3.2 Conclusions

The study established that there was no universal name and definition of small business enterprise but that the definition varied per country. It however emerged that the global determinants of a SME is that it operates outside government structures and employ a set number of employees.

Besides the limited research and scholarly studies on SMEs in Namibia it became evident that SMEs bear economic significance in terms of employment creation, helping to diversify economic activity and poverty alleviation (Ipinge, 2010; MTI, 1997). This provided the impetus for the promotion of SME development in Namibia.

The literature review also led to the understanding of the peculiarities of SMEs which were taken into consideration in the development of the EAP. Besides the financial constraints, small businesses worldwide, in general, faced various constraints to their development and growth amongst which was the ignorance around the human factor (April, 2005). However, most available research focused on the financial challenges faced by small businesses and least on the human aspects.

9.3.3 Recommendations

The development of a universal name and definition of a small business was needed. This standard definition could be modified to suit the various conditions without altering the core of the definition.

There was also a need for both quantitative and qualitative research on the challenges faced by small business in terms of its human capital.

9.4   CHAPTER 3: EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES – A CONTEXTUAL AND HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

9.4.1 Summary

This chapter discussed the importance of employee wellbeing to a business operation. It further introduced the concept of EAP, presented its origin and types of EAPs. The chapter also discussed the benefits of the EAP to a given workplace.

A broad review of the literature was conducted from a variety of sources such as books, journals and research reports. The aim was to gain an understanding of the definition of an EAP, its origin internationally as well as in South Africa since the concept of EAP in Namibia was drawn from the South African experience. The EAP service delivery models and benefits of an EAP was further explored through the review of the literature. The literature review also led to the comparison of empirical data to literature on EAPs as well as shaping the development of an EAP suitable for SMEs in Namibia.

9.4.2 Conclusions

The study concluded that all human beings at one stage or another experience some problems in their lives. These problems could impact the job performance of employees if not dealt with adequately. Hence, the evolution of the EAP as a tool to help workplaces resolved employees' personal and work-related troubles that may impact on their workplace productivity. Joseph et al. (2018) reported that a study by PricewaterhouseCoopers (2014) found improvements in absenteeism, presenteeism and productivity post-EAP while Grow and Ots (2015) reported improved work/life management, work morale/motivation and work relationship after EAP utilisation.

The concept of EAP was found to be still relatively new in Namibia where the focus has largely been on HIV and AIDS, health and wellness. Few organisations, mostly in the

private sector, who have established such programmes has modelled it against the South African experience.

9.4.3 Recommendations

The development of literature, tools, models and resources around EAPs in the developing context and specifically in Namibia was recommended. Contextualised training on EAPs should also be provided in Namibia.

In addition, the role that HIV and AIDS have played in the evolution of the EAP in South Africa and by extension to Namibia must be documented in the same way as alcohol programmes have contributed to the development of the EAP in the United States.

9.5   CHAPTER 4: AN EAP FOR SMEs – A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

9.5.1   Summary

This chapter consolidated the theoretical and contextual overview on EAPs developed for the SME sector. It presented a discussion of an EAP suitable for SMEs in terms of programme design and implementation. This was done with due consideration of the unique characteristics of the SME sector.

A comprehensive review of literature was conducted that included a variety of sources such as books, journals and research reports.

9.5.2 Conclusions

The significant contribution of SMEs to employment and poverty alleviation in Namibia, as noted in Chapter 2 made the promotion of employee wellbeing within the SME sector vital.

Due to the peculiar nature of most SMEs, the study established that SMEs possess characteristics ideal for the establishment of and an EAP. Findings were that the flat organisational structure of SMEs have opportunities for the development of personal relationship as well as flexibility to respond to problems and challenges (Business Case Studies, 2016) within the workplace.

9.5.3 Recommendations

More literature is needed on EAPs developed for the SME sector, globally but more specifically from the developing economies.

More research in the application of the EAP core technology in SMEs, with its own peculiarities, must be undertaken.

The utilisation of this research findings was recommended to inform the development of standards for EAPs suitable for SMEs in Windhoek.

9.6 CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ETHICAL ASPECTS

9.6.1 Summary

This chapter provided a detailed explanation of the methods that were used to collect data, the research design, the research population, the research sample and the sampling techniques employed. In addition, the procedures which were followed to analyse the data and the measures taken to ensure validity, reliability and trustworthiness of the research was presented.

The chapter further provided a detailed discussion of the approaches and processes used to collect and analyse data in order to generate findings for the study. It also presented an in-depth survey of the various measures and criteria which were employed in order to

ensure both reliability and validity of the findings. The chapter further provided an overview of the ethical considerations that were adhered to during the research process.

The exploratory mixed method approach was used in this intervention study (Delport & Fouché, 2011:441). This involved a qualitative exploration of the personal and work-related problems experienced by employees that impact on workplace productivity as well as the assessment of the current and proposed strategies of how these problems could be addressed in the workplace. Based on the qualitative information, an EAP for SMEs was developed and evaluated (Creswell, 2009:14; Delport & Fouché, 2011:441). Best ways of promoting the programme for optimal utilisation was also explored.

The chapter further presented the ethical issues that were considered in the study.

9.6.2 Conclusions

The intervention research design was the most appropriate for this applied study (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:475); that aimed at assisting employees in SMEs in adopting and sustaining behaviours that reduce psychosocial and health risks, improve quality of life, enhance personal effectiveness and benefit the organisation financially (Mirabito, Baun & Berry, 2011:4). This was done through the development and evaluation of an EAP for SMEs. In order to achieve the six phases of the intervention research model (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:476), the study was carried out in four stages namely, the needs assessment, programme design, implementation and the evaluation of the EAP. These stages were discussed in Chapters 6, 7 and 8, respectively.

9.6.3 Recommendations

The study adopted a correlational research design having only the intervention group experiencing EAP education with no comparison group of employees that are equally distressed and not receiving EAP services. Although less rigorous than the experimental research design, the single case design is typical of almost all studies of the users of

voluntary employee health and wellbeing benefits provided in real life settings (Attridge et al., 2008).

The sample size was appropriate for the design chosen. However, a bigger size sample with diverse SMEs in terms of composition, the area of operation, ownership and other variables was recommended.

9.7   CHAPTER 6: AN EAP FOR SMEs IN WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA: FINDINGS OF A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

9.7.1 Summary

Needs assessments are often carried out before an intervention programme is compiled and evaluated (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:475). Through semi-structured interviews with employers and employees, the study sought insight into the personal and work-related problems that impacts productivity in the workplace, and also explored the current problem solving strategies employed. After the introduction of the concept of an EAP, the study further established the desirability of an EAP by SMEs as well as the preferred type/mode of offering.

In this Chapter, findings of the qualitative exploration of problems experienced by employees in SMEs in Windhoek that impacted on their productivity in the workplace was presented. In addition, the qualitative part of the study sought to gain an understanding of the support available for employees experiencing such problems and their views on the type of EAP they would prefer. Key informant interviews (Annexure 2 & 3) were held with 21 employees and 4 employers to gain an understanding of the phenomenon under study. Data was collected from the key informants by means of face-to-face semi-structured interviews of between 20 - 30 minutes. The qualitative information also shaped the EAP described in Chapter 7.

9.7.2 Conclusions

Consultation and collaboration with a variety of workplace functions to gain a broader understanding of the organisation was important (Frey et al., 2018). This consultation involved key informants representative of all levels of employment from across the participating organisations.

The findings of the study indicate that employees in SMEs experience personal and work-related problems that impact on their productivity in the workplace. These problems range from employee substance use/abuse, health-related concerns, work pressures/demands, low wages, relational issues amongst employees and employers as well as work colleagues, amongst others. Hence, many participants expressed a need for an EAP in SMEs to help employees resolve problems that affect their productivity.

EAP service provision by persons not employed by a particular SME was preferred because of its perceived high degree of confidentiality it presented. There were, however, divergent views on whether counselling services should be on-site or off-site. Therefore the programme that was adopted offered services both on-site and off-site with mostly the screening and referrals taking place on-site.

9.7.3 Recommendations

The EAP served as a platform where employees can receive support and find ways to cope with personal and work-related concerns that may impact on their workplace productivity. Employers clearly expressed a lack of knowledge on how to deal with troubled employees. Therefore the development and implementation of an EAP for SMEs was recommended to assist employees to resolve problems that impact on their productivity.

9.8   CHAPTER 7: DESCRIPTION OF AN EAP FOR SMEs IN WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

9.8.1 Summary

This chapter presented an outline of an EAP that was designed for SMEs, guided by the needs of the employees and their employers. The EAP core technologies of the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA provided the framework for the EAP that was developed. The chapter clearly outlined theoretical and empirical aspects around EAP programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Based on the needs assessment as well as the literature reviewed, an EAP was designed as an intervention to assist troubled employees in their respective workplaces. No empirical work was carried out during this phase, which basically involved a desk review of literature on employee assistance interventions, incorporating findings from the needs assessment.

9.8.2 Conclusions

Findings of this study revealed that EAP services must be customised to meet the clients' needs (Jacobson & Hosford-Lamb, 2008) as well as that of the organisation. Therefore, each EAP must be uniquely designed for its workplace, taking into consideration the distinct requirements of both labour [if any], management interests (Csiernik; 2005) and needs of employees. Merely offering an EAP does not mean it will be used. According to Attridge et al. (2009b) a company should develop a specific target level of utilisation and then create a realistic plan to promote the EAP in order to achieve the utilisation desired.

EAP standards as described by the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015) was used as a framework for the development of the EAP.

9.8.3　Recommendations

9.8.3.1　　　　EAP Advisory Committee

The Namibian context and the SME sector, in particular, has its own peculiarities, requiring the contextualising of the EAP standards developed by the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015). An advisory committee comprising both the employer and employees from different levels of employment as well as other stakeholders is vital in this regard. The Advisory Committee will also ensure "maximization of the potential for a highly effective programme" (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015:6). It is recommended that this committee comprise of all stakeholders ranging from senior and middle management, employee representatives, EAP professionals and other service providers.

9.8.3.2　　Programme design

Most of the evidence from reviews of studies conducted globally with a positive outcome of EAPs was for the provision of counselling services (Attridge et al., 2018). The EAP thus has a great focus on counselling which did not take place in this study. It is important for future research to also consider workplace counselling as part of the EAP in addition to other interventions. The researcher believes that programme design should cater to both organisational as well as employee needs through offerings such as individual, group and family services, management consultation, educational material amongst others. The modern EAP should incorporate proactive and reactive aspects by offering both secondary and tertiary interventions (Joseph et al., 2018).

The study recommends a combination of EAP interventions whereby certain services such as training would be provided onsite and clinical/counselling services offered on- and/or off-site depending on employee preference. The onsite services could be on designated dates that will be communicated to employees. This would in a way also ensure the visibility of the EAP within the organisations (SMEs). Preference of a hybrid

model was also confirmed by this study through the interviews that were conducted. A study by Frey et al. (2018) however concluded that no single EAP design fits all organisations but that the key to an effective EAP is understanding the needs of the organisation and exercising a combination of autonomy and flexibility when implementing programmes.

9.8.3.3   EAP professionals

Even though a need for an EAP for SMEs was established, the study through the needs assessment found that SMEs are financially not able to contract services of a commercial EAP service provider. Similarly, Frey et al. (2018) established that SMEs can neither employ full- or part-time counsellors who are regular status employees of the work organisation, which implies an increase in employment cost. Hence, the reliance of this study on the free services offered by professionals in the public service. The study thus recommends that a pool of practitioners in the public sector, most appropriately psychosocial service providers from the Ministry of Health and Social Services and Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, be trained/orientated on the EAP for effective and efficient service delivery to SMEs. These two Ministries are the major employers of social workers in the country. It was also recommended that a practitioner within the two Ministries be identified to coordinate the programme for SMEs if it is to achieve the goals and objectives of the EAP. As was the case with this study, all EAP staff should be registered with the Health Professions Council of Namibia. They should amongst others possess expertise in:

- Basic interviewing skills.
- Counselling and case management skills.
- Alcoholism and its treatment.
- Marriage and family counselling.
- General emotional problems.
- Knowledge of HIV and AIDS and other lifestyle conditions.
- Other typical problems such as financial and legal problems.

Regular meetings on the EAP was recommended where case management and other issues pertinent to the EAP can be discussed. Ongoing mentoring and support from experienced case managers was also crucial.

9.8.3.4   EAP policy and operational guidelines

There must be a policy to provide the scope of the EAP and clearly delineate its implementation (Attridge et al., 2010; Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015; Maiden, 1999). The EAP policy must clearly provide guarantees, principles, and members' rights and responsibilities. The policy should include a statement on management commitment and support. It should also include a specific statement on confidentiality and its operations pertaining to all aspects of the EAP.

Coupled with the policy, an operational procedure should be drafted outlining the duties and responsibilities of all stakeholders, the resources required as well as deadlines. The operational plan should include clear guidelines for programme activation, marketing and promotion, staff selection, operations and administration, and monitoring and evaluation procedures.

Keeping in mind the educational level of employees in the SME sector, it was recommended that the EAP policy be concise and comprehensible. Besides English, the policy and operational guidelines should be translated in the most commonly used vernaculars in a given organisation.

The EAP policy and its operational guidelines must be marketed to facilitate instant identification. Copies thereof should be made available to all employees, displayed in various work-site environments and discussed continuously in meetings and other staff gatherings. This would ensure that employees are familiar with the content of the EAP policy and operational guidelines.

9.8.3.5   Training and development

The modern EAP incorporates proactive and reactive aspects by offering both secondary and tertiary interventions which range from activities such as training and coaching for areas of concern such as stress, organisational change and substance misuse across an entire organisation (Joseph et al., 2018). The inclusion of management coaching in this study may indicate the usefulness of the EAPs more strategically and proactively in order to develop their human capital and avert escalation of issues (Joseph & Walker, 2017).

As highlighted by the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015:21&22) ongoing training must be provided to:

- enhance the functioning of the EAP within the organisation,
- provide clarity to potential referring supervisors about their role in the assessment of poor performance and the referral process,
- enhance supervisors' ability to make appropriate referrals,
- ensure the support for the EAP along with union representatives,
- define the rationale of the EAP,
- promote the EAP as a management support system,
- clarify programme operation,
- outline procedures for referring employees experiencing job performance problems,
- communicate the positive impact the EAP may have on the organisation.

However, there should be due cognisance of the "availability and propensity of SME staff to attend face-to-face training/therapy or workshop style interventions often seen in corporate or public sector work settings is a widely recognised problem" (Martin et al., 2009:n.p.). It is recommended that alternative modes of delivery that was convenient for SMEs are considered.

9.8.3.6   Marketing of programme

The creation of awareness of the benefit of EAPs in SMEs is vital because it provides an avenue where troubled employees can seek psychosocial support when necessary. Marketing of the EAP is essential to ensure visibility in a given organisation and to make sure that it was optimally utilised by the targeted beneficiaries. Therefore, the development and implementation of an appropriate marketing strategy was highly recommended (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015:22). A necessary component of marketing is to maintain regular communications with employees and family members regarding the availability the EAP and the importance of being proactive concerning its use (Attridge et al., 2010).

The study recommends the development of a marketing strategy that involves all relevant stakeholders and reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure relevance and feasibility (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015: 23).

9.8.3.7   Stakeholder management

The Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2015:24) highlighted the importance of networking with various internal and external stakeholders. Networking, with especially external stakeholders, was vital for an EAP for SME due to this sector's limitations in terms of internal capacity for service provision. The identification of all relevant stakeholders as well as continuous networking with these role players was recommended to ensure commitment to the EAP.

9.9   CHAPTER 8: PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

This chapter entailed the last two phases of intervention research which was evaluation and advanced development and dissemination (Creswell, 2009:14; Delport & Fouche, 2011:441). Four tasks were carried in this phase, namely selecting an experimental design, collecting and analysing data, replicating the intervention under field conditions

and refining the intervention (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:485). A single system design was chosen as an appropriate design to evaluate the effectiveness of the EAP intervention.

The WOS which is an empirically validated measurement tool designed to quantify the relationship between EAP intervention and workplace outcomes (Sharar & Lennox, 2010) was used for testing the outcome of the pre and post-test intervention. To gain a broader understanding of the participants, questions to attain the demographic profile of the respondents were included to the WOS. Since the focus of the study was on the EAP intervention and not solely on EAP counselling, questions around the training and marketing of the programme were also incorporated.

9.9.1 Summary

The intervention process commenced with consultations with the work organisations to gain buy-in from management. These consultations provided an impetus for the undertaking of the study. The needs assessment also confirmed the perceived value of the proposed EAP as well as what type of EAP model will be valuable. The involvement of all the relevant stakeholders in the design of the programme was also of paramount importance. In the absence of a formal EAP Advisory Committee, the researcher co-coordinated the functions of this committee (Standards Committee of EAPA-SA, 2015:6). The researcher solicited input from various stakeholders on an ad hoc basis in terms of policy formulation (Annexure 10), implementation procedure, marketing and promotion and other aspects as required.

Seven (7) social workers from the Ministry of Health and Social Services who expressed interest in serving as EAP practitioners were orientated around the EAP and the role of the EAP practitioner. This was followed by training of about 15 supervisors from the participating SMEs conducted by the researcher and two of the social workers who received the initial training on the EAP.

Due to concerns over the under-utilisation of the EAP which was also highlighted under limitations (Section 1.8), the focus of the EAP that was implemented changed from face-to-face counselling to employee education. Focus areas of the education sessions were determined by the outcome of the needs assessment and addressed substance abuse, financial literacy and gender-based/domestic violence. Alcohol abuse, financial problems and domestic violence which manifest itself mostly through absenteeism affects employees' productivity in the workplace (Aronsson et al., 2000; Fraser et al., 2002; Michie, 2002). The education sessions were facilitated by various professionals established as part of the researcher's network of resources, two of which also underwent training that was offered to the EAP counsellors. Topics were presented in the two organisations weekly on Wednesday and Friday mornings over a period of three weeks during October and November 2017. The education sessions that lasted between 3 - 4 hours each were in a workshop format consisting of lectures, question and answer session as well as practical applications and was attended by a total of 59 employees. During the sessions, employees were provided with contact details of social workers and other relevant service providers, in case they require further assistance.

Quantitative instruments were administered before the commencement of the education sessions and again about 90 days thereafter.

9.9.2 Conclusions

Consultations with work organisations and other relevant stakeholders as well as the needs assessment provided valuable information that shaped the EAP that was developed, irrespective of the change in focus.

The concurrent measurement of quantitative and qualitative data complemented the results which strengthened the study.

Language was an important consideration in this study. The education sessions, in the same way as the employee training and orientation around the EAP, were conducted in

English and translated in a local language, preferred by the employees. The WOS items also had to be translated for some respondents.

9.9.3 Recommendations

The demographic data revealed several issues that may be unique to this study. For example, there were more male than female respondents. This was possibly due to the composition of the organisations surveyed. It is important for future research to take into consideration the effect of gender on research response rates and utilisation of services as well as on perceptions of the effectiveness of the EAP.

Besides the additions in terms of the inclusion of questions around the demographic profile of the participants as well as programme marketing, the standardised measuring instrument (i.e. the WOS) needs further adjustments to a suit a particular research context.

The type of EAP and the services it offers is also vital in terms of utilisation. Short-term psychological counselling interventions remains the core offering for the EAP (Joseph et al., 2018). Therefore, the majority of cases presented to the EAP only offer brief face-to-face counselling; that is six sessions or less (Sharar, 2009). It is not clear if the brief counselling-only EAP model would yield the same outcomes in programmes that apply the other EAP core technology. Joseph et al. (2018:2) found that a review of EAPs which focused solely on workplace counselling and excluded other EAP services meant that the findings were "limited in its generalizability, making it difficult to delineate any differences between the various EAP services, their impact on outcome variables and whether these differences affect the overall effectiveness of EAPs within organizations". This study thus recommends that the WOS should be adjusted to measure all aspects of the EAP core technologies and not solely focus on EAP counselling.

The study highlighted the necessity for EAPs. However, there is a need for empirical assessment of EAP's effectiveness especially in developing economies, where

employers' and employees' exposure to EAP is relatively recent and not in-depth (Li, Mollenhauer & Zhang, 2006). Research which shows that EAPs are effective in Namibia in general and specifically in SMEs is thus important for future development of the field.

It was also recommended that EAP services include family members of the employees.

9.10 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.10.1 The goal and objectives of the study

The goal of this study was to design, implement and evaluate an EAP suitable for SMEs in Namibia.

The goal of the research was accomplished. An EAP for SMEs was found to be necessary in order to address the psychosocial needs of employees and improve their productivity in the workplace.

Emanating from the goal, the objectives of this study were to:

- Explore the type of challenges experienced by SMEs and its employees;

This objective has been accomplished as the researcher, through qualitative analysis, established the personal and work-related problems that impact on the productivity of employees in the SME sector.

- Describe ways to address these challenges as viewed by SMEs and its employees;

This objective was also realised as the researcher, through qualitative analysis, established the type of assistance employers and employees require in order to resolve the personal and work-related problems that impact on the productivity of employees in the SME sector.

- Develop and implement an EAP for SMEs;

This objective was attained. The needs of employers and employees as identified in the needs assessment, as well as the literature reviewed, was used to develop an EAP for SMEs in Windhoek, Namibia.

- Evaluate the newly developed EAP after a 12-month implementation and administration period;

This objective was reached whereby the evaluation of the programme that was implemented took place within the 12-month period.

- Compile and disseminate guidelines for EAPs for SMEs in Namibia, based on the research findings.

Findings of the study will be shared with the NCCI, Healthworks Business Coalition and any other organisation of interest. To reach out to a broader scholarship, articles will be submitted to accredited journals for possible publication, and findings will be presented at national, regional and international conferences.

9.10.2 Hypothesis

The following hypothesis guided the proposed research:

If an Employee Assistance Programme is implemented in small and medium enterprises, employee productivity in the workplace will improve.

Based on the findings and conclusions of this research the hypothesis was partly confirmed. Due to the implementation of the EAP, absenteeism, one of the variables that were tested using the WOS, which could impact on workplace productivity was reduced.

9.10.3 Research questions

The study aimed to answer the following research questions:

- Are employees of SMEs experiencing psychosocial problems as an indicator of the need for an EAP?

The needs assessment showed that employees in SME do experience psychosocial problems that impacts on their workplace productivity. In as much as they are concerned about their employees' welfare, employers expressed their incompetence in addressing employees' emotional issues. Both the employers and employees where aware of the availability of employee assistance services in bigger-sized organisations and expressed interest for such programmes for SMEs.

Therefore, the development and implementation of an EAP for SMEs was highly recommended.

- What would be the expected services to be rendered by the EAP suitable for employees of SMEs?

Most participants welcomed the introduction of an EAP that will address the psychosocial needs of employees in SMEs. Due to similarities in the Namibian and South African work context, the EAPA-SA standards were deemed appropriate to guide the development and content of the EAP. This was done keeping in mind the concern which was expressed that SMEs should not be treated the same as bigger-sized companies in the development of the EAP because of peculiarities of the SME sector.

Confidentiality was a great concern for the participants with most indicating that due to the small size and flat organisational structure of SMEs, employers and employees tend to be more familiar with each other. Participants thus expressed a preference for an external EAP as it may increase the sense of confidentiality but also provided an efficient low cost alternative. Based on the indication by the participants, it was recommended that an external EAP model will be suitable for SMEs whereby services will be provided both on- and off-site.

9.11   RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The following recommendations are made for future research:

- The results of this study support the important role of EAPs for employees in SMEs to minimise the impact of personal and/or work-related problems on workplace productivity. Although this study confirmed that an EAP which focussed on employee education impacted workplace outcomes, specifically absenteeism, the effect was moderate. More research which includes all aspects of the EAP core technology is needed.
- A need exists to conduct research to assess the relevance and application of EAP core technology within the peculiar setting of SMEs which are mostly faced with resource constraints, and specifically within the African contexts.
- There is a need for experimental research with a treatment and control group to assess the impact of EAPs on workplace outcomes.
- There is also a need to improve the findings of this study by using a bigger sample and by exploring all aspects of the EAP core technology in the development of the programme.
- Another factor that will determine the success of an EAP in SMEs is the culture of the workforce into which the programme is to be integrated. There is a need for the exploration of the cultural and individual values of employees pertaining to counselling in general and specifically within the workplace.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE 1: PERMISSION LETTERS – NAMIBIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (NCCI) & HEALTHWORKS BUSINESS COALITION

P. O. Box 9355
2 Jenner Street
C/o Simpson & Jenner Str
Windhoek-West
Windhoek Namibia
Tel: +264-61 228809
Fax: +264-61 228009
E-mail: ncciinfo@ncci.org.na
Website: www.ncci.org.na

Registration Number: 21/2002/507

Enquiries: Mr. Tarah N. Shaanika

09 March 2015

Dear Ms Leonard,
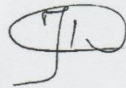
REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH IN SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES IN WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

Your request to undertake research for your doctoral studies entitled "Employee Assistance Programme for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in Namibian", refers.

Permission is hereby granted for you to undertake the envisaged research in SMEs as proposed.

We wish the best of luck in your studies.

Kind regards,

MR.T. N. SHAANIKA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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Healthworks
Business Coalition

Formerly known as NABCOA

19 March 2015

Dear Ms. Leonard,

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH WITH SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES IN WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

Your request to undertake research for your doctoral studies entitled "*Employee Assistance Programme for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in Namibian*", refers.

Permission is hereby granted for you to undertake the envisaged research in SMEs as proposed, Please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Johanna Mbandi.

We wish the best of luck in your studies.

Sincerely,

MR. P. J. VAN WYK
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ANNEXURE 2: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EMPLOYERS

1. Demographics:
   - Gender
   - Age
   - Marital status
   - Number of years in business
   - Number of employees and positions

2. In your view, what are the typical problems (personal and/or work-related) that your employees experience that impact on their work performance?

3. How do you know when an employee has a problem?

4. What do you (as employer) do when your employees experience such problems?

5. In your opinion, whose responsibility is it to support employees with personal problems?

6. Whose responsibility is it to support employees with work-related problems?

7. What services do you offer or could be offered to employees with problems that affect their work performance?

8. An EAP is a confidential programme available to assist the employee when he/she needs help to deal with life events, workplace issues and other personal problems and challenges. What are your thoughts on the EAP?

9. Of what benefit would an EAP be for your business/workplace?

10. What would be the best way to present/offer an EAP to employees in SMEs?

11. Who should be tasked with the actual provision of the EAP?

12. Would you encourage your employees to use the EAP?

ANNEXURE 3: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EMPLOYEES

1. Demographics:
   - Gender
   - Age
   - Marital status
   - Number of years of employment
2. Have you ever experienced personal and/or work related problems that you felt affected your work performance? Which types of problems are/were those?
3. What do you do when you experience such problems?
4. Who do you consult when experiencing problems?
5. What type of support does your employer offer?
6. What are your thoughts/feelings on the provision of support structures by your employer?
7. An Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is a confidential programme available to assist the employee when he/she needs help to deal with life events, workplace issues and other personal problems and challenges. What are your thoughts on the EAP?
8. In your opinion, how would the EAP be of help/benefit to you as an employee?
9. There are three types of EAPs – onsite offered by a person employed by the company, off-site (offered by a person not employed by your company) or a combination of both where the company employees such a person but who mostly links employers with outside service providers. What would be the best way to present/offer an EAP to the employees in SMEs? Why?
10. Would you make use of an EAP if your employer were to provide it?

ANNEXURE 4: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

![University of Pretoria logo] UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Social Work & Criminology

6 May 2015

Our Ref: Prof Terblanche

Tel. 012 4203292

Fax. 0866287488

Email: lourie.terblanche@up.ac.za

Ref.: Emma Leonard (Student Number: 12364887)

Cell.: +264 811288025

Fax2Email:+264 (0) 886554138

E-mail: eleonard@unam.na / emma.leonard2010@gmail.com

Dear Participant,

I am a doctoral student in the Department of Social Work at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. As part of my studies I am required to write a thesis, resulting from a research project, under the supervision of Prof L S Terblanche.

I hereby request you to participate in the envisaged study, based on the following details:

TITLE OF STUDY:

An Employee Assistance Programme for Small and Medium Enterprises in Namibia.

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PURPOSE OF STUDY:

The purpose of this study is to assess the need for and develop an employee assistance programme for small and medium-sized enterprises in Namibia.

PROCEDURE:

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are either an employer/employee of an SME.

If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to sign this consent form before you have answered all questions. In this study you will be asked to participate in an individual interview with the researcher focusing on the following aspects:

- Problems (personal and/or work-related) that impacts on productivity in the workplace.
- Current problem-solving strategies
- Knowledge on and possible utilisation of the Employee Assistance Programme.

The interview will last approximately one hour at a location and time of your convenience. The interviews will be recorded using a digital recording device and assigned a unique identification number to ensure that no identifying information will be revealed in the final research product.

RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There is a risk that the interview may create some level of discomfort. You may feel a loss of privacy or exposure because you will be talking about your personal problems in a place which is normally regarded as a work space. You however do not have to talk about any subject you do not want to talk about and you may stop the interview at any time. Should you experience any psychological harm as a result of the interviews, a debriefing session will be conducted with the researcher

upon completion of the interview. Should additional counselling be required, a referral will be made to the social workers in the Ministry of Health and Social Services – already arranged.

BENEFITS:

There are no direct financial gains to accrue from this study. Results thereof could however assist in the development of an EAP for SMEs in Namibia which is ultimately geared towards the enhancement of productivity and social functioning of employees employed by SMEs. The potential benefit of your participation in this study lies in your views, potentially appropriate for shaping the envisaged programme.

PARTICIPANTS' RIGHTS:

Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw your participation at any time and without negative consequences to you, the participant.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

In order to minimize any risks associated with this study, all information you provide will be regarded as confidential. The data collected during the interviews will be transcribed and a unique identification number will be used as identification instead of your name. This will ensure that the data will not be linked to your name or identity. However, information from the study and the consent form signed by you may be looked at or copied for research or legal purposes by the University of Pretoria. My supervisor will have access to all raw data collected during the research process.

The digital records of the interviews will be saved electronically and stored in a locked cabinet until all of the records are transcribed in full. All records will eventually be saved at the Department of Social Work and Criminology, University of Pretoria for a period of 15 years for archival purposes. Findings from this study may be presented at meetings, conferences or published in papers. The findings

will be presented in a way that preserves the confidentiality of the participants, and will be framed in terms of recommendations to promote the implementation of EAPs for SMEs.

PERSON TO CONTACT:

In the event that you may have any questions about your participation in this study, you can contact Emma Leonard, Cell: 0811288025, Email: eleonard@unam.na

Kind regards,

EMMA LEONARD

Kind regards

PROF L S TERBLANCHE
COURSE LEADER

CONSENT BY THE PARTICIPANT:

I have been given the opportunity to read this informed consent form. I understand the information about this study and I voluntarily wish to confirm my willingness to participate in this study.

Participant name	**Participant signature**	**Date**

Contact telephone number:

ANNEXURE 5: QUESTIONNAIRE – WOS

AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN NAMIBIA

Dear Respondent/Employee,

Please read the following questions and insert a cross (X) in the relevant box or write down your responses in the space provided.

Thank you for spending time to complete this questionnaire.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. What is your sex?

Male ☐   Female ☐

2. What is your age group?

Less than 20	
21 - 30	
31 - 40	
41 - 50	
51 - 60	
60 and older	

What is your marital status?

Single	
Living together	
Married*	
Separated	
Divorced	
Widowed	

*Includes traditional, church and court marriages

3. **What is your highest level of education?**

Below Grade 8 (Standard 6)	
Grade 8 -10 (Standard 6 – 8)	
Grade 11- 12 (Standard 9 – 10)	
Certificate or Diploma	
Undergraduate Degree	
Postgraduate Degree	

4. **How long have you worked for this company?**

Less than a year	
2 – 5 years	
6 – 10 years	
11 – 15 years	
More than 15 years	

SECTION B: WORKPLACE OUTCOME SUITE

CGP WORKPLACE OUTCOME SUITE (WOS)

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Below is a series of statements that refer to aspects of your work and life experience that may be affected by the personal problems you want to address at the EAP during the past 30 days. Please read each item carefully and answer as accurately as you can.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ITEMS 1-5

Please report for the period of the past 30 days the total number of hours your personal problems:

NUMBER OF HOURS

ABSENTEEISM	1.	Caused you to miss work altogether.	
	2.	Made you late for work.	
	3.	Caused you to take off early.	
	4.	Pulled you away from your normal work location.	
	5.	Required you to be on the phone, e-mail or internet while at work.	

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ITEMS 6-25

The following statements reflect what you may do or feel on the job or at home. Please indicate the degree to which you agree with each of the statements for the past 30 days. Use the 1-5 response key to the right.

			STRONGLY DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	SOMEWHAT AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
PRESENTEEISM	6.	I had a hard time doing my work because of my personal problems.	1	2	3	4	5
	7.	My personal problems kept me from concentrating on my work.	1	2	3	4	5
	8.	Because of my personal problems I was not able to enjoy my work.	1	2	3	4	5
	9.	My personal problems made me worry about completing my tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
	10.	I could not do my job well because of my personal problems.	1	2	3	4	5
WORK ENGAGEMENT	11.	I feel stimulated by my work.	1	2	3	4	5
	12.	I often think about work on my way to the work site.	1	2	3	4	5
	13.	I feel passionate about my job.	1	2	3	4	5
	14.	I am often eager to get to the work site to start the day.	1	2	3	4	5
	15.	I often find myself thinking about my work at home.	1	2	3	4	5
LIFE SATISFACTION	16.	My life is nearly perfect.	1	2	3	4	5
	17.	I am not very satisfied with my life as a whole.	1	2	3	4	5
	18.	So far, my life seems to be going very well.	1	2	3	4	5
	19.	There isn't anything about my life that I would change if I could.	1	2	3	4	5
	20.	I am very disappointed about the way my life has turned out.	1	2	3	4	5
WORKPLACE DISTRESS	21.	I often feel anxious at work.	1	2	3	4	5
	22.	Thinking about being at work makes me upset.	1	2	3	4	5
	23.	I am unhappy most of the time at work.	1	2	3	4	5
	24.	I dread going into work.	1	2	3	4	5
	25.	I can't wait to get away from work.	1	2	3	4	5

ANNEXURE 6: QUESTIONNAIRE – ASSESSMENT OF EAP COUNSELLORS TRAINING

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN NAMIBIA

EAP COUNSELLORS TRAINING EVALUATION FORM

Date: _____

Location: _____

Trainer: _____

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements listed below.

	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)
1. The objectives of the training were clearly defined.					
2. Participation and interaction were encouraged.					
3. The topics covered were relevant to me.					
4. The content was organised and easy to follow.					
5. The materials distributed were helpful.					
6. This training experience will be useful in my role as EAP councillor					
7. The trainer was knowledgeable about the training topics.					
8. The trainer was well prepared.					
9. The training objectives were met.					
10. The time allotted for the training was sufficient.					
11. The meeting room and facilities were adequate and comfortable.					

ANNEXURE 7: QUESTIONNAIRE – ASSESSMENT OF SUPERVISORS TRAINING

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN NAMIBIA

SUPERVISORS' TRAINING EVALUATION FORM

Date: _____

Location: _____

Trainer: _____

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements listed below.

	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)
12. The objectives of the training were clearly defined.					
13. Participation and interaction were encouraged.					
14. The topics covered were relevant to me.					
15. The content was organised and easy to follow.					
16. The materials distributed were helpful.					
17. This training experience will be useful in my role as supervisor					
18. The trainer was knowledgeable about the training topics.					
19. The trainer was well prepared.					
20. The training objectives were met.					
21. The time allotted for the training was sufficient.					
22. The meeting room and facilities were adequate and comfortable.					

ANNEXURE 8: QUESTIONNAIRE – ASSESSMENT OF MARKETING STRATEGY

EAP FOR SMEs IN WINDHOEK

EVALUATION OFTHE FFECTIVENESS OF EAP MARKETING

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements listed below.

	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)
1. EAP marketing material was easy to understand.					
2. Attending EAP presentations was useful in obtaining information on the programme.					
3. Topics presented by the EAP was relevant to employee needs.					
4. Marketing activities addresses confidentiality.					
5. EAP marketing assisted in understanding the benefits of utilising the EAP.					

Thank you for your feedback!

ANNEXURE 9: ETHICAL CLEARANCE – UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

12 August 2015

Dear Prof Lombard

Project:	**An Employee Assistance Programme for Small and Medium Enterprises in Namibia**
Researcher:	**E Leonard**
Supervisor:	**Prof L Terblanche**
Department:	**Social Work and Criminology**
Reference number:	**12364887 (GW20150707HS)**

Thank you for your response to the Committee's correspondence 3 August 2015.
I have pleasure in informing you that the Research Ethics Committee formally **approved** the above study at an *ad hoc* meeting held on 12 August 2015. Data collection may therefore commence.

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

The Committee requests you to convey this approval to the researcher.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

Prof. Karen Harris
Acting Chair: Research Ethics Committee
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail: karen.harris@up.ac.za

Research Ethics Committee Members: Prof KL Harris(Acting Chair); Dr L Blokland; Prof M-H Coetzee; Dr JEH Grobler; Prof B Hogmeyr; Ms H Klopper; Dr C Panebianco-Warrens; Dr C Puttergill; Prof GM Spies; Dr Y Spies; Prof E Taljard; Dr P Wood

ANNEXURE 10: EAP INFORMATIONAL BROCHURES

(ENGLISH & OSHIWAMBO)

EAP

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME FOR SMALL & MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SMEs)

WHAT HAPPENS IN COUNSELLING?

Our professional counsellor will work with you to assist in managing or resolving any concerns that negatively impact your life. EAP counselling is designed to be short term, solution focussed counselling. If you require further and/or specialised support, referral to other services will be provided. The aim is to discuss your concerns and work out some strategies or options to improve your coping skills.

GETTING THE HELP YOU NEED IS SIMPLE

If you need guidance, give us a call to find out how we can help. We are available by telephone Monday – Friday, 09h00 – 13h00 and 14h00 – 16h30 to provide immediate help for urgent matters.

Call Us Now
081 858 4380/ 081 605 0155

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGES

- Needing support to help achieve your goals
- Missing deadlines
- Involved in conflicts frequently
- Needing new strategies on professional or personal goals

PERSONAL CHALLENGES

- Distracted by issues at work or at home
- Not feeling your usual self
- Feeling overwhelmed

SOME REASONS PEOPLE CONTACT THE EAP ARE:

- *Improving relationships/communication with others*
- *Facing crisis and trauma*
- *Grief and loss support*
- *Strategies for handling conflict with colleagues or supervisors/managers*
- *Facing alcohol, drug or gambling addictions*
- *Handling anxiety and stress effectively*
- *Feeling depressed or down*
- *Improving work performance*
- *Assistance with financial and legal distress*

WHEN TO CONTACT US

Many life challenges and changes are best resolved with assistance from an experienced counsellor.

YOUR WELLBEING STARTS HERE

Your Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is a voluntary, confidential and complimentary counselling service. It is a short-term, solution focused approach to help you enhance your overall wellbeing.

EAP can assist when personal, family or work related concerns are impacting on your health or quality of life and also when you need guidance on professional or personal goals or effective communication skills. Through professional and experienced counselling sessions, you can achieve your full potential. his service is completely confidential. Your employer or colleagues will never be informed that you have contacted us; your privacy is guaranteed.

EAP appointments can be made by simply calling the EAP. Face-to-face counselling can be arranged at a time and location that's convenient to you. Counselling services are also available via telephone.

All our counsellors are independent of your organisation and focused on supporting you to address any issues impacting your wellbeing.

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EAP

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME FOR SMALL & MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SMEs)

MEXUNGOMWENYO OHAMU NINGWA SHIKE?

Omuxungimwenyo wetu a deulwa ota ka longa naave a kwafele mokukandula po omaupyakadi oo haa ku hange mon-ghalamwenyo yoye. Exungomwenyo lo-EAP ola totwa po li longe mefimbo lixupi elela, opo li kandule po omaudjuu tashipifile mex-ungomwenyo. Ngeenge owa pumbwa eyambidido, oto ka tuminwa keenhele oko to dulu okumona Ekwafo ngeenge otashi dulika. Elalakano okuhokolola omaupyakadi oo u na opo ku talike kutya omilandu dilipipo tadi longifwa oku ku kwafa u kandule po omaudjuu oye mwene.

OKUMONA EKWAFO ELI WA PUMBWA OKUPU

Ngeenge owa pumbwa ekwafo, tu dengela tu tale kutya ohatu ku kwafele ngahelipi. Denga okudja Omaandaha fiyo Etitano, okudja po 08H30-13h00 nokudja po 14H00-16H30 tu ku pe ekwafo kiinima ei ye endelela.

Dengela keengodi tadi shikula:
081 858 4380/ 081 605 0155

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ONGHALONAWA YOYE OPO TAI TAMEKE APA

Oprograma yokukwafela ovanailonga (EAP) yoye, otai longifwa keliyambo loye mwene. Omauyelele oye otaa kala a amenwa, noto pewa exungomwenyo. Ekwafo eli otali kala lopokafimbo kaxupi elela opo u mone ekandulepo loudjuu woye, nokukwaaluilla ombili yokomwenyo.

EAP otai ku kwafa momaudjuu i e na sha noukolele woye ile u wete ongushu yoye ya fa yawa pedu, tashe etwa komaudjuu opaumwene, kovakwapata, koilonga ile keendjodi dopaumwene nokushiiva okukwatafana nawa novanhu.

Mexungomwenyo la nuka po olo to ningilwa, otali ku kwafa wu hange ashishe osho to lalakanene., noto dulu okuhanga aishe wa hala okumona pauyadi. Meyakulo eli, Omauyelele oye otaa kala a amenekeka.

Ova hona voye osho yo ovanailonga pamwe naave itava shivifilwa kombinga yeenghundafana detu naave.

Ouyelele woye otau kwatwa noukeka. Ngeenge owa hala okuninga oshilaye nafye, oto dulu oku shi ninga pangodi. Exungomwenyo lopangodi osho yo lokoshipala noshipala otali dulu okuningwa pefimbo nopoonhele ye ku wapalela. Ovaxungimwenyo kave shi oshitopolwa shehangano leni, otave ku yambidida ashike u dule okutaalela oudjuu keshe tau nyonauna Onghalo nawa yoye, nombili yoko mwenyo.

OMASHONGO OPAILONGA

- Owa pumbwa eyambidido lokuku kwafela okuhanga eendjodi doye.
- Iho wanifa po oilonga yoye ngaashi sha udafanwa.
- Alushe oove ngoo u li meenhangu.
- Owa pumbwa omilandu di pe meshiivo loye lopailonga ile meendjodi dopaumwene.

OMASHONGO OPAUMWENE

- Oto piyaanekwa komaudjuu koilonga ile keumbo.
- Ou dite wa fa wa limbililwa
- Ou dite wa wililwa po kiinima ihapu

OMATOMHENO AMWE OVANHU HAVA KONGO EKWAFO KO EAP OO AA TAA LANDULA:

- *Okuwapaleka onghala-fano/omukalo ho longifa okupopya novanhu.*
- *Owa taalela omaudjuu ombaadilila wa li ino a teelela ile omangwangwano*
- *Omaupyakadi e etwa keso lovaholike voye ile wa kanifa sha ndee kape na eyambidido lasha*
- *Omilandu dokulihumbatela nawa omaudjuu haa holoka ngeenge kape na eudafano pokati keni novanailonga pamwe naave ile novahona voye*

- *Omaupyakadi okupikwa o koikolwifa ile koingangamifi nosho yo okuta omashina*
- *Okulihumbata nawa molungwenye niinyenu*
- *Omhepo ya wa pedu ile wa ninga omwenyo mwii*
- *Ehalo lokulundulula ile okweetapo sha moilonga*
- *Ekwafo lokukwata nawa oshimaliwa ile uuna wa taalela iinima iihokolola yopaveta*

ONAINI U NA OKU TU KONGA

Omashongo mahapu omonghalamwenyo nomalunduluko ohaa kanduiwa po nawa nekwafelo lomuxungimwenyo a pyokoka. Kashiimba owa hala okukendabala okumona omuxungimwenyo wo-EAP koinima tai shikula.

ANNEXURE 11: EAP MARKETING AND PROMOTION POSTERS

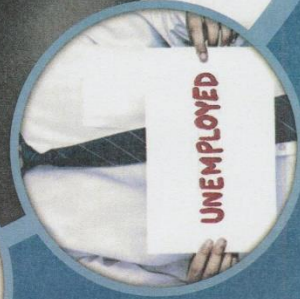Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) for SMEs

NEED HELP?

For Confidential Caring Assistance with personal and family problems.

Call Us Now
081 858 4380/ 081 605 0155

SUBSTANCE ABUSE CAN COST YOU:

Your health

Your relationships

Your financial security

And possibly your job

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) for SMEs

Call Us Now
081 858 4380/ 081 605 0155

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ANNEXURE 12: EAP POLICY

[COMPANY NAME]'S EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (EAP) POLICY

BACKGROUND

[Company Name] recognises that employees may, from time to time, experience problems of a personal or work-related nature which impact on their work performance, health, wellbeing or productivity of the workplace. An important strategy to assist staff in this regard is the provision of an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), which gives employees and members of their immediate family access to a confidential counselling service.

The EAP will provide confidential and voluntary assistance through its EAP to all employees and their families who may be faced with dynamic challenges. Matters that may be addressed through the EAP include, but are not limited to, dealing with work or life change; relationship issues; personal trauma; family difficulties; financial concerns; health matters; alcohol or substance abuse; gambling or other addictions; coping or dealing with grief and/or loss.

For the welfare of employees as well as for effective business operations, **[Company Name]** encourages its employees to take advantage of this valuable benefit of employment with the company.

POLICY PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the effective operation of an EAP at **[Company Name]**, and to give guidance to employees and supervisors when the need to access the programme arises.

PROGRAMME ELEMENTS:

The EAP provides access to the following confidential services:

Training and development

- Training, support and advice for supervisors and managers in dealing with issues relating to their roles in the EAP.
- Training and orientation sessions to all employees with regard to the EAP.

Marketing and promotion

- Develop a marketing package which will describe the programme to employees and assist them to continuously use it appropriately.

Case Management

- Provision of external, face-to-face or telephone confidential counselling for personal or work related issues.
- Confidential counselling assistance to staff and members of their immediate family members to help them recognise problems and offer resolution options.

Consultation with work organisations

- Needs assessment to help the organisation and employee determine the nature of problems and ways to address it.
- Respond to the requests for EAP services by developing and implementing an EAP to address organisational and employee concerns.

Stakeholder management

- Orientation of EAP service providers to enhance their knowledge, skills and attitude in EAP service delivery.
- Orientation of EAP service providers to small business work conditions and operations in Windhoek
- Establish a referral function to help employees and their families identify additional resources beyond the EAP by securing:
  - Community information and referral directories.
  - Names of private professionals
  - Lists of mental health centres and treatment programmes
  - Information on self-help centres providing services suited tp the needs of EAP clients in the geographic areas served.

Monitoring and evaluation

- Monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the EAP services relating to the work organisation and individual job performance.

ELIGIBILITY:

EAP services are available to all employees and their immediate family.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

All consultations will be conducted in complete confidence between the employee and the EAP counsellor. All counsellors are guided by a professional code of ethics. In case of a formal/mandatory referral to the EAP, the EAP counsellor will provide the supervisor with information on whether,

- The employee has contacted the EAP
- The employee has been attending their scheduled sessions.
- The employee is following through on the treatment recommended by the counsellor.
- The employee is invested in making changes to rectify their workplace issue.
- Ongoing treatment is necessary and possible recommendations from the EAP counsellor.

There are however certain exceptions to confidentiality, namely:

- If a participant reports any knowledge or suspicion of child or elder abuse or neglect.
- If a participant threatens to harm himself or others.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The EAP coordinator:

- Oversees the overall development, implementation and maintenance of the programme.
- In collaboration with the EAP counsellors deliver programmes to employees at all levels of the company – programmes designed to explain how to use the service as either a recipient or referral agent.
- Offer seminars in other areas of interest such as addiction, stress management, balancing work and family life, etc. as required.

The EAP counsellor:

- Will offer a broad service for the total range of psychosocial problems experienced by employees and their immediate family members.
- Is available at an off-site office of the Ministry of Health and Social Services, Khomas District.
- Is the guardian of confidentiality of information.
- Works in collaboration with the EAP coordinator/trainer in the delivery of most of the training and orientation programmes.

Supervisors:

- Will provide support to the programme and provide information where necessary to employees as to the appropriate use of the service.
- Will properly document job performance such that an employee is made aware of problems as they develop (Appendix B).
- Will maintain performance and set appropriate standards to employees as to the appropriate use of the service.
- Will maintain performance and set appropriate standards to not cease if the employee is seeking counselling assistance.

The employee:

- To acquaint him/herself with the programme and to seek help from the programme as needed, hopefully before job performance if affected.
- If using the programme on a management referral basis, the employee is expected to work hard at acceptance of the service and to cooperate with the counsellor.
- There is no cost to the employee for the utilisation of the EAP. However, the employee will bear the cost emanating from referral by the EAP.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION:

An employee's current job and future job advancement will not be jeopardised by using the EAP services.

However, a formal/mandatory supervisory referral to the EAP may require an employee to participate in the EAP as a condition of continued employment. Referral to or participation in the EAP should not be regarded a formal step in the disciplinary process.

If an employee's job performance continues to deteriorate and there is no apparent effort on the part of the employee to address the problem, the supervisor has the authority to take disciplinary action.

TIME OFF:

[Company Name] considers normal scheduled work hours spent with an EAP counsellor as sick leave or annual leave.

If an employee wants to use the programme anonymously, vacation time can be used.

If an employee is referred for services beyond EAP, working hours spent away from work will be treated as sick leave or personal leave.

RECORD KEEPING:

The EAP coordinator and counsellors will have a record keeping system carefully designed to protect the identity of each employee while facilitating proper case management, follow up and proper statistical information reporting to **[Company Name]**.

Records of clinical data and other administrative matters will be retained for at least five years.

REPORTING:

The EAP coordinator will provide monthly statistical reports to **[Company Name]**. The monthly statistical reports shall provide combined reporting of the numbers of **[Company Name]** employee referrals each month distributed by nature of the problem and type of referral.

The EAP coordinator shall also make available an annual report which provides composite statistical information and also provides any recommendations which the agency may have for improvements for future programme operation.

IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD:

The EAP will be in effect until 31 December 2017. Renewal will be reviewed based on programme performance and employee need. This administrative policy will be revised accordingly or as procedures require.

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

The EAP offered by **[Company Name]** will operate within the following framework:

- Employees will be responsible for correcting unsatisfactory performance and maintaining acceptable performance.
- Supervisors and managers are responsible for confronting employees about unsatisfactory as well as acceptable but deteriorating performance, and referring such employees to the EAP when appropriate.

TYPES OF REFERRALS

- **Self- or voluntary referral**

An employee through a process of self-realisation recognises that a problem exists and seeks assistance by consulting the EAP directly. No entries are made in the employee's record.

Self-referrals are treated with strict confidentiality and employees who voluntarily seek assistance but do not want their supervisors to know of their participation can arrange appointments outside duty hours.

- **Informal Referral**

This is when an employee experiences personal problems contributing poor job performance and on advice of the supervisor seeks assistance from the EAP. Job performance problems need to be identified in the early stages. Appendix A provides examples of behaviours that the supervisor can identify and document. These behaviours, observed over a period of time, may be indicative of a personal problem. The role of the supervisor is to identify problem behaviours, not necessarily to determine the problem's source or cause.

In cases of an informal referral, the written record of the discipline interview will note that an informal referral was made by the supervisor (Appendix B), and a copy will be forwarded to the EAP counsellor.

If the employee chooses to use the services of the EAP, he/she will sign a Release of Information form ((Appendix C) that allows for limited information sharing between supervisor and the EAP counsellor.

The information sharing between supervisor and the EAP counsellor will not include detailed discussion of the employee's personal problems but sufficient to assist the supervisor in determining appropriate performance expectations of the employee as he/she proceeds through the early stages of counselling.

- **Formal or mandatory referral**

A supervisor who is concerned about the decline in an employee's performance, attitude and behaviour may refer that employee, with the employee's consent, to the EAP for assistance.

The supervisor is required to complete the referral form (Appendix D) and submit it to the EAP coordinator at least three days prior to the interview.

Certain information given to the EAP counsellor will be released only if the supervisor and employee have signed the Release of Information.

Proper documentation is important to both support employee discipline as well as to reduce liability risk for the organisation (Appendix E).

The process of supervisory referral (informal and formal) will be in accordance with the flow chart depicted below:

SUPERVISORY REFERRAL PROCESS

Supervisor notes unsatisfactory job performance/behavioural changes & documents work performance issues

↓

Supervisory address specific concerns with employee and recommends that employee contact the EAP

Employee refuses EAP referral

- Job performance problems persist/worsens
  - ↓
  - Provide feedback
  - ↓
  - Institute disciplinary measures as per organisational policy

- Job performance improves
  - ↓
  - Provide feedback
  - ↓
  - Issue resolved

Employee accepts EAP referral

↓

Employee meets with EAP & accepts recommendations

- Job performance improves
  - ↓
  - Give employee positive feedback
  - ↓
  - Issue resolved

- Unsatisfactory job performance/behaviour continues
  - ↓
  - Review employee performance
  - ↓
  - Institute disciplinary measures as per organisational policy

APPENDIX A: BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

ABSENTEEISM AND TIME-OFF ABUSE:
- Repeated unauthorised leave/absences
- Excessive sick leave
- Excessive lateness
- Monday absences, Friday absences, both or other pattern such as on pay days
- Frequent abuse of breaks and lunch periods
- Unusual and increasing questionable excuses for absences
- Frequent unexplained disappearances.
- Frequently leaves work early

PERFORMANCE:
- Mistakes due to carelessness or poor judgment
- Missed deadlines
- Jobs or tasks take more time that usual
- Complaints from customers/co-workers
- Difficulty in recalling instructions and details
- Difficulty in handling complex assignments
- Unconvincing excuses for poor performance
- High accident rate on and off the job
- Alternate periods of high and low productivity
- Needs constant supervision

PERSONAL BEHAVIOUR:
- Unpredictable changes in mood
- Loss of temper, frequent or intense arguments
- Overreaction to real or imagined criticism
- Borrowing money from fellow employees
- Increased isolation from fellow employees
- Unexplained memory lapses
- Laziness
- Decline in personal appearance and hygiene
- Verbal denial of any job performance problem
- Playing the "Blame Game"
- Expressions of frustrations or discontent.
- Comes to work with the smell of alcohol on the breath.

OTHER HIGH RISK BEHAVIOURS:
- Has detailed discussions about death, suicide, or harming someone.
- Has made specific verbal threats or has been physically threatening to others in the workplace.
- Concerns about sexual behaviour or sexual harassment.

APPENDIX B: INFORMAL REFERRAL MEMO

DATE:

SUBJECT: Referral to the Employee Assistance Programme

TO:

FROM:

The purpose of this memo is to express my personal concern for you and your work performance. Over the past few (months, weeks) I have observed the following: (list specific job performance concerns)

I would like to see you get back on track. That is why I am informally referring you to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). This is a free and confidential programme that can assist you in addressing any issues that may be affecting your work performance.

Please contact the EAP at +264 818584380 or +264 816050155 by_____ (Date). Participation in this programme is voluntary. Whether or not you use this service, you will be expected to meet your performance goals. I will be re-evaluating your work performance in 30 days and strongly suggest that you use this as a tool to help yourself.

Sincerely,

cc   EAP Counsellor
       Human Resources

APPENDIX C: AUTHORISATION FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Employee name:	
Date of birth:	
I hereby request and authorise:	
To obtain from and provide to:	

The following type(s) of information from my records [please tick all that apply]:

☐ EAP status (appointments, attendance, compliance & recommendations).

☐ Records and reports prepared by the EAP.

☐ Psychiatric, psychological, counselling or treatment-related notes, reports and recommendations.

☐ Other: _____

The purpose for such release of information [please tick all that apply]:

☐ Management referral

☐ Recommendations and monitoring

☐ Employment related evaluation (e.g. fitness of duty)

☐ Forwarding of clinical records to a practitioner or provider involved in my medical care or treatment.

☐ Other: _____

I understand that authorisation will remain in effect for the period necessary to complete all transactions on accounts related to services provided to me.

Signature of employee:	Date:

APPENDIX D: FORMAL SUPERVISORY/MANAGERIAL EAP REFERRAL FORM

<u>Instructions:</u>
- This form should be completed by the supervisor/manager.
- The employee should be aware of the contents of this form.
- This is not a disciplinary form but is one to be used in assisting the employee experiencing personal problems that require help.

Employee name:	Date of birth:
Occupation/Job title:	Number of year/months in employment:
Referring supervisor/manager's name:	Referring supervisor/manager's telephone number:

1. Briefly state the reasons for referral:

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. List the behavioural indicators you have observed in the employee (Use the check list attached):

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. For how long have you been aware of the incidents or behaviours mentioned in the check list?

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. What corrective actions have been taken to solve the problem(s), if any? (e.g. disciplinary action, warnings, counselling).

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. If the EAP interventions were to be successful, what should be the desired improvements/changes?

_____

_____

_____

6. Mention anything positive about the employee that would be helpful during treatment to improve performance.

_____

_____

_____

7. Point out anything that could hinder the success of the EAP intervention.

_____

_____

_____

_____   _____

Supervisor's/Manager's signature   **Date**

The employee's intention to participate in the programme cannot be processed without their signature and a "Yes" indication below.

I understand that my supervisor/manager is referring me to the Employee Assistance Programme and I confirm that the contents of this form were discussed with me.

☐   **YES, I will participate in the Employee Assistance Programme.**

☐   **NO, I do not wish to participate in the Employee Assistance Programme.**

_____   _____

Employee's signature   **Date**

APPENDIX E: DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES

I.   Apply uniform system in compliance with company policy

II. Remember **CSO.**
     Documentation should be:
     > **C**oncrete
     > **S**pecific
     > **O**bservable and Objective – exclude subjective impressions

III. Include Positives as well as Negatives
     > Improvements/Changes
     > Evaluations
     > Exceptional Work

IV. What should be included?
     A. Attendance Records
     B. Any decline in work performance (include date, time, place and exact nature of each incident
     C. Recommendations made to solve the problem
     D. Expected time frame for improvement (be specific)

--   --

SIGNATURE: RESEARCHER   **SIGNATURE: MANAGING DIRECTOR**

ANNEXURE 13: AGREEMENT FOR THE USE OF WOS

From: Dave Sharar [mailto:dsharar@chestnut.org]
Sent: Thursday, June 04, 2015 8:47 PM
To: Lourie Terblanche <Lourie.Terblanche@up.ac.za>
Cc: Tom Shjerven <tgshjerven@chestnut.org>; Audrey Eertmans
<aeertmans@chestnut.org>; 'Audrey Eertmans' <audrey.eertmans@iswlimits.be>;
Leonard, Emma <eleonard@unam.na>
Subject: RE: LOURIE TERBLANCHE USE OF WOS BY DOCTORAL STUDENT E
LEONARD

Hello Lourie,

Yes the WOS is standardized and validated – for both the full 25-item and the super short 5 item.

Ms. Leonard – glad to hear the WOS will be used in Namibia. Check out www.eapresearch.com for a
tutorial and a copy of the license agreement. The tool is free – just sign and send the agreement back to
me via e-mail. If Audrey or myself can be of any assistance as you pursue your WOS study please
contact us.

Dave

From: Lourie Terblanche [mailto:Lourie.Terblanche@up.ac.za]
Sent: Wednesday, June 03, 2015 6:09 AM
To: Dave Sharar
Cc: eleonard@unam.na
Subject: LOURIE TERBLANCHE USE OF WOS BY DOCTORAL STUDENT E LEONARD

Dear Dave

Emma Leonard is a PhD student of mine. She is a faculty member in the Department of Social Work,
University of Namibia.

She has indicated in her research proposal that she intends to use the WOS for collection of empirical
data amongst small and medium enterprises in Namibia.

We need to clarify:

- is the WOS a standardised data collection instrument? If so, please provide us with a document confirming such status.
- Can you please give her permission to use the WOS for her doctoral studies - such permission should also be on an official letter head of your company.
- Both matters can be addressed in the same letter.

I do cc Ms Leonard on this email.

Looking forward to hear from you!

Kind regards

Prof Lourie Terblanche
Department of Social Work and Criminology
University of Pretoria
Tel. 012 4203292
Fax. 0866287488
Email: lourie.terblanche@up.ac.za

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

WORKPLACE OUTCOME SUITE LICENSE AGREEMENT
(Version 2013.07.02)

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(Version 2013.07.02)

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(hereinafter called "CGP") and _____Emma Leonard_____ (hereinafter called "Licensee"),
a _____Doctoral Student_____ organized under the laws of the State of _____,
having an office at _____Windhoek, Namibia_____.

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ANNEXURE 14: CONFIRMATION OF STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

From: Iiyambo, Petrus
Sent: Wednesday, November 07, 2018 6:52 PM
To: Leonard, Emma <eleonard@unam.na>
Subject: RE: Confirmation of accuracy of statistical analysis

Dear Mrs. Emma Leonard,

I am pleased to confirm that data analysis for this study was done correctly and according to the stated objectives.

The choice of statistical methods used was based on the nature of data provided and experiment.

Thank you and best wishes.

Peter

Peter Iiyambo

Lecturer

Statistics

University of Namibia

Tel: 061-2063965

Fax:

E-mail: piiyambo@unam.na

Web: http://www.unam.edu.na

Private Bag 13301, 340 Mandume Ndemufayo Ave, Pionierspark, Windhoek, NAMIBIA

ANNEXURE 15: CONFIRMATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING

Katherine Carter, PhD

PO Box 41288

Ausspannplatz

Windhoek, Namibia

0813415100

carterkatherine@fastmail.fm

7 December 2018

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

I hereby confirm that I edited the thesis of Emmerentia Leonard entitled "*An Employee Assistance Programme for Small and Medium Enterprises in Namibia*".

Yours sincerely,

Dr Katherine Carter