**THE INFLUENCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE (SAPS) EMPLOYEES'
PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP EXPERIENCES ON THEIR PRODUCTIVITY IN THE
WORKPLACE: INFORMING EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME**

by

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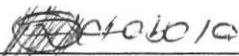SUPERVISOR: Prof. HM WILLIAMS

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I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

_____   2022-10-19

SIGNATURE   DATE

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late, good friend who always ensured that I received the maximum emotional and psychological support, SD Mahlangu passed away in a tragic car accident on the 23rd March 2022. It is also dedicated to my husband and children who have been my pillar of strength from the start of my academic journey. Lastly, it is dedicated to myself as I have worked tirelessly to ensure that I complete my studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

Background - The study provides an analysis of studies conducted by different researchers with regard to the relationship between the influence of a primary relationship and work productivity. It has been discovered that intimate relationships and work performance relationships can no longer be overlooked because there is a strong correlation between the two. Studies in different countries including South Africa have been conducted which indicate that employees experience conflict with regard to their personal and work relationships. This prompted the introduction of an Employee Assistance Programme in different departments including the South African Police Service (SAPS) in order to address issues experienced by employees. The programme deals with both personal and work issues in order to improve the employee's mental well-being as well as increase productivity in the workplace.

Purpose - This research study intended to explore the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace because insufficient information exists regarding this phenomenon.

Method - A qualitative research study was undertaken with a phenomenological design supported by exploratory, descriptive and contextual strategies of enquiry. Piloting of the data collection instrument (open-ended questions contained in an interview guide) was utilised. Data was obtained by conducting semi-structured interviews with SAPS employees about the influence that primary relationships had on their productivity in the workplace until data saturation was reached. The data was thematically analysed by applying the eight steps of data analysis proposed by Tesch. Data verification was applied using Lincoln and Guba's (1985) trustworthiness model which involved aspects such as credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. Ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, beneficence, and management of information were adhered to.

Results - It was found that the SAPS employees experienced both positive and negative spill-over with regard to the influence of their primary relationship experiences on their work productivity. This was brought about by the fact that when matters were going well in the employee's life, they tended to be happier as well as more focused and eager to be productive at work without being followed by their senior supervisors. When the SAPS employees experienced conflict in their primary relationship, they lost focus and concentration in what they were supposed to do. This tended to make them moody and less productive, which in turn affected how they rendered services to the communities they were employed to serve.

Key terms: South African Police Service (SAPS), primary relationship, employee, productivity, workplace, Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).

SETSOPOLWA

Tshedimošo ya mathomong – Dinyakišišo tše di hlagiša dinyakišišo tšeo di dirilwego ke banyakišiši bao ba fapafapanego mabapi le kamano magareng ga khuetšo ya kamano ya motheo le tšweletšo ya ka mošomong ka ge go utollotšwe gore dikamano tša marato le dikamano tša phethagatšo ya mošomo di ka se sa hlokomologwa ka gobane go na le kamano ye e tiilego magareng ga tšona ka bobedi. Dinyakišišo tše di dirilwego ka dinageng tše di fapafapanego, go akaretšwa le ka Afrika Borwa, di laeditše gore bašomi ba itemogela thulano mabapi le dikamano tša bona tša motheo le tša ka mošomong. Se se hlohleleditše gore go tsebišwe Lenaneo la Thušo ya Bašomi ka dikgorong tše di fapafapanego, go akaretšwa le ka go Tirelo ya Maphodisa ya Afrika Borwa (SAPS) go rarolla mathata ao bašomi ba lebanego le ona. Lenaneo le le thomišitšwe ka nepo ya go rarolla bobedi mathata a batho le a ka mošomong ka nepo ya go kaonafatša go phela gabotse ga menagano ya bašomi gammogo le tšweletšo ka mošomong.

Maikemišetšo – Dinyakišišo tše di ikemišeditše go lekola khuetšo ya maitemogelo a dikamano tša bašomi ba SAPS go tšweletšo ka mošomong.

Mekgwa – Dinyakišišo tša boleng di dirilwe go tšwa go tlhamo ya ditiragalo tšeo di thekgilwego ke mekgwa ya dinyakišišo ya tekolo, ya tlhalošo le ya seemo. Go lekola ge eba ditlabelo tša go kgoboketša tshedimošo di a šoma (dipotšišo tša go nyaka mabaka tšeo di lego ka gare ga tlhahli ya dipotšišo tša dinyakišišo) go dirišitšwe. Tshedimošo e hweditšwe ka go diriša dipotšišo tša sewelo ge go botšišwa bašomi ba SAPS ka ga khuetšo ya dikamano tša motheo go tšweletšo ya ka mošomong go fihla ge go sa hwetšwe tshedimošo ye mpsha. Tshedimošo e ile ya sekasekwa go ya ka merero ka go diriša dikgato tše seswai tša tshekatsheko ya tshedimošo tšeo di šišintšwego ke Tesch. Mokgwa wa tshephagalo wa Lincoln le Guba (1985) o šomišitšwe go tiišetša tshedimošo; o akaretša dilo tša go swana le seriti, go fetišetšega ga tshedimošo, tshephagalo le go latelega. Dilo tša go amana le maitshwaro tša go swana le tumelo ya tsebo, sephiri, go se tsebege, go holega le taolo ya tshedimošo di ile tša latelwa.

Dipoelo – Go hweditšwe gore bašomi ba SAPS ba itemogela bobedi maikutlo a makaone le a go se loke mabapi le khuetšo ya dikamano tša motheo go tšweletšo ya mošomo wa bona. Se se tlišitšwe ke taba ya gore ge ditaba di sepela gabotse bophelong bja mošomi, ba fela ba thaba kudu, ba na le tsepelelo kudu ebile ba nyaka go ba le tšweletšo le ge go se na bahlokomedi ba bona bao ba ba lekolago. Ge bašomi ba SAPS ba itemogela thulano ka dikamanong tša bona tša motheo, ba lahlegelwa ke tsepelelo le nepišo mabapi le seo ba swanetšego go se dira, gomme se se fela se ba dira gore ba tšewe ke maikutlo le go ba le tšweletšo ye nnyane gomme se se ama ka fao ba abelago ditšhaba tšeo ba thwaletšwego go di abela ditirelo.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

EAP : Employee Assistance Programme

EAP-SA : Employee Assistance Programme-South Africa

SAPS : South African Police Service

SACSSP : South African Council for Social Service Professions

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This social work research study is about exploring the influence that the primary relationship of South African Police Service (SAPS) employees has on their productivity in the workplace so that scientific knowledge can be generated to inform the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) of SAPS accordingly. The chapter will present the background of the study, the problem formulation, the rationale of the study where the researcher will justify the reason for the chosen research, the theoretical framework where the theories related to the study will be elaborated, and the research question, objectives and goals that will assist in providing focus and direction to the study. This will be followed by the presentation of the research methodology where the research approach, research design, research method, sampling of the population, and sampling methods will be covered. The data collection, method of data analysis and data verification will be clarified. Finally, ethical considerations that guided the study will be explained as well as the clarification of key concepts. The information shared in this chapter explains what the researcher planned to do.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

This chapter will present an overview of studies conducted nationally and internationally on the importance of primary relationships as well as how the primary relationship has an effect on employees in their respective workplaces. It further illustrates what an EAP is as well as the background of EAP in a work setting. The influence of primary relationships is one of the aspects that is considered when exploring the productivity of [1]SAPS employees.. Primary relationships are regarded as those that an employee has with her/his significant other and their children (Ganiyu, Fields & Atiku, 2017:442) and within an African context it may refer to the extended family as well (Muchie, Lukhele-Olorunju & Akpor, 2013:333). Considering the above statements, primary relationships in this context refer to an employee's immediate and extended family. The researcher views the term primary relationship as the relationship that one has with immediate family or a significant other. The primary relationship that the researcher is focused on is the relationship between SAPS employees and the wife/husband, girlfriend/boyfriend, cohabitating partner and/or same sex partners.

The influence of families on a person's work performance cannot be underestimated. Even when a member of the family experiences a temporary or permanent alienation from the family, he/she

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[1] SAPS employee refers to an employee permanently appointed according to the South African Police Act (Act 65 of 1998.

can never relinquish the effect that belonging to a family has on them (Mercado & Dilchert, 2017:406). Conlon (2016:78) believes that outside work-related stressors, meaning the stress that one incurs from home, can have a long-term impact on an individual's work performance and increase the rate of absenteeism.

On the other hand, it is noteworthy to remember that the functioning of a family is influenced by demands in relation to marital status, gender orientation, childcare, extended family and hobbies (Ganiyu et al., 2017:442) and that those aspects in return affect the performance of an employee at work. Thus, it is only natural that an employee's personal life will have an effect on her/his productivity whether it is a positive or negative influence (Hetherington & Blenchman, 2014:viii).

The value of the family unit in the success of any society cannot be overstated. Muchie, Lukhele-Olorunju and Akpor (2013:333) further elaborate that in the traditional African societies a family is normally extended and consists of generations, including aunts and cousins, living together. African societies embrace the concept of a family relationship (primary relationship) especially with regards to embracing the extended family as well. This is the reason why a primary relationship does not only include the relationship one has with their partner or own children, but rather family members one has a close relationship and bond with. For example, people can grow up taking care of their nieces and nephews after the death of their parents (Muchie, et al. 2013:334).

EAP is an approach instituted by employers with the goal to provide services to troubled employees, including marital conflicts, family problems, emotional and financial problems as well as drug and alcohol abuse (Soeker, Matimba, Machingura, Msimango, Moswane & Tom, 2016:570). Thus, the programme is developed to assist the emotionally and psychologically overwhelmed employees.

The role of the social worker in the EAP is to provide services to the affected employees. Social workers are trained professionals who, firstly, assesses a reported problem. A thorough assessment is done by the social worker as a measurement of the core of the problem in order to be able to provide a relevant and effective service to the employee. It is reported by the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (2016), News24 (2019) and SAPS portfolio committee (2012/13 Annual report) that police absenteeism and abuse of sick leave was causing reduced productivity by SAPS employees, whilst the Daily Maverick newspaper published on 12/12/2018 that in 2017/18, 11 SAPS officers were killed and seven out of the 11 were killed by their fellow SAPS officers. They also reported that around 2012/2013 SAPS officers were more likely to commit suicide than be killed on duty as 115 officers killed themselves while 29 were killed on

duty. The Safer Spaces newsletter published on 01/03/2019 reported that in 2017/2018, 11 SAPS employees were killed during domestic violence disputes and seven out of the 11 were killed by their fellow SAPS partners. The Minister of Police, Bheki Cele, revealed that 30 police officers committed suicide between April 2020 and March 2021, whereas 37 SAPS officials committed suicide between April 2021 and March 2022. He indicated that factors contributing to the increasing number of suicides amongst SAPS employees are depression, poor coping skills, financial difficulties as well as primary relationships problems. This indicates that the effects of primary relationships on one's well-being and the possibility that these relationships affect their productivity at work (The South African Newsletter published 25/03/2022).

Organisations globally have come to realise the importance of family relationships and the effect thereof on employees (Ganiyu et al., 2017:443). For instance, a study approved by the Council of the European Union (2011) was conducted to establish the factors that affect the possibility for men and women to improve both their family life and work life. The Council of Europe drew attention by conducting a study on European citizens and the aim of the study was to achieve a better balance between one's private life and work performance for both men and women with consideration of demographic challenges (Livia-Pogan, 2014:143-4).

Another study was conducted in Singapore on different non-profit organisations in 2013. The aim of the study was to establish the interpersonal stressors originating from family conflict, and to check how the family stressors linked to work outcomes by examining the relationship between family incivility and employee job performance. It was discovered that psychological distress and family incivility negatively affected work productivity (Lim & Tai, 2013:352).

In South Africa, a study was conducted at the Gauteng Department of Health in 2013 with four randomly selected hospitals. This study was conducted to determine the influence personal conflict has on an individual compared to burnout and other work-related problems. It was established that 86% of employees experienced personal stress related to financial strain, 58% experienced high levels of work stress, 65% experienced high levels of burnout about a lack of personal achievements and 66% experienced low job satisfaction regarding pay. The overall findings of the study conducted indicated that personal stress was found to have a negative impact on work roles (Khamisa, Pertzer, Ilic & Oldenburg, 2017:255).

The investigation into the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace is conducted at the SAPS where an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) exists. However, there is insufficient scientific information available about the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the

workplace. It is therefore also important to introduce this concept and how it is implemented in the SAPS as the outcome of this research will inform the SAPS EAP's practices by providing suggestions on how to address this phenomenon based on scientific evidence.

EAP is said to have emerged in South Africa (SA) in the early 1980's whereby companies provided programmes copied from the United States (US). These programmes were introduced into SA by students who studied in the US (Maiden, 2014:2). Soeker et al. (2016:570) stated that EAPs were introduced to increase productivity amongst employees, reduce sick leave taken by the employees and meet the goals set by the company. The SAPS followed suit and such a unit was established to attend to all employees of the organisation. Each profession's distinctive role and responsibilities was recognised, thus staff at the EAP are qualified professionals such as chaplains, psychologists and social workers (Williams, 2016:132).

1.3   PROBLEM FORMULATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

A problem statement or research problem is defined by Wentz (2014:129) as an argument describing why a research question is important. It describes the importance of the study as well as providing clarity and identification of the study. It is argued by Miles (2017:2) that a problem statement indicates the general purpose of the study. It is also referred to as the focus of the inquiry or what a researcher intends to investigate (Nasution, Onziral & Aulia, (2019:1). The problem statement will be emanating from the real problems shared by the SAPS employees and they will be from inadequate research body and has not yet been researched by other researchers. The problem statement of this study is based on the evidence (nature of the problem) mentioned in the Background of the Study. Providing a problem statement will assist in demarcating the intended research study. It will also assist the research in finding out from the relevant people about relationship between the primary relationship and work productivity in the SAPS environment. The experiences and suggestions to the EAP shared by the participants will influence the recommendations to be drawn at the end of the study. The problem statement for this study is as follows: there is insufficient scientific information available about the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace, thus a knowledge gap between primary relationships and one's focus and productivity at work are identified and inform the EAP of SAPS.

1.4   RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

There has not yet been a study conducted about the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity at the workplace in the Mpumalanga province, Thembisile and Dr J.S. Moroka areas.

Research into the effects of stress caused by work on employees' home life or work-to-family conflict has been well investigated by Hancok (2013:33) but few research studies have been done on the effect of family-to-work conflict, meaning family stressors such as marital conflict, financial instability, conflict over children, divorce, and legal and housing issues. According to Kgaleque (2018:77) an individual is a being that operates in different systems which include family, friends, school, religious affiliation and work environment. He further stated that no person operates in isolation that means lived experiences in a family setting can affect work performance or church involvement. It is further mentioned by Hancok (2013:33) that a study that was conducted in the United Kingdom with employees from different Health Departments and the findings indicated that domestic stressors had a negative effect on job performance, meaning the level of job productivity declined when they experienced personal problems.

From the researcher's observations, the influence of employees' primary relationships on their productivity differs from employee to employee. The relationships can either be good or bad, and thus influence the employee's concentration and productivity in their workplace. The researcher will focus on employees who have primary relationships especially those employees in relationships, which in nature have impacted or are impacting their productivity at work. The plan is to afford the employees an opportunity to express the challenges that they experienced, how they experienced these challenges, who contributed to their situation, the severity of their experiences and how these challenges affected their productivity at work.

As an employee herself over a period of ten years, the researcher was once in a situation where she found herself taking an extreme number of leave days to address a personal problem that she was experiencing. During this time as much as she was at work, she was hardly able to concentrate on her work and client service was impacted. The researcher has thus found the study of the influence that the primary relationship of South African Police Service (SAPS) employees has on their productivity in the workplace: inform the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is relevant to Occupational social work because the filed addresses matters and situations experiences by the employees in the workplace from family-work issues to work-family issues. As described by Ambrosino, Ambrosino, Hefferman & Shuttlesworth (2015:490) and Zastrow & Hessenauer (2022:315) occupational social workers are the primary field of professional that working with troubled individuals and families and they also provide employees with EAP services. It was further stated that it is a field of expertise that has effective communication and negotiation skills aimed at improving the working conditions as well as increasing understanding between both the employer and the employee.

Social work as a broad profession it looks at environments that includes the conditions, circumstances and interactions that completes an individual. Thus the environments involves the type of home an individual lives in and the type of work they do and how these environments impacts each other inter-changeably Kirst-Ashman (2017:22). It is relevant that the study be conducted within the social work context as it focuses on South African participants experiencing social problems. The researcher further believes that the study is significant because it will help in contributing to the understanding of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationships on their productivity in the workplace as well as ways of informing the EAP. The study will also generate more ideas and information of the chosen topic.

1.5   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework is a representation of a set of ideas and assumptions that are drawn to help explain a particular phenomenon (Hall 2020). It is confirmed by Anfara, Norma and Mertz (2014:15) that a theoretical framework is any empirical or quasi-empirical theory of social and psychological process at a variety of levels that can be applied to the understanding of a phenomenon. The researcher views a theoretical framework as the basis from which the researcher will attempt to explain and understand the causes and origins of the challenges experienced by employees. Ojedokum and Idemudai (2014:107) confirm that the reality of what is being investigated must fit an appropriate model, supporting a discipline and area under investigation.

The theories are discussed below.

1.5.1 System's theory

Systems theory, as indicated in Becvar and Becvar (2018:2), was formed by Von Bertalanffy in 1968 because the theorist wanted to understand the dynamics of families, as it makes no sense to analyse an employee independently when there are other people who influence their behaviour. Systems theory is alluded to by Priest (2021:5) as a way of explaining the increasingly complex systems across the person-in-environment and it assists with understanding the client's system to interpret the problem and develop a balanced intervention.

Systems theory is also described by Schirmer and Michailakis (2019:5) as a theory that assists in understanding the person's action by evaluating their interaction patterns with other people, from their family members, to their colleagues, partners and friends.

It was further defined by Turner (2017) as the identification of three systems that contribute to the well-being of a person, namely, informal natural systems which include friends, family

neighbours and colleagues; the formal systems which include the workplace, community, organisations and unions; and the societal system which includes government departments, hospitals and schools.

It was indicated by Patton and McMahon (2014:23) as a theory that is able to recognise the diversity and complexity in families and an employee's career. It also recognises the elements and interactions between an employee's relationships that keep on changing overtime, impacting the lives of the employees. It is characterised by multi-dimensional sources (which are relationships, social, structural and cultural) that can be of influence in the systems (primary relationships/family, work environment or government organisations) they are part of as individuals (Newman & Newman, 2018:52). It is further supported by Malkina-Pykh and Pykh (2013:03) and Cabot, Gomez, Pastor, Sancho and Teniente (2017:249). Systems theory is also characterised as an inter-disciplinary theory that is responsible for facilitating the management of complexity in an individual's life linked to their structure, behaviour and their relation to the environment.

The researcher describes systems theory as a way of showing that there are systems in the SAPS employees' lives, from the natural systems where family is involved, the formal systems where their workplace is involved, and the societal systems were the government department is involved. The systems theory explains that no person operates in isolation, the different systems in an employee's development have an effect or rather association with each other. The system that is linked to the study is the natural system which, in this case is the partner (married or in a committed relationship) of the employee participating in the study as well as the formal system which is the SAPS as the workplace of the employees. The natural system (the family) and the formal system (workplace) are the most relevant systems for this study because the focus is on the employees' intimate relationships and how they affect their performance in the workplace. They focus mainly on the SAPS employees' lives as the partner is someone who is in a committed relationship with the employee and how the partners contribute to the employees' concentration and coping abilities in their places of employment.

The second link with the research study is the explanation that when one aspect suffers, it directly affects other aspects. The family/relationship that the person is from might be experiencing problems which in the long run affects how they cope in their other systems in their life such as the organisation that they work for. If there is a problem in the employees' personal and private lives, it might affect their concentration in the work aspect of their lives because these systems are inter-linked in a person's life.

1.5.2 Inter-role conflict

It is cited by Clegg (2017:148) that the inter-role conflict was formed by Greenhaus and Beutell in 1985 after seeking clarification about how the impact of family-work conflict and work-family conflict affected an employee's well-being. Inter-role conflict is when a clash between two or more roles occurs and it occurs when the one role interferes and interrupts the other role of the employee (Grant & Kinman, 2014:35). It was further explained by Parrish (2014:120) that a conflict that occurs when various roles held by one person are incompatible. "Inter-role conflict is when an individual is faced with competing and multiple role obligations especially when two or more are incompatible" (Nuhn, 2014:36; Brayan, 2020).

In recent decades, cultural, demographic and societal changes have resulted in men and women experiencing the challenge of balancing their personal lives and their work lives (Sanchez-Vidal, Cegarra-Leiva & Cross, 2020:438). The inter-role conflict is characterised by the recognition of roles that are accompanied by overload in the workplace, family roles by ambiguity and the combination of the two by conflict (Beehr 2014:24). This is also supported by Mishra (2021) that the inter-role conflict is accompanied by exploring the aspects in an employee's life where the family and work domains create conflict amongst each other.

The researcher linked this theory to the research because it is applicable when a SAPS employee is struggling to meet the demands of a role he/she must fulfil at work, at home or in the community due to the interference from other roles, such as when an employee is struggling to separate their home role from their work role, resulting in conflict of the two roles and one role ends up suffering because of the other role. The researcher applied the role by checking how the employees were balancing their expected roles to determine which role was being neglected.

The researcher is of the opinion that these two theories (systems theory and the inter-role conflict) are the baseline of this research study because the employees' existence is found within the different systems (informal natural- formal- and societal systems) with the expectation to provide and maintain different roles which influence the primary relationship.

The two theories complement each other because they indicate that the employees have different roles to play in different systems leading them to perform multiple roles in different aspects of their lives. The researcher understands the two theories in a sense that the employees as unique individuals have roles that they are expected to play in the community they live in, which in return it might be more likely to take a toll on them as individuals should they struggle to balance the different roles. This in return is likely to create a strain in an individual

that might possibly lead them to lose focus and stability in their lives. This leads to the employee neglecting other roles in some systems leading to inter-role conflict. The two theories do not only focus on the family and workplace domains but rather in all the complex human systems that make up an individual. They are theories that focus on roles individuals play within the different institutions they are affiliated under. They assist in understanding individuals on how they balance the roles they play in their complex systems as well as familiarising oneself of the existence or lack of inter role conflict thereof. They further provide the integration of life and work relationship in an individual well-being. Systems theory and inter-role conflict theory in this study is focused on the employees' belonging in the systems and their involvement as well as participation in roles they hold.

The systems theory assist the practitioners is providing holistic approach is also encompassing empowerment approaches to the employees who have been experiencing inter-role conflicts into their lives. However, for the purposes of the study the researcher will focus only on the family and workplace productivity because the intention is to explore how the family, particularly the primary intimate relationship experience, influence an employee's ability to be productive in the workplace.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTION, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The research question, goal, objectives and planned research methods are associated with the problem statement, the rationale and the theoretical framework of the study. They will be elaborated on in this chapter on how the researcher planned to implement these in the study.

1.6.1 Research question

A research question is formulated to address ideas and find answers about a research topic that the researcher intends to do research about and to answer long standing controversies (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013:1). Singh and Thirsk (2021:75) describe a research question as the direction for what a researcher intends to find out. Flick (2018) elaborates that a research question is also a starting point from where decisions will be made about the appropriate research methodology and methods to follow. It was further explained by Hair, Celsi, Money, Samouel and Page (2015:88) that a research question is the method that informs the researcher's execution plan for the study.

The researcher understands the research question as a statement that the study intends to answer which will lead to new knowledge by following a specific method. Thus, the research

question is planned to assist the researcher to have a specific focus for what she wants to study and will provide direction and focus for the intended research study.

The research question for this study is: What is the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace? To support the research question, a research goal and objectives were formulated and are presented next.

1.6.2 Research goal

A research goal is explained by Kuykendall (2020:83) as a concise statement about what the researcher wants to achieve with the research. The research goal relates to a specific phenomenon and is closely linked with the research question, it should clearly state what the intended purpose of the intended research study is (Carter & Lubinsky 2016:43; Bjorn, Laurent, Mowsianiak & Olsen, 2018). The research goal is necessary to ensure that the researcher remains focussed and has purposeful direction for the duration of the research study (McFarlane & Lim, 2018:105). The researcher understands the research goal as the intention of what the researcher wants to achieve by embarking on the study.

In formulating the research goal, the researcher confirms what she wants to achieve with this research study as it will be specifically focussed on the topic. Therefore, the research goal for this study is: To develop an in-depth understanding of the influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace, informing EAP.

1.6.3 Research objectives

The research objectives support the research goal by breaking it up into workable steps to achieve the goal and to ultimately answer the research question (Carey, 2017:19). The research goals inform the researcher about what she wants to achieve with the research as it gives clear direction for how the phenomenon should be investigated so that answers can be established for the research question (Hunt, Pollock, Campbell, Escourt & Brutton, 2018:3). Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls and Ormston (2014:51). Thus, in qualitative research having research objectives supports the overall goal to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying reasons, beliefs and motivations.

The formulation of research objectives enables the researcher to articulate what steps she needs to take to answer the research question and attain the research goal.

The research objectives for this study are:

- To explore the influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace

- To describe the findings in terms of the influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace

- To report the findings, draw conclusions, and make recommendations in relation to the influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace which will help inform EAP in SAPS.

To ensure that the research question, goal and objectives are achieved, the research methodology and methods were decided upon and aligned with the intended research study.

1.7   Research methodology

With this part of the chapter, the researcher will present how she planned to execute the research after obtaining ethical clearance. It is important to note that in chapter three, the researcher will specifically elaborate on how the research was actually executed by means of following the planned research methods mentioned in this chapter.

The research methodology deals with and considers the reason behind research methods, which are broadly differentiated between quantitative (e.g. inferential, simulation, or experimental studies) and qualitative research (e.g. biographical narratives, case studies, phenomenology) (Bhattacharyya, 2006:17; Nayak & Singh, 2021:10). It is alluded to by Williamson and Johanson (2018:4) that research methodology is the entire framework or design of the research, the choice of paradigm, methods and tools or techniques to explore research and to create new knowledge. After considering the definitions provided by the authors above, the researcher views research methodology as a method that will guide the approach and design of the research on the effects of the SAPS employee's primary relationship experiences on their work productivity. In this section the research approach, the design which supports the research question, goal and objectives for this research study, will be discussed.

1.7.1 Research approach

The researcher followed a qualitative research approach with this research study. Qualitative research is defined by Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls and Ormston (2014:65) as a systematic, subjective approach used to describe life experiences and situations whilst giving them meaning. It further entails the exploring and understanding of social problems and their meaning to individuals in the society (Creswell, 2014:4). The qualitative research approach is

characterised by the researcher studying participants (e.g. SAPS employees) in their ordinary surroundings, intending to discover (explore) and make sense (describe) or interpret the meaning that specific phenomena (primary relationships and SAPS employees' productivity) have for the research objects (Creswell & Poth, 2018:8).

Qualitative research is also associated with interpreting and giving meaning to the demonstrated situations or events, and qualitative methodology recognises the real-world experiences of people and strives to describe these experiences in-depth. "It respects the fact that these experiences are socially constructed, complex and ever changing" (Sloan & Bowe, 2014:4). The reasons for choosing the qualitative research method is because the researcher planned to conduct interviews, record the data, to gather information of the lived experiences of SAPS employees with regard to the influence of their primary relationships on productivity in the form of said words, and to be able to re-listen to the provided data after the session. The researcher planned to collect the data so that the views and experiences of the participants (SAPS employees) could be understood (Padgett, 2017:2) and it granted the researcher the opportunity to explore in greater depth, obtaining inside perspectives, holistically and contextually.

Thus, the qualitative research approach was relevant to the researcher as her study was more focused on exploring, describing and contextualising the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace. The qualitative research approach guided the researcher as to which methods she had to follow and adhere to in order to avoid confusion and misdirection mid-research (Creswell, 2014:4). For the researcher to effectively carry out the intended study, the qualitative research approach allowed the SAPS employees to be comfortable so they could vent freely about their lived experiences.

1.7.2 Research design

Research design refers to the plan for collecting data for the research study and how that data will be analysed (Wotela, 2017; Kumar, 2014:24). The research design is a further expansion of the selected research approach as it gives a researcher clear direction as to what procedures to follow in collecting the data (Creswell, 2014:11), and how to collect and analyse the data (Nishishiba, Jones & Kraner, 2014:49). It is of utter most importance that the researcher utilised the relevant research design because it assisted in achieving the goals and objectives of the study and in analysing the data collected in a trustworthy manner.

The researcher planned to apply the phenomenological research design supported by exploratory, descriptive and contextual strategies of enquiry. Phenomenology is described by

Marshall and Rossman (2016:18) as a strategy that assists the researcher to have a clear understanding of the shared, lived experiences of participants, which is carefully explored, described and reflected on (Mills & Birks, 2014:181; Howell, 2013:55).

Therefore, the researcher planned to study the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace, meaning to interpret the internal and external experiences as they are shared and appear to the world in an objective manner (Leavy, 2014:6; Howell, 2013:55). The researcher also planned to apply the principle of bracketing to ensure that how she views the provided data is not influenced by her preconceived beliefs about the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace as well as her personal experiences, cultural factors and assumptions (Luts & Knox, 2014:23). The definition of bracketing is further agreed to by Halcomb (2015:6), Squires (2023:425) and Sorsa, Kikkala & Astedt-Kurk (2014:8-12) as a process of the researcher setting aside their preconceptions, assumptions, preconceptions and notion regarding the researched topic.

The researcher planned to use explorative, descriptive and contextual research strategies of enquiry in support of the phenomenological research design. An explorative research strategy refers to investigating a specific problem to have a better understanding of the existing problem or, when there is limited information available about the particular phenomenon, as a preliminary examination of a problem or situation to identify parameters to be studied (Clow & James, 2014:28; Houser, 2018:137; Flynn & McDermott, 2016:88). The researcher planned to explore the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace to assist in gaining a better understanding of the phenomenon and to inform the EAP in the SAPS from a social work perspective.

A descriptive research strategy is defined by Dziuban, Piccianao, Graham and Moskal (2016:98) as the exploration and description of phenomenon in real-life situations. This design will provide answers to the 'who, what, when, where, why and how' in terms of the influence of employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace. With the descriptive research design, the researcher will obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomenon and describe these findings (Flynn & McDermott, 2016:91). The responses that the researcher received from the semi-structured interviews was described, and the thematic data analysis was concluded.

For a better understanding thematic data analysis is defined by Madondo (2021) and Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2017:695) as a method that allowed the researcher and the independent coder to identify themes, sub themes and categories from the data collected.

A contextual research strategy is described by Maruster and Gijsenbeg (2013:29) as a design that assists in defining and identifying the context within a problem. It is also described by Sharma (2020) as a method that enables the researcher to give the participants an opportunity to vent out their own personal experiences to the researcher following the kind of questions that they will be asked, but with the freedom of expression in their relaying of events. The research interview questions asked by the researcher created the context of the area under investigation – the participants were asked to answer questions related to the specific context of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace.

The researcher planned to apply the chosen research approach and research designs by implementing practical steps as specific research methods to ensure a sound and scientific research study, these will be discussed next.

1.8   Research method

Research methods are the techniques applied step-by-step to collect and analyse data (O'Leary 2017:11) and are explained by Allen (2017:4) and Kumar (2014:10) as the practical processes and procedures that will be followed to execute the research and assist in answering the research question. The researcher is of the opinion that the research method is the process followed by the researcher that provides guidance regarding the collection, interpretation and analysis of the data. The research methods also assist in ensuring that the relevant population is selected.

The researcher will explain what she intended to do and how she intended to execute the research study. The researcher will begin by discussing the population, sampling, sampling techniques, data collection, pilot testing, method of data analysis and data verification as this will describe the specific techniques employed in executing the research and the ethical considerations (Sloan & Bowe, 2014:4).

1.8.1 The research population

Population is defined by Pandey and Pandey (2015:407) as individuals who are accessible to the researcher and regarded as a set of elements from where the researcher will obtain data about a phenomenon (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2020:250). Population refers to a collection of several units, elements or objects such as people, firms, institutions, organisations and regions,

implying that the researcher must identify specific people or areas where the research will be conducted (Wotela 2017; Young & Tempel 2014:79; Van Rinjsoever 2017:36). The researcher's target population was the SAPS employees who worked at SAPS Thembsile sub-district and Dr JS Moroka sub-district, Mpumalanga province and are in a relationship. The researcher was not able to interview each person of the mentioned population and therefore she needed to draw a sample that would best fit the criteria of inclusion (See inclusion criteria on 1.8.3).

The researcher firstly elaborated on what sampling entails before she discussed the sampling techniques that she planned to apply. The researcher requested permission to conduct the study from the SAPS National office and the Provincial Commissioner of Mpumalanga. After the permission was granted, the researcher made use of the local station commanders in the two sub-districts as gatekeepers, to assist in inviting potential participants to partake in the study. Gatekeepers are the senior people employed by the SAPS department who occupy higher positions in the department and they have access to the participants Pentiseva, Faria & Eski (2020:83). It is further elaborated by Lumsden & Winter (2014) and Nastasi & Hitchcock (2015) as role players in encouraging participants to participate as well as protecting the said participants by understanding the proposed researched before granting access to the researcher.

The researcher requested that the station commanders to give her a timeslot during their staff meetings. During the meetings the researcher introduced herself, presented the research study by explaining the purpose, goal and objectives of the research as well as who could participate and what the expectations for participants would be. The contact details of the researcher were provided, and follow-ups were done with interested employees, ensuring that they met the criteria of inclusion.

1.8.2 Sampling

When a phenomenon is being investigated it is usually not possible to include the whole population as part of the research study and therefore sampling takes place. This is a process of selecting the participants who best represent the population of interest (Hennink et al., 2020; Harding, 2013:17). That was also confirmed by Schensul and Lecompte (2013:281) who state that sampling entails the selection of persons who will accurately represent the target population for a specific research study. When enough information has been collected in such a fashion that the same information is being repeated and no new information comes to the fore, this is called data saturation (Padgett, 2017:134). Data saturation implies that there is enough

information to replicate the study and when further coding is no longer feasible (Fusch & Ness, 2015:1408). The quality of the research will be at risk if data saturation is not reached and will have an effect on content validity (Harding, 2013:74). The researcher continued conducting semi-structured interviews until data saturation was achieved.

The researcher selected participants who fit the criteria of inclusion from the employees of the SAPS working in Thembisile sub-district and Dr JS Moroka sub-district police stations, Mpumalanga province. The sampling techniques which were applied are discussed next.

1.8.3 Sampling methods

Sampling methods are described by Astin and Long (2014:93) as a way that guides the researcher on who they should talk to, based on the research question and goals (Padgett, 2017:67). Grove, Gray and Burns (2014:270) indicate that sampling occurs when the researcher examines a portion within a larger group to get the number of participants that will be participating.

The researcher used non-probability sampling by applying the purposive sampling technique. Non-probability sampling is associated with qualitative research and the main expectation is not to claim representativeness of the wider population, but to have smaller numbers because of the exploratory nature or in-depth analysis of a specific social issue or topic (Campbell, Taylor & McGlade 2017:38; Schneider, Whitehead, LoBiondo-Wood & Haber, 2016:112; Maruster & Gijsenberg, 2013:80). The researcher has planned to select a limited number of not more than 15 participants out of the entire police stations because it is not everyone working at the selected stations that will fit the inclusion criteria.

The researcher purposively selected participants based on their ability to provide the needed information and considering the criteria of inclusion which were linked to the purpose of the research about the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace (O'Leary, 2017:210; Padgett, 2017:67). Inclusion criteria are pre-determined characteristics that participants possess to be part of the population under study and from whom the participants will be purposively selected (Houser, 2018:162; Waller, Farquharson & Dempsey, 2016:67). Exclusion criteria are specific characteristics that will dismiss potential participants from the population under study (Waller et al., 2016:67).

The criteria of inclusion for this study were:
- Employees appointed according to the SAPS Act 68 of 1995.
- Employees who were married, in a relationship, cohabiting or same sex partnership.

- Employees who were knowledgeable about the EAP services rendered in their workplace.
- Employees who were not managers, supervisors or line managers.

The exclusion criteria for this study are:
- Employees who were single (not married or in a relationship);
- Employees who were on extended sick leave;
- Employees who were involved in disciplinary cases against them.

The data collection method was determined once an appropriate sampling technique was decided on to match with the intended goal of the study.

1.9   DATA COLLECTION

Data collection entails the tools that will be used in obtaining the data (Thomas, 2017:200). The researcher decided on the data collection instrument and techniques applied for data collection, which also involved explaining how the preparation of the sampled participants would be done (Panke, 2018:203; Thomas, 2017:200). The researcher prepared participants for data collection and collected qualitative data from them by means of the most suitable data collection method (Flick, 2018:209) to achieve the goal of the intended research.

1.9.1 Preparation for data collection

The preparation of data collection entails deciding which resources will be utilised when collecting the data, such as venue, time, budget, digital recording device and how the participants will be prepared (Pope & Mays, 2020:112). Before the actual data collection took place, the researcher issued a letter of invitation to partake in the study to the participants (Addendum J) and then contacted them telephonically to arrange and confirm a scheduled time, date and place for the interviews (Nastasi & Borja, 2016:17; Creswell, 2013:177). The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews, telephonic interviews as well as Microsoft Teams interviews for those that stay far from the researcher's office.

At the start of the semi-structured interview, the researcher introduced herself, explained her role and how she could be addressed and confirmed with the participants how they would like to be addressed (SAPS protocols require this preparation). Comfort issues such as where the toilets are, having a glass of water ready and that cellular phones will be switched off for the duration of the interview, were clarified for those who did face-to-face interviews. The researcher explained to the participants that there were no 'right' or 'wrong' answers and that the participants could feel at ease sharing their experiences honestly. The researcher clearly stated the purpose of the study and outlined the process of the session. Ethical issues such as

confidentiality, anonymity, management of information were discussed and clarified so that the participants were aware of their rights as well as how are they were protected during the whole interviews process. The participants were informed that the interviews would be recorded with a digital device and how the data would be kept safely in storage (Creswell & Poth, 2018:62). Written informed consent was obtained prior to any interviews with participants (See Addendum C).

The researcher made use of gatekeepers, the local station commanders in the two sub-districts' police stations, who assisted with inviting potential participants to partake in the study. The researcher requested a timeslot during the staff meetings from the station commanders. During the meetings the researcher introduced herself and the research study, and explained the purpose, goal and objectives of the research as well as who could participate and what the expectations for participants would be. The contact details of the researcher were provided and follow-ups were done with interested employees, ensuring that they met the criteria of inclusion.

1.9.2 Method of data collection

Data can be sourced by conducting interviews, observations or studying documents (Padgett, 2017:99; Creswell, 2013:159). The researcher gathered information by means of semi-structured interviews with participants (Flick, 2018:27). The research interview questions and biographical profile questions are contained in an interview guide (See Addendum D). The researcher used semi-structured interviews as a data collection method to collect data from the participants. Semi-structured interviews are described by Willig (2013) and Olsen (2014:33) as an interaction method which entails a meaningful conversation with the aim of collecting data (Kirner & Mills, 2019; Mann, 2016:91; Hasan, 2013:60). Thus, the researcher explored, collected and gained a clear understanding of the participants' views, experiences, challenges and how they had coped with the effects of their primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace. Semi-structured interviews are meant to afford the researcher an opportunity to gain in-depth information by probing and expanding on the participants' responses (Rubin & Rubin in Alshenqeeti, 2014:40). The researcher applied probing (exploratory, explanatory, clarification probes) listening, questioning, eliciting, empathy, communication and exploring skills during the semi-structured interviews (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:122; Harding, 2013:41). The methods were applied until data saturation was reached.

The researcher i continued to verify the data and detected if the same findings were found.

1.9.3 Pilot testing

The purpose of pilot testing is described by Tran, Nguyen and Chan (2017:34) as a method of testing the drafted interview instruments that are going to be utilised by the researcher. It is also defined by Williams (2019:4) as a method that is used by the researcher to test the structured study before conducting the actual study. Pilot testing is further described by Orcher (2017:183) who asserts that it is a cardinal rule that the researcher tries out or tests the questionnaires to determine whether they will operate properly before using it in research. The researcher views pilot testing as an interview guide test used with a few participants who are not part of the population.

The researcher conducted a pilot test to evaluate the data collection instrument (research interview questions contained in an interview guide) with two participants who fit the inclusion and exclusion criteria but who were part of the geographical population as described earlier. She included her peers and colleagues to review the questions for applicability and whether the questions were clearly and understandably formulated (Panke, 2018:218), she also did a mock interview with one of her colleagues as she wanted to familiarise herself with the use of the mentioned research interview skills to be applied during the interviews.

1.10 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is described by Oliver (2013) as a process where the researcher identifies the significant concepts within the collected data that might be utilised to develop a theory or articulate findings so that suggestions and practice guidelines can be proposed or developed. Flick (2018:240) postulates that data analysis is a process of drawing meaning, making sense and understanding the information collected during data collection. Data analysis is understood as the categorisation or interpretation of data by identifying specific themes.

The researcher transcribed the data collected from the interviews conducted. However, she made use of an independent coder to create the thematic analysis of the collected data by applying the eight steps of data analysis suggested by Tesch (1990) as adapted in Creswell (2014:197):

- The researcher wrote down word for word, from the digitally recorded interviews. The independent coder re-read the transcriptions provided by the researcher in order to get a sense of the whole and made notes as they come to mind.

- One document of the interview was selected - the most interesting/shortest one on the top of the pile – and the independent coder went through it not thinking about the content of the information but rather the underlying meaning of said information writing down any thoughts on the underlying meaning.

- A list of all the topics was made and similar topics were put together. The topics were grouped as major topics, unique topics and leftovers.

- The independent coder found a fitting abbreviate (Code/tag label) for each of the identified topics.

- Descriptive wording for the researcher's topics was created and turned into themes/categories.

- The independent coder, in agreement with the researcher, made a final decision on the abbreviation for each theme/category and alphabetised the codes.

- Using the cut and paste method, data material belonging to each theme was assembled in one place by the independent coder and a preliminary analysis was made.

In summary, the researcher, with the assistance of the independent coder and the endorsement of the supervisor, conducted the data analysis according to the eight steps suggested by Tesch where the data is reduced, re-organised and represented. The data was reduced in terms of taking out statements that were repeated and discarding information that was irrelevant to the research (Grbich, 2013:61; Roulston, 2013). The data was verified as reliable, trustworthy and a true reflection of what was said and how it resonated with the research question, goal and objectives of the research study (Flynn & McDermott, 2016:180).

1.11 DATA VERIFICATION

Data verification is a method that is applied during the data collection, data analysis and reporting phases of the research study (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015:364) and the verification of conclusions that have been drawn also receives attention (Balthazar & Vendrely, 2021:173). The researcher was supported by an independent coder who assisted with verifying the interpretation of the data and determining which data needed to be reduced (Roulston, 2013:55).

One of the principles of data verification is ensuring the validity of the data. One of the key aspects of validity in using interviews is whether the information provided by the participants truly reflects their lived experiences outside of the interview situation as per the articulated goal

of the research (Silverman, 2016:414). The researcher compared the responses of the participants with the questions as well as with the research question and goal.

The researcher applied Lincoln and Guba's model (1985) that proved the trustworthiness of the data and findings. Lincoln and Guba's model suggests four strategies to confirm trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Krefting, 1991:217). Transferability and credibility, as described by Creswell (2013:246), are used to ensure that the findings are transferable between the researcher and those being studied, whereas dependability and confirmability are established through auditing of the research process. Flynn and McDermott (2016:111) indicate the importance of ensuring that research data and findings are rigorous, reliable and valid.

The researcher achieved credibility by triangulation, peer debriefing and member checking (Flynn & McDermott, 2016:112). With triangulation the researcher combined data sources (literature and participants' interviews) to determine whether the participants; responses were in line with determining the effects of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences in the workplace versus literature. Peer debriefing – the researcher included peers to provide their perspectives on how the researcher collected the data, and about problems and meanings of data already collected. The researcher applied member checking by sitting down with each participant to afford them the opportunity to verify whether each participants' transcribed interview was a true reflection of what they had shared (Flick, 2018:48; Flynn & McDermott, 2016:111-113).

The researcher provided thick descriptions of the research process and environment which contributed towards the applicability to other settings (transferability). The researcher achieved dependability by keeping an up to date research journal and records of all research documentation. Confirmability was ensured by truthfully reflecting the presented data and not the views of the researcher (Flynn & McDermott, 2016:113).

Above all, the researcher ensured that ethical considerations were adhered to and the next section will address these.

1.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is vital to discuss the ethics around the intended research study so as to ensure that no harm is done to the participants. Research ethics is defined by Bernard (2013:181) as the study of what researchers ought or ought not to do and how it should be decided. It is further described

by Bhola and Raguram (2016:228) as a concept that aims to protect the participants from being harmed during the process of research. "Research ethics is a mechanism to protect the interest of research participants" (Tsang & Liu, 2019:147). The researcher understands research ethics as a system that guides and reminds the researcher what is right or wrong and that the participants have the same rights.

The following ethical considerations are highlighted – informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, beneficence and management of information.

1.12.1 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is described by Ary, Jacobs, Irvine and Walker (2019:450) as a means by which the researcher ensures that no one person other than the researcher knows who participated in the study. The researcher had an agreement with the participants that after the data was collected, the names of the participants would not be used and the researcher would not reveal these names to anyone. The recordings of the interviews were listened to in a secure place (Sieber & Tolich, 2013:155; Tsang & Liu, 2019:147). Thus, the researcher upheld one of the social work code of ethics' principles (confidentiality) to ensure that the participants' information was always protected. The independent coder and the language editor will also be given confidentiality forms to sign. As practitioners we are required by section 14 of the South African constitution and section 2 of POPI Act 04 of 2013 that we uphold the right to privacy of individuals and protecting important interest of individuals.

1.12.2 Informed consent

Informed consent refers to the researcher ensuring that she frankly, honestly and thoroughly discussed all aspects of the intended research with the participants (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2020:72; Th & Sbinga, 2018:17). Being well-informed enabled participants to make sound decisions about participating in the research study without the fear of being forced (Carter & Lubinsky, 2016:46). The participants were then comfortable to provide maximum information about their experiences relating to the influence that their primary relationship has on their productivity in the workplace (Creswell & Poth, 2018:54). Taking into consideration the definitions of informed consent, the researcher viewed it as an ethical requirement to be transparent with what the study entails so that their voluntary decision to participate in the study was not based on false information. Written consent was obtained from the participants who willingly participated through the completion of the designed consent form, as written consent is essential. (See Addendum C).

1.12.3 Beneficence

Beneficence, as an ethical consideration, relates to why the researcher is doing the research, is it for her own benefit or is the real intention that the participants, population and community benefit the most from the findings (Flynn & McDermott, 2016:48). During the preparation of the participants, the benefits of the research were explained to the participants. They were informed about the reason for the research and that the findings would be articulated in such a manner that it would not only further explain the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace, but also ways of informing EAP to enhance services towards such employees and other members of the primary relationship (Hennink et al., 2020:72; Carter & Lubinsky, 2016:44).

1.12.4 Anonymity

Anonymity is defined by Sieber and Tolich (2013:154) as the way in which the researcher acquires a unique identity for each participant because participants' privacy needs to be maintained (Merriam & Grenier, 2019:390) and confidentiality is managed through the anonymization of data (Shaw & Holland, 2014:116) as a strategy used to maintain privacy. The researcher was creative and provided different names/ pseudonyms or codes for the participants that only she was able to identify the participants and information. Furthermore, at the start of each digital recording the researcher mentioned the pseudonym allocated to the participant in order not to confuse the data and participants. All electronic files were password protected as well.

1.12.5 Management of information

Safeguarding, controlling and protecting the collected data of a research study is one of the most important ethical considerations to adhere to (Zazus, 2017:2). The management of information requires the researcher to ensure that the collected data, related documents, notes, digital recordings and files are kept safe in a locked cabinet to which only the researcher has access. The researcher took custodianship of all the data relating to the research study about the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace: informing EAP, even after the completion of the research (McGregor, 2018:22).

1.13 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

It important to clarify key concepts in the research thus the following key concepts will be discussed: Primary relationship, Employee, Productivity and Workplace

1.13.1 Primary relationship

A primary relationship is defined by Anderson (2014:233) as an atmosphere in which the participants exchange intimate knowledge, acts and reactions with some degree of spontaneity and provides realistic conceptions of themselves, whilst Battyany and Russo-Netzer (2014:27) refer to a primary relationship as a close relationship that provides a higher level of meaning in life and the lack of such a relationship can produce deficits in meaning.

For the purpose of this study, a primary relationship is described as connecting people within a circle of nearness, commitment, deep feelings, shared values and goals (Connidis & Barnett, 2018:2035), it is a close relationship with significant others (primary members such as husband, wife, cohabiting partner or same-sex partner) with which the participant is sharing his/her life. The term primary relationship is defined by Pallota-Chiarolli (2016:228) as a long-term, committed marriage-type of relationship where lovers share finances, parenting and decision making. A primary relationship occurs when the partner falls in-love with someone else and establishes a covert, long-term, emotionally involving extra-dyadic sexual relationship (McKinney & Sprecher, 2014:136).

Considering the above definitions and explanations, the researcher focused on a primary relationship where two people have an intimate relationship, from married couples, cohabiting partners or same-sex partners.

1.13.2 Employee

Employee is described by Vinel (2013:17) as one who is employed, and Holland and Burnett (2013:16) indicate that it is an individual who has entered into or works under a contract of employment. The Labour Relations Act (2006:Section 213) says an employee is anyone who works for another person or who assists in conducting the business of an employer. Employees for this research study refer to employees of the SAPS appointed according to the SAPS Act 68 of 1995.

1.13.3 Productivity

Productivity is described by Beaton and Maser (2016:74) as a certain number of units of output per person per day or per hour. It is further defined by Storm (2019:xxxiii) as a measure of being able to apply resources provided by the employer as well as achieving within a given time. Productivity is a relationship between inputs and outputs and very close to the definition of efficiency (Vlachvei, Notta, Karantinini & Tsounis, 2017:20). For the purpose of this study

productivity is regarded as production and creativity that needs to be maintained by appointed SAPS employees.

1.13.4 Workplace

Workplace is described by Perley (2021:79) as an environment that recognises performance, values work-life balance, and encourages teamwork, innovation and the generation of ideas. It is cited by Swann (2018:5) as a setting of providing assessment and consideration of appropriate counter measures. The workplace for this study refers to the SAPS, Thembisile sub-district and Dr JS Moroka sub-district police stations.

Primary relationship, employee, productivity and workplace are concepts that the researcher focused on and assessed how they are inter-linked and influence or impact on each other through the study. All the above given definitions fit the concepts of the researcher.

1.13.5 EAP (Employee Assistance Programme)

EAP is alluded to by Golub and Chevlowe (2019:21) as a benefit provided by the employer to its employees where counselling, referral and treatment for depression, stress, substance abuse, marital or family problems and elder care needs. It is further supported by Mitchell and Gamlem (2017:80), Rogelberg (2016:44) and Shafritz (2018:101) as a system of programmes and resources designed to support employees' health and well-being to prevent breakdowns caused by personal problems. The EAP for this study is the programme provided by EAP practitioners to SAPS employees working in Thembisile and Dr JS Moroka sub-districts whose productivity in the workplace is influenced by their primary relationships.

1.13.6 Social work

Social work is described by SACSSP as a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion and the empowerment and liberation of the people. It is a profession that facilitates development as well as social change, social cohesion, empowerment and liberation of the people (Corcoran & Roberts, 2015:889). It is defined as a profession that facilitates social change and empowers people with problem-solving abilities in order to enhance their well-being daily (Wright & Jones, 2015:54). It is further alluded to by Cree (2022:69), and Zastrow and Hessenauer (2021:3) as a practice-based profession and academic discipline that has a strong desire to help improve people's lives.

This is a social work study that focuses on occupational social work and other professionals as EAP Practitioners who render EAP services in the SAPS environment to the employees who need empowerment and liberation from their personal problems.

1.13.7 EAP Practitioner

An EAP practitioner is described by Winston, Winegar and Bistline (2020:64) as a practitioner who is awarded with EAP training or credentials to provide clinical assessment, counselling as well as referring the programme users to the relevant stakeholders for further intervention. It is further defined by Boella and Goss-Turner (2020:92) and EAPA-SA (published 08/06/2017) as a qualified practitioner who is expected to render therapeutic services to the employees as well as supporting employees with skills and insight to be more self-perceptive in dealing with personal problems, not forgetting to follow the organisations' reasonable constraints and imperatives.

The EAP practitioners for this study were the qualified practitioners (occupational social workers or psychologists) employed by the SAPS on a part-time or full-time basis to render services to the SAPS employees so that they do not deal with their personal problems alone.

1.13.8 SAPS (South African Police Service)

The SAPS is established in section 5(1) of the SAPS Act 68 of 1995. It is defined by the constitution of the Republic of South Africa 108 of 1996 in section 205 (1) as a national police structured in the national, provincial as well as the local government. Section 205 (3) further states that it is a structure that is mandated to prevent, combat and investigate crime, to maintain public order, to protect and secure the people and their property. SAPS is elaborated on by Willliams (2016:129) as a department that creates a safe and secure environment for all its citizens. It is a police force that is community-oriented intended to adopt and implement a human rights approach (Lamb, 2021:92).

The SAPS for this study is the Thembisile and Dr JS Moroka Sub sub-districts in Mpumalanga.

1.14 CONTENT OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

Structure/format is defined by Cypress (2021:123) as a structure in research that will have sections and subsections and the more the structure is detailed the easier it is for the reader to understand.

The research study's structure will be as follows:

In **Chapter One**, the introduction will focus on the introduction and research problem formulation; problem statement; reason/rationale for the study; theoretical framework, research questions, goal and objectives; research methodology and methods including the research approach, research design, research population, and sampling; data collection including preparations for collection, data collection and pilot testing; method of data analysis; data verification; ethical considerations; clarification of key concepts; and the content plan of the research report.

Chapter Two will focus on a literature study of the effects of primary relationship experiences of employees' productivity in the workplace. This chapter will also focus on literature by different authors which is inclusive of the discussion of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace.

In **Chapter Three**, the application of the research methods used in this study will be discussed.

Chapter Four will give an exposition of the findings of the study.

Chapter Five will provide the overall conclusions and recommendations of the research study, followed by the bibliography and addenda.

1.15 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The chapter elaborated on how the study on the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace, informing EAP in SAPS, was to be conducted. A qualitative research: phenomenology, and descriptive, explorative and contextual research designs were explained. Interviews were used to collect data and all the ethical considerations, including ensuring confidentiality, anonymity, informed consent, beneficence and management of information were followed. Data was verified by following the eight steps outlined by Tesch and it was validated by following the Lincoln and Guba 's model of trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. All the steps that were followed ensured that the researcher achieved the goals and objectives of the study as well as being able to answer the research question.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

The influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace lacks adequate literature. However, there have been similar literature studies under the influence of a positive relationship and conflict experiences in primary relationships of employees in different departments/ organisations and the effects on work productivity. The purpose of this chapter is to elaborate on what other authors said regarding the importance of a primary relationship in an employee's life, unpack the studies that have been conducted, the challenges experienced by employees in their personal relationships, the impact of personal relationships on employees' work productivity, implication of systems theory and inter-role conflict, coping mechanisms, the utilisation of EAP services by the employees, and the role of EAP.

2.2   THE IMPORTANCE OF PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP IN AN EMPLOYEE'S LIFE

A primary relationship is important in a human life because theorists believe that people have a need to belong and that is possible when one forms and maintains an intimate relationship that lasts (Berscheid & Regan, 2016:5). A good relationship needs a partner who is psychologically matured with the ability to be the strength for their partner, sharing everything, giving oneself in the relationship and having the desire to grow old with their partner (Corey, Corey & Mutatori, 2018:178). Young adults have developed strategies of navigating challenging transitions in the field of love and work domains because as adults they must balance between maintaining a professional career and long-term romantic relationships (Luyckx, Seiffge-Krenke, Schwartz, Crocett & Klimstra, 2014:192).

Primary relationships are divided into five categories according to Dailey (2020:30), namely:

- Intimacy needs which means that couples are each other's confidant, sharing personal intimate thoughts as well as expressing deeper feelings for one another.

- Companionship needs which are explained as the manner in which couples are spending more time together and doing activities together.

- Sexual needs which include having sexual intercourse as partners.

- Security needs are explained as being able to create stability by depending on each other and being able to rely on each other.

-      Emotional involvement which include the connection between two people where one can feel and understand the emotions of the other partner.

2.2.1 OVERVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ON EMPLOYEES' PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP EFFECTS ON WORK PRODUCTIVITY

There was no recent study about on police officers or security officers on their primary relationships and its effects of workplace performance was found. However, there have been other studies related to the researcher's study.

A study was done on the influence of work-family conflict, family-work conflict and work-life on Saudi female teachers' performance in the education sector, with job satisfaction as a moderation. The inclusion criteria of age, marital status or relationship status was used in order to check if the person qualified to participate in the study. The findings were that there is a high, important, significant and crucial impact on an employee's performance in the workplace, life balance and job satisfaction whereas there is a positive but not significant effect on work-family conflict. But nonetheless, family-work conflict showed a negative impact on work productivity (Al-Alawai, Al-Saffar, Alomohammedsaleh, Alotaibi & Alawi, 2021:486).

A survey conducted with married employees of 42 various companies, such as car insurance, information technology, manufacturing and baking in China, indicated that a good marriage or primary relationship is a good influence on work creativity for employees. The findings indicated that employees who were experiencing marital satisfaction responded positively to job demands and some respondents indicated that the level of respect they received at home made them feel confident about themselves at work. With that being said it, makes them work harder in the workplace and became more productive (Yipeng, Xu, Yongli, 2017:755). The above findings of the study share the same sentiments as Demerouti, Bakker and Tetrick (2014:127) who feel that the joy and happiness experienced by the employees in their primary relationships can have a positive spill-over from family to the work environment, and as such assisted them in improving and performing their work duties as their resource reservoirs are full. Individual focus is one of the factors that facilitated the employees to ensure that they organised their family lives together with their partners which in return effected how they functioned at work, being good or bad. A study done in the German companies about family to work conflict and job performance indicated that family and personal relationships hinder one from performing their work duties effectively because employees cannot concentrate fully at work. Concentration is a state characterised by focus on the task at hand that requires self-control. The findings of the study indicated that family and primary relationships can interfere with an employee's responsibilities

at work and thus, generate negative consequences for the said employees and the organisations they are working for. With that being said, it is alluded to that primary relationships that are not going through challenges can help offer opportunities and development to the employees in their workplace and that the employees can stay healthy and productive (Nohe, Michel & Sonntag, 2013:341/351)

A study conducted in Taiwan on married staff working at the University of Science and Technology, many participants expressed frustration about their primary relationship because their partners undermined them as partners in their relationship, taking out their negative emotions on them and this is associated with the silent treatment and insults. The study's findings revealed that when one feels undermined and disrespected, it does not only lead the employee to feel psychologically strained but it also leads to loss of work concentration and poor productivity (Chen, Liang & Wang, 2020:7). Looking at these studies conducted around the globe, it can be concluded that primary relationships can make or break an individual, especially in their workplace. Each experience lived by the employees has a different outcome.

A study was conducted on both genders in China where the family incivility as a source of stress originating from family and primary relationships domain and its spill-over effects in the workplace was explored. From the chosen population the findings showed that family incivility, intimate relationships and conflicts in the said domains contributed negatively to work performance. It further revealed that better balance between family to work life can be achieved through the support of the work management Bao, Xing and Gongxing (2019:270)

A further study that was found to be relevant was conducted on Uranium mine in Namibia. A total number of 292 members of the mine participated. The study was about investigating the relationship between work-home/ home-work interaction. The home to work relationship included a relationship with the parents, siblings as well as the spouses. It was found that the participants were emotionally and psychologically available at work only if there was positive interaction in the home settings. Conflicts were found to be affecting the participants negative at work. The study indicated that employees need to be protected against negative home-work interaction through EAP services so that they can be able to engage at a personal level at work Rothman and Baumann (2014).

Another study was conducted in Belgium where newlyweds and cohabitating partners full time employed, working for different occupations was conducted. Seven hundred and ninety-nine couples participated in the study. The study was about the impact of negative work-family and

family-work spillover on feelings, life dissatisfaction, work performance. It was discovered that both work-family and family to work spillover affected the couples negatively on both life and work interests. It was further found that married life matters at influencing work performance as well as being motivated as individuals.

2.2.2 OVERVIEW OF EMPLOYEES' PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP EFFECTS ON WORK PRODUCTIVITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

In South Africa a study was conducted which focused on monitoring the impact of family-work conflict on the performance of women-owned businesses in Bloemfontein, in the Free State province. The findings indicated that the family-work conflict negatively influenced women who were running their own businesses (Ngek-Brownhilder, 2018:326).

Another study was conducted with teachers at schools in the North West province about the role of conflict they experienced. It was found that work efficacy depends on a motivational work climate for educators and for such to take place influences from different factors need to be in place. The said factors can emanate from outside of the workplace. The responsibilities and the expectations that are associated with employees in family to work situations can lead to role conflict, the role conflict thus develops uncertainty in an employee's life, the uncertainty develops harm in an individual's job performance, job satisfaction and creativity in an individual. The results found in the study showed that there is role conflict in family to work conflict which leads to absenteeism and loss of productivity which costs the Department of Education millions of rands (Boweni, Van der Westhuizen & Meyer, 2020:2).

A study that was conducted in some South African public organisations with different departments inclusive of the SAPS were the purpose was to examine the relationship between extrinsic motivation, life satisfaction and work satisfaction. It was found that primary relationships were found to be the core influencer between job performance and life satisfaction. Primary relationship also contributed to employees' eagerness to perform in team work Mafini and Dlodlo (2014).

Another study that was conducted focused specifically on India married women in South Africa with the purpose of exploring the perception about the support they receive from their partners and how the support impacts their career progression. It was found that support from their husbands was important as it accelerated their interest in advancing in their careers. It was also found that they perform well at work when they have the support of their husbands Carrim & Ahmed (2016:16).

This shows that an employee does not live in isolation. As the researcher has indicated in chapter 1 with regard to systems theory, each system in an employee's life, including the employee as an individual, the family of origin they are from as well as the community they live in, affect each other. There are systems in an individual's life that affect how they live and these systems affect each other both positively or negatively.

2.3   IMPLICATIONS OF THE SYSTEMS THEORY ON AN EMPLOYEE'S PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP AND WORK PRODUCTIVITY

The systems theory is proven to be one of the important theories found to have an impact on an individual's life. As elaborated by Hinde (2014) systems theory involves the individual's self-interaction, relationships, groups and organisations that have dialectical relationship with each other where socio-cultural structure of norns, values, beliefs are implemented.   It was stated by Radzi, Sumarjan, Chik, Zahari, Mohi, Bakhtiar and Anuar (2015:34) that individuals have their well-being affected by different personal and social factors adding to those that they experience at work. Different systems that they belong to may exert demands and expectations in an individual leading to primary relationships problems and poor work performance. It makes the employees aware of the foundation in their personal relationships as well as the workplace as the two environments are interconnected and a balance between the two must be found. The theory also assists the employee and the therapist to analyse the relationship of each person in the family as well as try to make sense of the situation that the employee might be going through. It allows the individuals to be aware of the changes happening in their lives, how they should attend and embrace these changes as well as building resilience around the changes in their lives (Becvar & Becvar, 2018:5; Scott-Fraser, Grove, Lee, Greene & Slolovey, 2014:10).

Applying systems theory in social work assists the practitioner to integrate the social factors with the psychological functioning of the employee to create balance in their lives. It also provides the employee and the practitioner with ideas of how an individual can maintain stability in their current lives, instead of focusing and dwelling on the changes brought about on the systems they fall under (Payne, 2014:186). The importance of systems theory in social work assist the practitioner to create helpful possibilities of intervention and assessment referring to the systems that they belong as they do not live in isolation Shaw (2016). It assists in understanding systems as integrated complex where personal relationships, work relationships, social relationships can be measured Detomasi, Gartrell and Gartrell (2019).

Systems theory assists EAP practitioners in assisting the employees to enhance understanding of internal and external structures and environments that bring about inter-role conflict thus drawing internal and external strength to deal with the problems experienced Teater (2019:32).

2.4 IMPLICATIONS OF INTER-ROLE CONFLICT ON AN EMPLOYEE'S PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP AND WORK PRODUCTIVITY

An employee who is married or in a committed relationship is able to cope better with life roles and challenges when they get support from their partners. However, lack thereof can lead to an employee experiencing inter-role conflict. Employees who experience inter-role conflict are likely to suffer from burnout due to the pressure they are likely to be under from the family and work domains. Inter-role conflict is regarded as becoming a modern day pandemic which causes implications between the employee and the organisation where they are working (Rossi, Meurs & Perrewe, 2016:148).

The implication of inter-role conflict in an employee's life is that it helps the employees to realise the neglect in their roles in other aspects of their life, prompting them to activate intensified active coping abilities for both work-family conflict as well as family-work conflict. It is stated that the employee, with the help of therapists, can manage to create boundaries between their family and work domains diminishing the negative impact of personal relationships or work interfering with the other (Leiter, Bakker & Mosiach, 2014:47). It is further stated by Miryala and Luvala (2015:65) that it is well known that both family and work environments are incompatible due to their distinct norms and requirements, the inter-role conflict assists in realising the problem, and coming up with attempts to manage the conflicting roles in order to sustain both the family and work domains. There is a bidirectional relationship between family, marital institutions to workplace institution. The relationship involves far reaching decisions, providing role set and spending most time in one institution which often result in men and women significant inter role conflict that distresses other aspects of their lives Weiss & Lonnquist (2017:118) and Halford & Van de Vijvel (2020:327). In most cases people experience inter-role conflict because it ensues across all systems that an individual belongs to and it can have different effects on work-life as well as family to work life Collier (2018:182). In situations where inter-role conflict occurs, the individual has multiple roles to play and they will increasingly be unable to handle each role effectively. Failure to perform some duties simultaneously can be caused by either lack of resources or the incompatibility between the different roles Chan, Zinn, Wang (2016:431), Chmiel, Fraccaroli & Sverke (2017) and Segalla (2021:95).

2.5 POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE IMPACT OF PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP ON WORK PRODUCTIVITY

Relationships go through phases and these phases can either be positive or negative. When things are going well in a primary relationship, this can bring satisfaction and happiness to an individual in both their private and work life (positive phase). With that being said, when there are constant fights and disagreements it can result in stress and lack of concentration in one's life (negative phase). Happiness and productivity at work have been shown to be influenced by personal characteristics such as marital or personal relationship status and self-esteem (Baykal, 2020:181). As explained by Eby and Allen (2013:336), all primary relationships have positive and negative aspects and those aspects can have a direct impact and influence on employees. They further stated that employees affected by high conflict in a relationship may have low productivity which may result in them taking an extended leave of absence which can result in low turnover or loss of productivity.

The negative impact of primary relationships on work productivity is described by Anatan (2013:91) as based on time, strain and behaviour. He explained time as the individual being able to perform a single role at a time, strain as tension in one role affecting the other role, and behaviour as when the problem experienced starts to affect the individual's behaviour. He believes that family-work conflict negatively affects job satisfaction as well as family satisfaction. It is reported by Adams, Adams, Beherend and Treiman (2021:264) that the impact of personal and marital relationship factors makes a contribution to a person's performance in the occupational environment, they are complex and their influence is reciprocal. However, it is still of importance to keep in mind that a primary relationship is one of the most important aspects in an employee's life. It is explained that work productivity is not restricted to effects and aftermaths of what happens within the organisation only but rather external sources, which include primary relationships and family situations. There is a significant relationship between primary relationships, economic conditions and other external factors of employee on work performance. Research conducted previously indicates that those that are dating or married and working together in the same organisation, there is no benchmark evidence in the literature of any attempt to compare productivity in terms of gains or losses resulting from employees dating each other within the organisation (Hoffman, Frederick & Schwartz, 2014:420).

2.6 EFFECT OF CONFLICT IN PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP ON WORK PRODUCTIVITY

People who are dating or married are more likely to experience conflicts, fights or disagreements within their relationships. Individuals who experience conflict between their primary relationship,

family and work are subject to anxiety, incompatibility to work, and mental and emotional exhaustion as a result of tension. With that being said family-work conflict involves family demands that hinder or prevent time being spent on work due to one's family/personal role (Golden, 2013:256). The majority of research to date has focused on the impact of work stress on family life, the relationship is a reciprocal one with the impact of family stress on work productivity.

Marital or family discord has been found to impair work productivity in cases where it results in work absence, loss of focus or concentration, mental health, alcoholism, depression and anxiety. Marital and family problems, depression and other psychological problems are some of the direct personal issues that impact negatively on an employee's well-being and, as a result, work performance, affecting the organisation's bottom line (Adams, 361:2015).

The authors Petersen, Sprich and Wilhelm (2016:276) believe that experiences within intimate or primary relationships are likely to have distress as certain percentages in married couples have reported to be going through a stressful situation. With that being said, the effect of a stressful situation that is being left unattended has negative implications on the lives of employees and individuals, including their relationships, family, society and their workplaces. It also causes poor physical health, less work productivity and absenteeism in the workplace.

The above mentioned effects of conflict in primary relationships are supported by a study conducted related to the stress and coping mechanisms of police officers in the Tzaneen region in Limpopo, which indicated that stress is a trigger by stressors on the psychological syndrome and there are several contributors of stress in police officers' lives, including family pressure to do or achieve something, insufficient social and emotional support, and lack of control in situations which leaves them frustrated (Mushwana, Govender & Nel, 2019:1).

The effect of conflict in primary relationships on work productivity is further elaborated by the study conducted in Limpopo SAPS officers about the causes of suicide in SAPS officers, where it was found that domestic violence committed by police officers results from financial constraints where they take too many loans that they cannot repay, inability to align their budget effectively, fear of sharing personal problems with other people, work overload, management showing no interest or concern over the police officers' safety, marital problems, and being diagnosed with diseases. It was found that both personal and work factors are contributors of suicide amongst SAPS officers (Singo & Shilubane, 2020:1753).

Most people who are married tend to direct all their focus to their marriages and its experiences, making them a priority above everything else. They tend to have difficulties in separating their home boundaries from their work boundaries which, in return, negatively affects both family and work life (Swarnalatha & Rajalakshmi, 2017:46). However, it is explained by Yule (2015:160) and Dansby (2019:9) that coupes who uses the word "we" tend to focus on their relationship challenges together for the success of the relationship to avoid spill-over in the family-work domain. It was argued by Adamson, Proulx, Few-Demo and Roy (2022:262) that other people in the primary relationships view their work as an important aspect same as the personal relationship they are in, thus they ensure that focus is given equally to both aspects of their lives for stability purpose. When a conflict arises in a relationship, it affords the partners an opportunity to express their issues and bring about new ideas without letting anger build up. However, it becomes a problem if it is not properly handled as it can lead to frustration, hard feelings and severe fights (Folger, Poole & Stutman, 2021:1)

2.7 COPING MECHANISM OF EMPLOYEES' EXPERIENCES ON THE INFLUENCE OF PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP ON WORK PRODUCTIVITY

Coping is used to describe and apply a different type of effort to deal with and overcome the challenges or difficulties experienced in one's life (Blaisure, Saathoff-Wells, Pereira, Wadsworth & Dombro, 2016:105). The ability to cope with primary relationship problems does not only benefit the employee going through the difficulty but rather the organisations that the individual is employed at. A study was conducted on strategies for coping with family stressors and work stressors, scale development and validation, and it was found that employees can find, use and apply a variety of alternative strategies that can assist them with coping with challenges (Clark, Michel, Early & Baltes, 2014:617).

A coping mechanism is also explained by Rahman (2019:107) as a mechanism that is explored through three constituent variables, namely, problem-based coping, emotion-based coping and negotiation/communication. It was reported by Kuster, Backes, Brandstatter, Nussbeck, Brandbury, Sutter-Stickel and Bodenmann (2017:576) that for some people, dealing and coping with a primary relationship is a challenge because they are more vulnerable than others when dealing with the effects of primary relationships. Couples create a coping response to the problems they have that affect their work performance as well as their overall well-being because they have three reasons, to regain their emotional well-being, return back to their normal activities and to regain psychological control in their lives (Seaward, 2018:210).

2.7.1 Problem-based coping

Problems-based coping means a turning a general problematic situation into small and manageable components by working hard in one aspect of life in order to save the other aspect of life (Rahman, 2019:111). A coping strategy which is implemented by the affected individual through the management of challenging situations in order to confront and change the stressor, including approaches like asking for help from others, taking direct action and planning (Sanderson, 2019:98).

As described by Deckers (2018:230-232), problem focused is a coping mechanism that involves an individual trying to identify the problem more clearly so that one can come up with potential solutions, thus people are more likely to use problem-based coping when confronted with controllable stressors but are more likely to use emotion-based coping when faced with less controllable stressors.

The above is explained by Mckay, Abramowitz and Storch (2017:407) as involving the expression of solidarity with the partner, relaxing together and directly discussing redistribution of house tasks and responsibilities. Problem-based solving is a mechanism that is conceptualised as a constellation of abilities that are too discrete in assisting to solve the problem (Snyder, Lopez, Edwards & Marques, 2021:455). Banyard, Norman Dillon and Winder (2019:684) describe it as a method that allows the individual the ability to manage a stressful situation in their lives by applying coping strategies by changing their relationship with the environment.

Problem-based aims at resolving and dealing with problems and situations that cause stress by creating a plan of action that comes with a sense of control and growth in mentality. It is also the effort displayed by the employee or an individual to solve the problem and that can be done by defining the problem, generating several solutions, comparing the different solutions and coming up with a working plan within the generated alternative plans (Merlo, 2021:183; Fink, 2016:360).

2.7.2 Emotion-based coping

Emotion-based coping is defined as a mechanism that involves managing the negative reactions of the accompanying stress, meaning it involves one's ability to control their emotions when they are faced with challenges in their primary relationship (Deckers, 2018:230). Emotion-based coping is defined by Rahman (2019:111) as a mechanism that includes positivity, openness within conversation, positive futuristic vision about relationships, sharing domestic responsibilities and social networking. It is alluded to by Banyard, Norman, Dillon and Winder

(2019:684) as the ability of an individual to deal with and alter a stressful situation in their lives by reducing the emotion that brings about distress. This can be done through venting, positive appraisal or self-blame. It aims to deal with and improve the negative emotions that are associated with the stress that at times can be linked with depression and anxiety. and It can be used as a method that deals with avoiding the stressful situation by applying wishful thinking. Wishful thinking at times includes one being in denial of a current stressful situation so that they can concentrate on other aspects of their lives (Merlo, 2021:183; Fink, 2016:361).

2.7.3 Avoidance coping mechanism

It was cited by Nader (2020) that avoidance has mixed results. It is defined by Bowyers (2019:224) as an escape coping characterized efforts of avoiding dealing with thoughts, feelings, acitvities associated with stress. Avoidance is a coping strategy used by individuals to deal with problems and stress. It is undertaken by avoiding relevant stimuli by distracting oneself and denying the existence of feelings and situation Bowers, Beidel & Marks (2020:215). It was elaborated by Corcoral (2014:93) that it can be used in a healthy way and a harmful way. Healthy avoidance included ignoring people, places and situations associated with unnecessary problems and harmful avoidance involves ignoring responsibilities and primary relationships which in return can be detrimental to an individual. Avoiding problems by pretending like they do not exist have additional consequences in the relationship.

Avoidance interferes with the process of planning ahead and in return bringing decline in the progress of the relationship Aitilio, Otis-Green & Cagle (2022:277). It was stated by Bray, Hourani, Williams, Lane & Marsden (2014:134) that avoidance of a problem in a relationship is associated with abuse of substance in order to cope with relationships problems, daily pressures and feelings. However, it was stated by Boss, Bryant & Mancini (2017) using avoidance does not necessarily drive one to start using substance but rather an individual can using the avoidance method by reading books, exercising or focusing of work. According to Anand (2022:97) avoiding mechanism is not practical in every situation because as an individual responsible for different roles in different systems, one cannot keep running away and avoiding the existence of problems all the time, thus an approach that is solution oriented is vital.

2.7.4 Communication

Two people who are in an intimate relationship have the responsibility of maintaining a relationship and that can be done when there is proper communication. Proper communication includes talking about feelings and fears as well as expectations from each other. This allows

the increase of intimacy and freedom of expression which releases the free spirit in a person (Guererro, Anderson & Afif, 2018:17; Strong & Cohen, 2016:240). Disagreements are bound to be experienced in relationships because two unique people are always in frequent planning and structuring of the life they want to build. The disagreements tend to ruin a good relationship if handled without communication. Thus, communicating with each other and trying to understand the next person's perspective assists in maintaining the relationship (Anslinger, Turner & Przybsc, 2020:31).

When partners are in conflict, willingness by the wronged partner to forgive is one of the most important factors contributing to coping, healing and restoring a damaged relationship, thus in recent studies it was found that there is a link between forgiveness and positive communication (Sheldon, Gilchrist-Petty & Lessley, 2014:78). Communication as explained by McKay, Abramowitz and Storch (2017:407) as a mechanism that involves one partner describing the stressful event and its deeper meaning whilst the other partner listens actively to promote further disclosure and demonstrate interest. The supporting partner then expresses empathy and a sense of solidarity. Then finally, the partner experiencing stress will provide feedback about what the support provided felt like and how they would like to see improvements in terms of support.

It is further explained by Bannon, Taggart, Kehoe and O'Leary (2020:385&395) that communication is forms the basis of a close relationship and it involves the dynamic interactions facilitated by mutually available information that also allows partners to set out and coordinate goals. It is also the efficiency related to relationship satisfaction because it is beneficial for a couple in terms of doing or performing roles jointly in order to address the problem-solving skills jointly. Communication is the ability of one person to express their thoughts and emotions involving self-awareness, using appropriate vocabulary to describe one's experiences and wants, having the ability to express oneself without fear of rejection by the listener and the degree and level of self-control of those emotions despite how heavy or difficult they are (Sexton & Lebow, 97:2016). Communication between intimate partners or husband and wife afford the couple the opportunity to lay down their issues which comes with creative ideas of settling the problem without building up tensions (Folger, Poole & Stutman, 2021:5).

Problems in a relationship are dealt with by both genders. However, Erber and Erber (2016:171), and Strong and Cohen (2016:260) state that men and women sometimes address problems differently. Women are said to tackle problems by creating conversation about the problem and communicating in-depth, whereas males are likely to withdraw when faced with a problem instead of communicating and that in return. This is disputed by Newman and Newman

(2015:448) as they indicate that when couples are faced with problems in a relationship, both male and female are actively involved in addressing the problem and communicating about it in order for them to come up with a diagnosis of the problem as well as a plan of action for intervention.

2.8   UTILISATION OF EAP BY EMPLOYEES IN THE WORKPLACE

A study conducted in a tertiary hospital in Limpopo, South Africa with regard to utilisation of EAP services within the institution, uncovered that few employees of the institution never utilised the services rendered by the EAP, another minority number referred themselves to the programme whereas most of the employees accessing the programme were referred by their supervisors (Manganyi & Mogorosi, 2021:293). The above statement is supported by Maiden (2014:27) who states that EAP services are available in most workplaces but employees underutilise it. It must be taken into consideration that when work performance decreases, the supervisor is the first to notice as accountability must be done at the end of each month. This is the reason most employees access the services through referral from the supervisor. There was under-utilisation of the services according to a study conducted in Limpopo Waterberg district (Dipela & Sithole, 2021). The study focused on the under-utilisation of the internal EAP services by the SAPS employee and it was found that most employees preferred not consulting the internal EAP but rather preferred using other alternatives. This was not because the programme did not provide effective services but rather it was not properly marketed by the practitioners.

There have been a number of reasons that contribute to employees not consulting the EAP. Amongst them, some of the reasons were stated by the Employee Assistance Programme Association-South Africa (EAPA-SA).

- Availability was a barrier, in the sense that employees have to wait for days before they were afforded an appointment for their initial session.

- Inconvenience, in the sense that access to the service is not easy for the employees due to the offices being far away.

- Intermediary utilisation, which was explained as organisations using intermediary HR as the link between the EAP and the employees. It demotivates some employees because they do not want their HR to know about their attendance

- Confidentiality, in the sense that employees fear that their personal matters will be laid bare to their employers and colleagues.

- Low awareness, in the sense that the programme was not being effectively and efficiently marketed by the practitioners.

- Lastly, the stigma associated with mental health, employees would suffer in silence as they felt that seeking professional help was associated with being weak, thus they applied the denial mechanism rather than seek help.

2.9 ROLE OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME ON THE INFLUENCE OF PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP EXPERIENCES AND WORK PRODUCTIVITY

An EAP is a programme that offers confidential, short-term, diligent counselling services to employees who are experiencing personal problems in their lives that affects their productivity at work. EAP services have been introduced in both public service and private sectors in South Africa and in most institutions these services have been running under the Human Management and Occupational Health departments for decades. The EAP was introduced by the employers in order for professionals to identify and resolve personal and work stress experienced by employees that already affects or may affect the productivity of the concerned employee (Soeker, Matimba, Machingura, Msimango, Moswaane & Tom, 2016:570; Govender & Vandayar, 2018:2).

In America it was discovered that 20% of employees are experiencing personal problems that are directly affecting their work. It is reported by the American National Institute and Mental Health that personal problems constitute up to 30% of absenteeism and 66% of termination of employment (Carchietta, 2015). The South African EAP copied most programmes implemented in America when it was initially introduced in the 1980s but that has since changed because, instead of focusing on substance abuse alone, a broader range of personal and occupational matters were covered (Manganyi & Mogorosi, 2021:293).

For an EAP practitioner to render a successful service to employees, essential concepts like confidentiality, supported policies, recognition and commitment by supervisors and the use of both formal and informal referrals, needs to be applied (Adams, 2015:361). As described by Sexton and Lebow (2016:108) EAP is meant for employees to improve couple and family skills through the expression of thoughts and emotions as well as affording each other a listening ear when the other person is expressing their feelings. This is one of the most common forms of intervention across theoretical approaches to therapy. It was further elaborated on by Milot and Borkenhagen (2018:154) that stress experienced in one's job is one of the reasons many employees take it upon themselves to consult with the EAP. The programme is designed to

maintain or assist employees with a variety of personal problems, including relationships/marital problems, mental health and emotional issues, family problems, and work-related matters among others.

As stipulated by Mendenhall, Lamson and Hodgson (2018:527/8) EAP is a worksite-based programme designed to assist employees who are overwhelmed with personal concerns, including marital, health, family, intimate relationships, financial, and alcohol and drug abuse which directly and adversely affect the employee's job performance. Further adding that services rendered include services for individuals that focus on employee's personal concerns, assessment, referral and follow up, services for managers and supervisors which include assisting with referrals of employees to the practitioners, supervisor training and management consulting others for the organisation include rendering awareness on violence prevention, crisis management, group intervention and employee orientation and the final service is administrative services which include the development of policies and procedures, outreach programmes, evaluation and referral resources development. Most authors agree with regard to the services rendered by the EAP as Mugari, Mtapuri and Rangongo (2014:258), and Manganyi and Mogorosi (2021:293) further attest that referral to EAP services does not only benefit the employee but the family as well through the sessions conducted. They cover programmes that address problems ranging from work-related issues affecting work performance, financial problems, and psychological problems including relationships, bereavement, trauma, stress as well as anxiety.

The issue of spirituality was involved in the role played by EAP (Van Wyk & Terblanche, 2018:136; Joubert & Grobler, 2013) where they indicated that spirituality involves beliefs and practices that guide an individual. It has not been sufficiently studied how spirituality is integrated into the EAP but most SAPS employees found that devotional sessions, like morning prayers, enhance their work performance and personal well-being as it uplifts their spirits to face the day. For those who believe in the holy spirit, when problems begin to manifest themselves in a primary relationship to the point where other aspects of life are affected negatively, prayer is said to assist because it is a communication with the one above (Omartian, 2014). It was elaborated by Yoder-Wise (2014:530) that as much as employees can learn how to communicate their feelings, conflict resolution, time management and cognitive structuring, they can also learn how to seek solace in prayer as well. The EAP practitioners and chaplains provide physical care to the employees in the workplace and the employees who utilised the EAP services and Chaplains where spiritual care services were part of the sessions reported less life

problems Maness and Mattis (2021:156). It was corroborated by Canda, Furman and Canda (2020:151) that it is important for practitioners to increase their understanding on spirituality because faith play an important role in the world. They also need to learn how to help and engage spirituality in a non-judgemental, inclusive and empowering manner to employees.

In South Africa we have different religious and traditional beliefs, and no one is to be discriminated against based on their own spiritual believes. Applying spiritual capabilities in one's problems includes praying to God or performing African ancestral rituals.

2.10 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

With all the studies conducted internationally and nationally and as much as too much focus is given to organisational stress contributors, with the few studies that have been conducted about family-work relationships' impact, there is a clear indication that the impact on work productivity is not only limited to stressors emanating from the workplace, but primary relationships are also contributors. The chapter focused on the importance of primary relationships in individuals' lives as well as the positive and the negative impact the primary relationships have on the employee were elaborated. The chapter focused on the studies conducted in various countries, that indicate that there is a link between primary relationships and work productivity. When an employee is going through a difficult time, their concentration at work is affected as they may think about is the problems they are going through in their homes. Once they find themselves in a position that they cannot concentrate at work, then their work performance drops. The same applies when an employee is happy in their primary relationship, their energy is not depleted, and they are healthy and effective in everything that they do. The negative impact of the primary relationship brings about conflict, thus the effect of conflict and the coping mechanism that included the problem based, emotion based and communication were elaborated. The implication of systems theory and inter-role conflict theory was discussed. Lastly the utilization of the EAP services by the employees and the role of the EAP in the workplace were discussed as to how they assist the employees whose work productivity is being influenced by their primary relationships.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Research methodology is referred to as a method applied in research that illustrates facilities and processes needed to investigate the research problem, achieve the research goals and objectives, and execute the whole research process (Bairagi & Munot, 2019:17).

This chapter discusses the methods applied by the researcher during the study of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace, informing EAP. The researcher explains how the research methodology was applied, how the population and sampling were applied, how preparations for data collections were done, the methods used to collect data, how the semi-structured interviews were conducted and how social work skills were applied during the interviews, how ethical considerations were practised to ensure the safety of the participants and how data was analysed and verified.

3.2 RESEARCH QUESTION, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

Research question

As discussed in chapter one, research question can be further defined as a problem driven process that guides the entire study Flick (2021:71). It was further described by Mills & Birks (2014:10) and Bloomberg (2022) as an interrogative question that guides the study, sheds light on the purpose of the study and directs the study design. The question that was designed to be answered by the study Islam (2019:28) The research question of the study was: What is the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace. The research question assisted the researcher in giving direction to what the researcher wanted to find out about so that an appropriate plan and methods (as described below) could be applied.

Research Goal

Research goal is the intent of the research outcome Mills & Birks (2014:10) and Ravitch & Carl (2019). The research goal of the study was to develop an in-depth understanding of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace. The research goal assisted the researcher in achieving the purpose of the study. It contributed to giving the study the relevant direction.

Research objectives

As discussed in chapter one, objectives are the aims of the study which is inclusive of the phenomenon to be achieved Mills & Birks (2014). It was further elaborated by Suresh (2022) as a clear, feasible, measurable, relevant and concise statement that gives direction to investigate experiences. The research objectives for this study are:

- To explore the influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace

- To describe the findings in terms of the influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace

- To report the findings, draw conclusions, and make recommendations in relation to the influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace

The objectives of the study assisted the researcher in giving clear direction to what the study intended to achieve by providing steps that led towards achieving the goal set for the study.

3.3   APPLICATION OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.3.1 The qualitative research approach

A qualitative research approach was applied when conducting the research as it directed the process of the study. Qualitative research was described in Chapter 1, section 1.7.1, however, qualitative research is further described as a method focused on helping the researcher to find out people's most important lived experiences, (Silverman 2020:03; Van Manen 2017) and understanding as well as describing participants' social phenomena (Flick 2018:x). The researcher understood, recognised and interpreted the information received during the collection of data.

The qualitative research approach guided the whole research process and having a research question, goal and objectives for the study. The qualitative research approach further enabled the researcher, through conducting semi-structured interviews, to gain in-depth information about the lived experiences of the participants. The researcher applied the qualitative research approach by recognising in-depth the real-world experiences lived by the Thembisile and Dr JS Moroka sub–districts' SAPS employees. The approach applied allowed the researcher to understand that the experiences shared by the SAPS employees had a different meaning for each employee. The employees were also engaged in their ordinary familiar surroundings,

which assisted in exploring and making sense of their behaviour and experiences. By applying the qualitative research approach, the researcher remained open-minded (applied bracketing) about the shared experiences of the SAPS employees and their primary relationships and their influence on their work productivity.

3.2.2 Research design

Research design is a plan that assists the researcher in planning how to collect, analyse and interpret data (Merill 2017:68), restricting and reducing the chance that there might be interference with the desired outcome of the study as well as dissemination of the study information (Grinell, Gabor & Unrau 2019:423). The researcher applied the design by ensuring that there is an effective way of carrying out the study to enable the collection of the SAPS employees with the good and the bad experiences in their personal relationships and how those experiences affected their concentration in the workplace as well as informing the EAP. The researcher's decision to choose the following designs was influenced by the concept of the study and how they study selected will contribute to the field being studied. The research design applied by the researcher was phenomenology which consists of exploratory, descriptive and contextual strategies. The designs applied are discussed below:

Phenomenological research design

As explained in chapter 1 (section 1.7.2) the researcher applied a phenomenology research design. Phenomenology is defined as a philosophy that involves the intellectual engagement where the meaning of the lived experiences is interpreted (Bahandur, 2018, Gray & Grove, 2021), describing and exploring the importance of the experiences from the people who have experienced it (Neubauer, Witkop & Varpio, 2019, Usher & Jackson, 2021:2), and how the phenomena is viewed by the participants (Eberie & Schnettle 2019, Faulkner & Faulkner, 2019:43).

The researcher afforded the SAPS employees an opportunity to share, describe in-depth, and explore their lived experiences with regard to their primary relationships and how these affected their productivity in the workplace. It further afforded them the opportunity to describe the kind of experiences they went through, what they learned from the shared lived experiences and how the EAP can improve its services to the SAPS employees in similar situations. The researcher insured that she gained an in-depth understanding of the influence of SAPS employees' experiences of primary/personal relationships. By applying phenomenology, the researcher ensured that she was not biased when conducting the study as she did not let her preconceived

beliefs, cultural factors and assumptions overshadow the data provided by the participants (bracketing). This allowed the participants to share without fear of being judged.

Exploratory research design

Phenomenology, as indicated in section 3.2.2, is complemented by the explorative, descriptive and contextual research design strategies as discussed in chapter one. The mentioned strategies were applied because they guided the researcher in affording the participants the opportunity to provide in-depth information about their lived experiences. The researcher applied the explorative research design by allowing the participants to express themselves without limitations, exploring the understudied (Grinell, Gabor & Unrau, 2019:410; Jaison, 2018:122, Faulkner & Faulkner, 2019:8) whilst subsequently defining the research question (Beverborg, Feldhoff, Merki & Radish, 2021:121), in order to gain a clear and better understanding of the problem (Polonsky & Waller, 2019:120).

The researcher applied the explorative research design in order to make sense of what the participants had been through by affording them an opportunity to express themselves in their own words. The expression of events provided by the SAPS employees explored in detail the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace.

Descriptive research design

In the process the researcher also applied the descriptive research method were the participants were afforded an opportunity to interpret and illustrate their experiences as well as the phenomena regarding their lived experiences (Faulkner & Faulkner, 2019:29; Neubauer, Witkop & Varpio, 2019:6). The researcher applied the descriptive research design when she got to ask how their primary relationships affected their work productivity, where they drew the line about the influence of their primary relationship on their work, when their primary relationship affected their work, and what happened in their primary relationship with regard to the experiences and how it affected how they performed in their everyday work duties.

Contextual research design

With regard to the contextual research method the researcher ensured that she understood the participants within their own context which ensured that rich and quality data regarding the primary relationships experienced, was collected, and how they dealt with the challenges that they had experienced in their relationships (Abbing, 2017:102).

The contextual research design applied was through the selection of interview questions asked, because the context of their primary relationships and how it influences their work productivity ensured that relevant and adequate information was provided. The participants were allowed to freely express themselves because all the content and context of their experiences mattered. The researcher ensured that she applied the mentioned research approach and research designs which assisted in obtaining rich and relevant data from the participants without manipulating the system or the process.

3.3 RESEARCH METHOD

3.3.1 Study Population

The population was selected from the individuals who were used during the study to draw findings as well as individuals who have the same characteristics and socio-demographic background that were of interest to the study (Engel & Schutt, 2017:105, Allen, 2017:1523, Perrin, 2020:192). The Mpumalanga province SAPS employees who had relevant characteristics and lived experiences were drawn based on the above definition. The employees were selected based on their lived experiences and relationship status as indicated in the inclusion and exclusion criteria in section 1.8.3. The population applicable to this study, was all Mpumalanga SAPS employees working in Thembisile sub-district: Verena, Kwamhlanga and Mkobola police stations only. The initial intended plan was to include all the Thembisile sub-district SAPS police stations as well as stations at Dr JS Moroka sub-district. However, none of the employees from the Dr JS Moroka sub-district participated and officials from the Moloto police station in Thembisile refused to participate when the idea of the study was presented to them. The ethical consideration of informed consent was applied and no one was forced to participate in the study if they were not interested. Thus, the population from which sampling was done, was confined to Thembisile Hani sub=district (Verena, Kwamhlaga and Mkobola police stations only).

To access the population, the researcher initially contacted the national SAPS head office to get approval to conduct the study in their department. The approved research proposal and the Social Work Research Ethics Committee certificate was required prior to the requisition being attended to and it was emailed. The matter was escalated to the provincial office by the SAPS national office where approval was granted by both offices in writing (Addendum J). The researcher thus brought the matter to the local police stations where the station commanders (gate keepers) were contacted and provided with the approval letters from both the national and provincial offices. Subsequently a meeting was set up by the researcher and the gate keepers

to discuss the research proceedings. The researcher requested a time slot for both the morning shift and the night shift staff so that a presentation about the study could be made. The researcher did presentations in the morning for the employees doing the day shift and in the afternoon for the employees who were working night shift. All Covid-19 protocols were adhered to during the meetings held with the day and night shift staff.

3.3.2 Sampling and sampling methods

As much as sampling and sampling methods were described in chapter one, it can further be explained that sampling and the research population are inter-linked to ensure that proper screening of the participant occurs prior the intended data collection. Sampling is referred to by Moser and Korstjens (2018:3) as a selection of a subset or smaller group to be studied as it is not feasible to study the whole community, it also includes the formal plan where the size and procedure for recruiting the population that will contribute rich data, was followed. A sampling method is a distinction where the researcher chooses between probability or non-probability sampling.

The researcher applied non-probability sampling because its methods and procedures were viewed to be relevant for answering the research question and to reach the goals and objectives of the study. Non-probability sampling is all about the selection of the population where the settings allowed an intensive portrait of activities (Engel & Schutt, 2017:119). It was also applied because it was impossible to study everyone in the chosen police stations as some did not meet the inclusion criteria. However, not all of the study population that expressed interest in partaking fitting the criteria of inclusion, thus the researcher applied the purposive sampling technique and 12 participants ended up partaking in the research study.

Non-probability sampling was chosen by applying the purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique was applied by the researcher where the participants were not chosen randomly for the study but rather with a purpose and certain qualities that provided the study with in-depth and intensive findings. The researcher applied sampling by acquiring and permission from the National and the provincial SAPS office. The station commanders were given the approval letters from the Head office and provincial office for assurance that access was granted, and they were helpful in organising the staff for sessions where the researcher explained what the research pertains. The researcher selected the Thembisile and Dr JS Moroka SAPS employees because they are local stations that will provide experiences on the influence of their primary relationships on their work productivity.

The technique applied ensured that the participants in the study had the ability to provide the required information which assisted in meeting the goals and objectives of the study. The group of people who portrayed good qualities that were suitable for this study was the Mpumalanga Thembisile sub-district, Verena, Kwamhlanga and Mkobola police stations' employees who were married or in a relationship with no limitation to the sexuality, who were not managers or supervisors, with or without children, any number of working years of experience, staying with their partners or in a long-distance relationship.

The criteria of inclusion for this study were (as indicated in chapter one:
- Employees appointed according to the SAPS Act 68 of 1995.
- Employees who are married, in a relationship, cohabiting or same-sex partnership.
- Employees who know about the EAP services rendered in their workplace.
- Employees who are not managers, supervisors or line managers.

The exclusion criteria for this study were:
- Employees who are single (not married or in a relationship);
- Employees who are on extended sick leave;
- Employees who are involved in disciplinary cases against them.

The selected participants were purposively chosen because their background provided information which was in line with the research question, goals and objectives of the study. The researcher chose 12 participants to part-take in the study and two participants were used for pilot testing.

Different types of interview methods were adopted in order to accommodate the Covid-19 pandemic and its challenges. Data preparation and collection are discussed below.

3.4   DATA COLLECTION

A method in research where a researcher uses interviews or observations to collect data (Faulkner & Faulkner, 2019:35). It is stated by Gray and Grove (2021:607), and Williams (2019:38) that data collection is a process in research were the selected population is gathered with a purpose of gathering data and information through observations, in-depth interviews as well as focus groups. The data collection applied by the researcher was interviews that followed the semi-structured process to gather information about the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationships experiences on their work productivity in the workplace as is detailed below. The interview method was chosen because they is found to be suitable in collecting data for the intended study.

3.4.1 Preparation for data collection

The process of preparation for data collection took place when the researcher created a guide on how data was to be collected, considering the factors such as number of participants to be included, time, place, costs and availability of tools as well as keeping in mind the maintenance of the ethical considerations by stating the openness and transparency in the study (Gray & Grove, 2021:608). The process where consideration was given to the safety of the participant as some of the discussed matters are sensitive and revive suppressed feelings (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2020:77). The researcher made use of gatekeepers, the local station commanders in the local police stations, who assisted with inviting potential participants to partake in the study.

The researcher requested a timeslot during their staff meetings from the station commanders. Those who were not normally part of the meetings, like constables in the charge office, were invited to attend for a few minutes before their shift started in the morning afternoon. During the meetings, the researcher introduced the research study and explained the purpose, goals and objectives of the research as well as who could participate and what the expectations for participants would be. The staff was promised adherence to Covid-19 regulations. The contact details of the researcher were provided and follow-up was done with interested employees, ensuring that they met the criteria of inclusion. All the ethical considerations were presented to the staff so that they could make a well-informed decision with regard to participating in the study as well as knowing that their information would be treated in a confidential manner. Those that agreed to partake in the study were given the participation information sheets (see attached Addendum A) that introduced about the researcher, the supervisor, the purpose and intention of the study. They then signed the informed consent form (see attached Addendum C).

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, face-to-face interviews, telephonic and Microsoft Teams virtual meetings were the methods used to collect data. Each participant was contacted individually to arrange the mode of interview they preferred. The researcher's office was prepared for those who preferred to do face-to-face interviews and data was purchased for the ones who preferred the virtual mode of data collection. During the arrangement session, a suitable time for the participants was also discussed and agreed by both parties. The methods utilised ensured that the privacy and comfort of the participants was the number one priority.

3.4.2 Application of the method of data collection

The method of data collection is a process were the researcher prepares to collect data (Gray, 2021:189). Method of data collection is further described as the acquisition of participants and getting information from them through interviews, document analysis, questionnaires,

observations and focus groups takes place (Groenland & Dana, 2020:164). Interviews was the chosen method for data collection as it is effective and efficient in affording the participants the opportunity to discuss and explore their experiences. Interview is defined as a formal environment and prominent data collection tool, where the researcher asks questions to the participants directly, be it face-to-face, by telephone or online, and affords them an opportunity to respond (York, 2019).

Under interviews, the researcher chose semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews is explained as a method were the interview questions have a planned guide in a particular order with open-ended and standardised questions (Gray, 2021:190, York, 2019).

In this regard, the researcher developed 12 questions (see attached Addendum D) for the 12 participants, plus the two participants who were used for piloting (The results of the two participants used were not used to reach data saturation). The first five questions were biographical questions which needed information about their personal details as well as employment background, the last seven questions were about the research questions which had the intention of answering the goals, objectives, research questions and the problem statement. During the interview process five participants were interviewed face-to-face, two were a telephone interviews and five were Microsoft Teams interviews. There was a huge network problem during some of the interview processes however it did not hinder the progress of the interviews. Data was bought for the participants who had a better connection. An appropriate and suitable time for the participants was agreed by both the researcher and the participants to avoid unnecessary re-scheduling and disturbances during the interview. The interviews were all conducted in English. Thus, all of them were interviewed when the SAPS employees' shifts and standbys were over and permission to record was requested prior to the interview.

During the interviews the designed interview guide was followed for each and every participant and follow up questions were asked were clarity was needed. According to Faulkner and Faulkner (2019:38) interviews are meant to enforce the meaning and understanding to what is being said by the participant. During the interview, the researcher followed the tips provided by Padgett (2017:114) where the researcher:

- Familiarised herself with the interview guide,

- Asked follow-up questions,

- Avoided all the leading questions,

- Afforded the participants the opportunity to explore without interrogating,

- Avoided generalising situations by allowing participants to share their experiences, and

- Allowed the participants to talk freely without interrupting.

- The researcher also ensured that she applied verbal and non-verbal responses to assure the participants that she was listening and took an interest in what they were saying.

The researcher applied listening skills by paying attention to what the participants were saying without interruption, questioning skills by probing and asking follow up questions on the shared information were necessary, eliciting by giving the participants enough time to express themselves without rushing them, empathy, communication skills by listening actively by being friendly and respectful to the participants, and lastly, the researcher applied exploring skills by ensuring that the participants shared their experiences, thoughts and feelings. Communication skills is defined as a two-way process where two or more people with the purpose of exchanging views Beesley, Watts & Harrison (2018:2). It is further elaborated by McKay,Davis & Fanning (2018), Agard (2015) and Anikina (2019:177) communication skill is a conscious activity used to share information accompanied by disclosure of thoughts, feelings as well as the expressing emotions aimed at solving communication tasks. It assists two parties having a conversation in understanding the shared information more accurately. Probing done by the researcher was helpful because a better understanding of what was said by the participant was very important for clarity sake. Other participants asked questions where they did not understand and clarity was provided to them. The researcher also recorded the interviews after the permission was granted by the participant as this is an important element when transcribing has to be implemented. It helped in transcribing word for word which assisted when analysing the data. The social work skills assisted the researcher in getting a clear understanding of the participants' views, their experiences coupled with challenges in their primary relationships that in return affected their work productivity and how they have managed to cope with the challenges they experienced in their relationships. The applied method of data collection and the techniques assisted the researcher in meeting data saturation.

3.4.3 Pilot testing

Pilot testing is referred to as a trial or preliminary test on the designed interview guide. It is used for unforeseen circumstances prediction, identifying challenges in the interview instrument prior the actual intended interview and affords the researcher an opportunity to do revision and realignment on the guide (Gray & Grove, 2021:623, Nayak & Singh, 2021:47, Perrin, 2020:161.

The researcher applied the definitions provided by the above mentioned authors where two participants who met the inclusion criteria were selected. The employees were SAPS employees. The researcher applied the pilot testing by interviewing two employees guided by the interview guide created. The researcher also tested the interview guide with her peers and colleagues that checked that the questions were understandable and clear. The interview tool was found to be effective and efficient to obtain data rich information. However, the data obtained from these two pilot participants was not included with the main study's data.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a method were the researcher reads and re-reads the transcripts thoroughly, interpreting them with the aim of getting a deeper understanding and meaning (Moser & Korstjen, (2018:35). It is defined as a process of analysing the notes, recordings and transcriptions from the interviews conducted, classification and inter-connection of phenomenon as well as the corroboration of evidence and reducing words to themes (Gronmo, 2020:199, York, 2019). The researcher transcribed the recordings from the interviews conducted and in that manner verification was also done. The researcher transcribed the interviews word for word as stated in the recordings. The researcher read the transcripts in order to make sense of what was relayed by the participants. The researcher forwarded the transcripts to the independent coder to assist with the thematic analysis of the collected data by applying the eight steps of data analysis suggested by Tesch (1990) as adapted in Creswell (2014:197):

- The researcher wrote down word for word, from the digitally recorded interviews. Re-read the transcriptions in order to get a sense of the whole and made notes as they came to mind.

- The researcher gave pseudonyms for each participant for anonymity purpose and to protect their identity. The researcher contacted the independent coder and the matter of analysing was discussed. The issue of confidentiality was discussed and agreement on how confidentiality will be maintained was reached. It is important to uphold confidentiality because according to section 02 of the POPI Act 04 of 2013 it gives the effect to individuals' right to privacy by protecting their personal information. The transcripts where thus sent to the independent coder. One document of the interview was selected - the most interesting/shortest one on top of the pile. The independent coder went through it not thinking about the content of the information but rather the underlying meaning of said information, and thoughts of the underlying meaning were written down.

- A list of all the topics were made and similar topics were put together. The topics were grouped as major topics, unique topics and leftovers by the independent coder.

- The independent coder found a fitting abbreviate (code/tag label) for each of the identified topics.

- A descriptive wording for the researcher's topics was created and turned into themes/categories.

- The independent coder sent back the created themes and sub-themes to the researcher. The researcher read the themes and sub themes comparing them to the transcripts to ensure that they are correct and well formulated. The themes were then approved by the researcher and forwarded to the supervisor for final checks of collaboration. In agreement with the researcher and the supervisor, the independent coder made a final decision on the abbreviation for each theme/sub-theme and alphabetises the codes.

- Using the cut and paste method, data material belonging to each theme was assembled in one place by the independent coder in agreement with the researcher and a preliminary analysis was done.

In summary, the independent coder, in agreement with researcher, did data analysis according to the eight steps suggested by Tesch where the data was reduced, re-organised and represented (as indicated in chapter one). The data was reduced, transformed, interpreted, reviewed, summarised and organised in a way that provided a response in answering the research question. The data was verified as reliable, trustworthy and a true reflection of what was said and how it resonated with the research question, goal and objectives of the research study.

3.6 DATA VERIFICATION

As introduced in chapter one, one of the principles of data verification is to ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the collected data, and they were the key element of conducting qualitative research. Validity is described by Regis (2019) as the interpretation of the data collected by the researcher whereby few or no mistakes were done. It was further defined by Ravitch & Carl (2016:186), Clark, Foster, Sloan & Bryman (2021) and Singh, Thirsk, Stahlke, LoBiondo-Wood & Haber (2022:335) that the most basic concern of trustworthiness is to achieve rigor and quality of research outcomes by utilising the principles and accurate measurements. Trustworthiness in qualitative research is the process followed to bring to mind the importance and relevance of having credibility and rigor in the research findings Ravitch and Carl (2016:186). It is further stated by Clarck, Foster, Sloan & Bryman (2021:364) as method where credibility, dependability, conformability and dependability is being applied in the study conducted.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, four strategies were implemented. The researcher ensured the implementation of data verification where the patterns of data were verified without any wishful thinking interference and were carefully checked for reliability by retracing the analytic steps. Reliability is the consistency of the research findings Trochim, Donnely & Arora (2015:119). Data verification is referred at the validity of the data were trustworthiness, utility and dependability verified. The researcher compared the responses provided by the participants with the questions and the research goal. The researcher applied the Lincoln and Guba's model (1985) to ensure the trustworthiness of the data and findings. Lincoln and Guba's model suggests four strategies that confirm trustworthiness, namely, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, (Krefting, 1991:217) and they are discussed below.

3.6.1 Credibility

It is stated by Balthazar and Vendrely (2021:173) that credibility is used to ensure that the findings are transferable between the researcher and those being studied. They further related that credibility is the primary step in data verification because the disseminated findings were conducted and analysed truthfully. The researcher achieved the data verification step of credibility by triangulation, peer debriefing and member checking. Triangulation is the procedure applied by the researcher where two or more sources are used for verification of the data collected which will expand intensive understanding of a social phenomenon Denault (2017) Flick (2018), Rose, McKinley & Baffoe-Djan (2019) and Hayhoe (2023). With triangulation the researcher combined interviews with the participants, journals and books to determine that the responses of participants were in line with regard to determining the effect of employees' primary relationship experiences in the workplace versus literature. This was to ensure that the data represented the participants.

Peer debriefing – an assessment and review of the data transcribed by a professional qualified peer was applied by the researcher. Peer debriefing can be explained as a method where the researcher sends the findings to experts in the research area to review the findings in order to confirm its scientific value and its worth for publication Privitera (2022). It is further elaborated by Austin & Sutton (2019), Asencio & Sun (2015:11), Santini & Eaton (2022) and Skinner, Edwards & Corbett (2015:81) as the researcher working in collaboration with qualified and experienced researchers in the same field who will ensure that they independently analyse the findings, synthesize the data and clarify the researchers' biases if there are any found.

The researcher kept in communication with the supervisor regarding the processes and the findings of the data collected. The researcher further applied member checking one of the processes of implementing data analysis. Member checking according to Privitera & Ahlgrim-Delzell (2019:1) involves verification of the findings' interpretation whereby the participants confirm if indeed their views expressed during the interviews have been portrayed by the researcher. A similar view was expressed by Skinner, Edwards & Corbett (2015:81) and Schwandt (2015:195) that member checking is when the researcher gives back the drawn conclusion to the participants in order for them to check the accuracy and rigor n the findings drawn. The researcher applied member checking by allowing the informants to verify the findings of the researcher by checking the findings and correcting any errors. Participants were given the transcripts of their own interviews and they were also given the opportunity to comment and give feedback on the content of the proceedings recorded. The process assisted the researcher is checking the accuracy of the transcribed findings.

3.6.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the research conducted being applicable and relevant to other people and groups for utilisation. Transferability is defined as the degree of fitting the study researcher to other life situations or specific environment Dana & Yendol-Hoppey (2020), Rees (2016:54) and Rohlender & Lyons (2015). The researcher provided thick descriptions of the research process and environment which contributed towards the applicability to other settings. The other settings refer to a different population in a different time with life problems, situations other than the studied population'. The researcher applied transferability by ensuring that the data provided represented the participants individually and no generalisation was applied. Both males and females who are in a primary relationship, different positions SAPS employees as well as different age group of participants where part of the study as this will help other SAPS employees from different provinces and district can be able to relate with the shared findings of this study. This was because each participant's experience and description of events is different. That was also to ensure that everyone felt important and valued.

3.6.3 Dependability

Dependability is achievable when auditing is conducted and the findings are found to be consistent and accurate and thus provide reliability (Tashakkori, Johnson & Teddlie, 2020). The researcher achieved dependability by assessing the phenomena using the same evidence from the same participants. All the proceedings during data collection were captured which later

assisted the independent coder to come up with themes and sub-themes. The conclusion was found to be the same and it will be discussed in chapter 4.

3.6.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is established through auditing of the research process. The importance of ensuring that research data and findings are rigorous, reliable and valid (Boswell & Cannon, 2020:200; Williams, 2019:60).

The researcher used pseudonyms on the transcripts from the interviews. The researcher provided the transcripts to the supervisor who read all the transcripts for confirmation. It was agreed that the researcher that there were no biases from the researcher to defend her own study. Confirmability was addressed through independent confirmation by others (the supervisor) apart from the researcher herself. The researcher can confirm that the data collected and analysed has nothing to do with the researcher's opinions and imagination. The researcher did not influence the findings in any way. The analysed data is strictly the experience of the SAPS employees interviewed about their primary relationships and its influence on their work productivity, expressed in their own words. All the data represents the genuine lived experiences of the participants.

3.7 APPLICATION OF ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher ensured that ethical considerations were adhered to. Ethical considerations are described by Faulkner and Faulkner (2019:43) as understanding the rights of the participants in the study. The researcher applied the ethics of treating the participant with utter respect by not pressuring them or bullying them into participating in the study, by clarifying the objectives and intended purpose of the study prior the interview so that they can be aware of what to expect (which is questions about their primary relationship experiences and how they affected their ability to be productive or unproductive in the workplace) and the researcher was also open, honest and clarified misunderstandings by allowing the participants to ask questions where they did not understand, as well as affording them the right to withdraw from the study when they wanted to if data was not collected yet (Bourne, James & Wilson-Smith, 2021:18). The right to autonomous participation, the right not to be mistreated by the researcher and the right to confidentiality, privacy and anonymity of the participants were all exercised by the researcher towards the participants.

The settings for the interview proceedings ensured that all the participants were not harmed or injured either physically or psychologically in the physical, telephonic and virtual interviews

proceedings. The interview guide, informed consent form and risk assessment tool constructed by the researcher were sent to the University of South Africa Social Work Ethical committee which accepted and approved it to be a low risked study and free from harm to the psychological and emotional well-being of the participants concerned.

3.7.1 Informed consent

Prior to the interview, the researcher took it upon herself as required by the ethical obligations, to inform the participants about what the study entailed, which is to gain more insight into their lived experiences with regard to their primary relationships and how these influence their productivity in their workplace. The reason for the full information was to ensure that they met the inclusion criteria for participating with a full understanding as to what the study entailed and their role in the study. No one was bullied into participating into the study (Pope & Mays, 2020:30, Faulkner & Faulkner, 2019:20). Informed consent means the agreement that the researcher and her participants had prior the study (Bourne, James & Wilson-Smith, 2021:18). Full information was provided by the researcher during the meetings which took place before the start of the employees' shifts starting in the morning and evening. The participants were given time to make their decision about participating in the study. The researcher left her contact details with the employees so that those who decided to participate could contact her using any mode of communication preferred by them. All the participants who agreed to participate signed the designed consent form presented to them after they understood everything pertaining to the study. No single participant experienced any kind of harm during or after the study.

3.7.2 Confidentiality and anonymity

The researcher upheld the confidentiality/anonymity principle by providing assurance to the participants that no one outside the study process would have access to their information (Lyons & Coyle, 2021:41; Faulkner & Faulkner, 2019:15). The participants' information was safeguarded in that raw data was not seen by anyone other than the research team which included the researcher, the supervisor, the independent coder and the editor, and because confidentiality is closely linked to anonymity, pseudonyms were used to disguise the identity of the participants as promised prior to commencement of the study. With regard to the interviews conducted face-to-face, the researcher ensured that the interviews were conducted in the researcher's work office after working hours where there was maximum privacy in that no one came in, disturbed or heard the conversation during the session. The telephonic and virtual video call sessions where conducted after work when the researcher and the participants were sitting

in the comfort of their own homes and there was no one disturbing the sessions. During the transcription of the interviews the researcher gave the participants pseudonyms that only she could identify because it is important that no one knows about the participants' real names except the researcher. All the data, including the recordings and the transcripts are still locked on the researcher's computer with passwords only known to the researcher.

3.7.3 Beneficence

Beneficence was implemented by the researcher when she explained to the participants as well as everyone during the meetings organised with the gatekeepers during the preparation of the participants as to why the researcher was doing the research. It was explained that the study is not only for her own benefit academically but rather to benefit both the participating population and the community of SAPS as a whole, because they would now be aware how the personal relationships of the employees, and their colleagues affect how they perform their daily duties as included in the department performance contract. As it was described in chapter one, beneficence is further defined as a method where the participants are informed how the study will benefit them or the community they live in (Lyons & Coyle, 2021:42; Pope & Mays, 2020:36, Faulkner & Faulkner, 2019:20).

The participants were informed about the reason for the research and the findings were articulated in such a manner that it would not only further explain the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace, but also inform the EAP to enhance services for such employees and members of the primary relationships. In that manner their employer will know what they are going through as individuals as well as helping the EAP practitioners to improve their services where the employees feel/believe/suggest that they are lacking and need improvement.

3.7.4 Management of information

Further explanation to the one provided in chapter one is that management of information is described as securing the storage of all the data collected and archiving all the materials accumulated during the process of the study (Bourne, James & Wilson-Smith, 2021:19; Lyons & Coyle, 2021:43, Pope & Mays, 2020:37; Bourne, Tsang & Liu, 2019:148).

The researcher ensured that the collected data, related documents, notes, transcribed data, digital recordings and files were kept safe in a locked cabinet to which only the researcher has access. The researcher had custodianship of all the data relating to the research study about

the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace: informing EAP, even after the research was completed.

3.8 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Even though there were plans to conduct the study in a certain manner as outlined in chapter 1, things did not go completely as planned. The study was meant to include employees at the Thembisile Hani sub-district and the Dr JS Moroka sub-district police stations. Presentations in all the police stations were conducted to afford everyone a fair opportunity of being included in the study. Unfortunately, none of the members from the Dr JS Moroka sub-district showed any interest and none agreed to participate in the study. In Thembisile Hani out of the five police stations, only three stations participated, namely, Verena, Kwamhlanga and Mkobola police stations. The other stations' members pulled out before the interviews could be conducted.

The second limitation to the study is that the researcher planned to include employees who were in same-sex relationships in the inclusion criteria. Unfortunately, none of the employees from the mentioned category participated in the study. All the participants in the study were in heterosexual relationships.

The third limitation was that initially the face-to-face interviews for all the participants were planned as the only method of data collection for the study. However, due to Covid-19 the plan was changed, and five interviews were conducted face=to=face, five were through Microsoft Teams and two were conducted telephonically. The changes were brought about to reduce/minimise the maximum physical contact to avoid high infection rates.

3.9   SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

In summary, the researcher applied the qualitative research method where the phenomenological research design supported by the explorative, descriptive and contextual strategies, was followed. Data on the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace was gathered through semi-structured interviews with the intention of informing the EAP in the SAPS. The participants were selected from the research population through non-probability sampling by applying the purposive sampling technique and all the inclusion and exclusion criteria were followed. During data analysis the eight steps of data analysis by Tesch were followed and for data verification the Lincoln and Guba model of trustworthiness was applied by ensuring that the following were adhered to - credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of collected data. Lastly,

all the ethical considerations, such as informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, beneficence and management of information, were adhered to in this research study.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

Research findings are provided by the researcher in the form of themes formed by the responses provided by the participants (Forister & Blessing, 2016:101). The chapter presents the findings uncovered during the research process conducted with the employees working at SAPS Thembisile Hani sub-district, Verena, Kwamhlanga and Mkobola police stations. In this chapter the biographical profiles of the participants are presented and discussed. Twelve SAPS employees participated in the study and pseudonyms were used to protect their identity. The findings are presented in a thematical manner, with sub-themes, that are derived from what the participants expressed and a literature control to support, compare and contrast the analysed data. The data was analysed using the eight steps of Tesch and themes were developed in conjunction with the independent coder and finally accepted after deliberations between the researcher, research supervisor and the independent coder. Pseudonyms are used in table 4.2.1 as well as on the lines provided under the themes. This was done as a way of protecting the true identity of the participants. The summary of the chapter will also be provided at the end of this chapter

4.2   PARTICIPANTS' BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILES

Table 4.2.1 Biographical information

Pseudonym	Gender	Marital status	Number of children	Ages of children in years	Live-in with partner	Appointment status	Years of service
Andile (A)	Male	Married	5	16, 14, 12, 8, 3	Yes	SAPS Act	10
Buti (B)	Male	Married	2	11, 4	Yes	SAPS Act	3
Celia (C)	Female	Single	2	11, 7	Yes	SAPS Act	9
Dixon (D)	Male	Married	1	4	No	SAPS Act	11
Elizabeth (E)	Female	Married	-	-	Yes	SAPS Act	4
Fred (F)	Male	Married	3	21, 15, 14	Yes	SAPS Act	1
Gerald (G)	Male	Single	-	-	Yes	SAPS Act	5
Holly (H)	Female	Divorced	3	17, 10, 3	No	SAPS Act	8
Ina (I)	Female	Single	1	11	Yes	SAPS Act	5
Jennifer (J)	Female	Single	1	7	Yes	SAPS Act	6
Kevin (K)	Male	Married	2	21, 16	Yes	SAPS Act	15
Lerato (L)	Female	Single	1	5	No	SAPS Act	10

4.2.1 Gender

Gender is the state of being male or female and performing roles that are considered to be socially and culturally acceptable (Collins dictionary, 2018; Strong and Cohen, 2020:121). The study included both male and female participants. There were six females and six males who participated in the study. Gender equality was represented in the study.

4.2.2 Marital status

The marital status indicates if a person is single, married, divorced, widowed or separated (Weisberg, 2020:518; Dernback, Singleto, Wharton & Wasson. 2021:396; Shanahan, Nilson & Broshko, 2016:90). Six people are married, one is divorced but in a relationship with someone after her divorce and five are not married but in a committed relationship. The marital/relationship status is important for the study as the inclusion criteria stated that only those who are in a relationship or those that are married were to be considered for inclusion in the study. All of the participants were in heterosexual relationships, no one from bisexual or same sex relationships participated in the study.

4.2.3 Number of children

The number of children in the study indicated whether the participant and their partners have children or not. One participant had five children, two participants had three children each, three participants had two children each, four participants had one child each whereas two participants had no children as yet.

4.2.4 Ages of children

All the children of the participants were 21 years old and younger.

4.2.5 Live in partner

Many participants in the study indicated that they stayed with their partners. Nine participants indicated that they stayed with their partners on a full-time basis and three stayed a distance away from their partners due to work commitments. The participants who stayed with their partners had the opportunity to spend more time with their partners which affords them enough time to know and learn more about their spouses. Those that stayed with their partners also had the advantage of creating a special bond with their partner as they got to spend quality time together. The other participants who did not stay with their partners were trying to spend more time with their partners whenever they were off/on leave because they were also keen on maintaining and sustaining their relationships. The maintenance and the sustenance of primary

relationships is of importance because they value the relationships as well as the happiness that was being brought by the relationship.

4.2.6 Appointment status

The SAPS Act (Act 68 of 1995: Section 29(1)) stipulates that members can be appointed on a permanent basis. All the participants were appointed according to the SAPS Act and they were all permanent employees. None of the participants was employed on a contract or an internship basis. None of the participants was serving in management posts.

4.2.7 Length of service

The participants were not employed at the same time thus their working experience differed. Their length of service ranged from 15 years to one-year experience. Experience is very important in a work setting because it allows the employee to be more conversant with the work they are employed to do as well as knowing the organisation's protocol of reporting and doing things. The participants had proper working experience which enabled them to be well conversant with their line of duty, how their supervisors preferred doing things as well as knowing the right sections and contacts for reporting. This shows that an employee with more working experience can be knowledgeable with the different channels within the police department when consulting some sections when faced with personal problems. The experience of an employee does not only benefit the employee but rather the community they are serving as well as the organisation they are employed at.

4.3   PRESENTATION OF THEMES AND A LITERATURE CONTROL

The presentation of themes and literature control to be discussed is informed by the transcripts provided to the independent coder by the researcher. The transcripts derived from the interview sessions that were conducted following the interview guide (See Addendum D) developed and pilot tested by the researcher. The participants were the SAPS employees working in Thembisile Hani sub-district who were also married or in a committed relationship. The themes were formulated by the independent coder in agreement with the researcher. The themes and sub-themes were extracted from the answers provided by the participants in the arranged semi-structured interviews. The transcribed answers generated six themes and fourteen sub-themes. Each theme and sub-theme is supported by the participants' responses and a literature control as to what other authors have written about the particular topic. The themes and the sub-themes are discussed and presented individually for a proper understanding as well as proper integration with the literature that supports it.

TABLE 4.3.1 THEMES, SUB-THEMES AND LINES

The table below illustrate the themes, sub-themes and the lines where the themes were derived from. The themes in this study are the key characteristics of what the population in the study experienced, whilst the sub-theme elaborate further, specifically and deeper on the formulated themes. The lines of each transcript were numbered and indicated the responses provided by the participants. It gives the reader a directive on the lines they must look at (from the transcripts) in accordance with relevant themes and sub-themes.

THEMES	SUB-THEMES	LINES
THEME ONE: Description of primary relationship by participants	**SUB-THEME ONE:** Primary relationship described as good or very good	B15-B18, E11-E14, F11-F12, I12-I13, K15-K17
	SUB-THEME TWO: Primary relationship described in a troubled manner • Having its "ups and downs • Trusting each other against all odds	A12-A13, C10-C12, D13-D14, J11-J14 AND L17-L18 G12-G13
THEME TWO: Influence of primary relationship on the participants' work	**SUB-THEME ONE:** Primary Relationship positive influence on work	B25-B26, B44-B46, C16-C18, D24-D25, E18-E20, I14-I15, J15-J18, K20-K22, L41-L42
	SUB-THEME TWO: Primary relationship negative influence on work • Loss of concentration • Impact on behaviour • Denies being affected	C28-C33, L58-L61 B54-B57, H39-H44
THEME THREE: Participants' coping with difficulties affecting their work performance	**SUB-THEME ONE:** Communication with intimate partner	B49-B52, G33-G34, H45, I29-I31, K35-K38
	SUB-THEME TWO: Communicate with third parties	C36-C39, D46-D48, E35-E36, F33
	SUB-THEME THREE: Participants who indicate that their problems does not need to be dealt with	H19-H23, J39-J41
	SUB-THEME FOUR: Other coping mechanisms	E34, L75-L77, L78

THEME FOUR: Participants' advice to colleagues on dealing with relationships problems	SUB-THEME ONE: Seek professional help	D53-D55, J45-J49, L92-L93
	SUB-THEME TWO: Communicate with intimate partner	E46-E49, F39-F42, I32-I38, K42-K47
	SUB-THEME THREE: Share with others	B58-B60, B62-B66, C63-C69, L97-L99
	SUB-THEME FOUR: Other advice	B67-B72, A71-A76, H51-H54
THEME FIVE: Participants' experience of accessing EAP	SUB THEME ONE: Reluctance to access EAP SUB THEME TWO: Preconceived negative perceptions of accessing EAP	A78-A83, C54-C58, L100-1106
THEME SIX: Participants' advice to the EAP	SUB-THEME ONE: EAP services must be more visible	B98-B100, C75-C78, D62-D65, E56-E60, I44-I49, J45-J49, K49-K54, L441-L117, L121-L123
	SUB-THEME TWO: EAP services must be geographically more accessible	A85-A86, E62-E62, G46-G50, I44, K49-K51, L114-L115

4.3.1 THEME ONE: DESCRIPTION OF PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP BY PARTICIPANTS

The description of a primary relationship is a union between two people who are committed to each other, it is also about how a person feels when they are in a relationship with someone. The feeling includes happiness, warmth, love and fulfilment. It also involves the fights, the disagreements and the couple's willingness to make it work. Fletcher, Simpson, Campbell and Overall (2019:114) refer to a primary relationship where two people are attracted to each other, and where each partner focuses on the qualities of the other person and the trust developing between the two.

The participants responded with ease when asked about their primary relationship (Tell me about your primary relationship / Who would you say you have a primary relationship with? / What makes you consider this as a primary relationship?). They expressed the joy that their relationships bring. But the participants also referred to their respective primary relationship as sometimes troubled. It is stated by Caligor, Kernberg, Clarkin and Yeomans (2018:250) that people describe their relationships in different manners. This is because others described their

relationship as having fulfilment, satisfaction, empathy and sustainable sexual experiences. However, others described their relationship as chaotic and stormy. Description of primary relationship was also explained by Darda (2015), Lamanna, Riedmann and Stewart (2014:107 and Myers, Abell and Sani (2021:380) as the ability by two people who are available for each other to give and receive attention, show commitment by both parties, a relationship where one can express their feelings freely and showing a willingness to work through challenges and conflicts without calling it quits. The following two sub-themes will address when the relationship was described as good to very good (sub-theme 4.3.1.1) or as sometimes troubled (sub-theme 4.3.1.2). It was described by Kirst-Ashman (2017:22) that primary relationships is part of the family, friends, work and government as systems that that individuals comes into contact with and in a way certain outcomes are expected.

4.3.1.1 Sub-theme one: Primary relationship described as good or very good

Most participants expressed the feeling of satisfaction when they described their relationships. They expressed how they looked forward to seeing their partners after work as this shows that they are in a good space with their partners. A very good relationship allows a person to be content with their partner and be excited about going home after having a long day at work. Below are excerpts from the transcripts that can attest to this:

Buti indicated that "*I think that's where I get to share some of the things that I don't expect her to do anything since well she is not one of my colleague. I can say as a partner, as a person I spend most of my time with we really are doing so good so far which gives me courage to go, the wife and the kids give me reason to go, wake up in the morning be on my form and go to work.*" (B15- B18)

Elizabeth said "*It's good because we got to know each other first before we commit ourselves into this thing of being married. So moving in with him I found it so easy because I know actually the kind of person I am moving in with. I know his personalities and his character so far so that was a bit easy for me.*" (B11- B14)

Fred indicated that "*the relationship is good but even though there are some problems but now it's good.*" (F11- F12)

Ina also expressed satisfaction by saying that *"almost eight months we decided to live in together. And things have been going good so far though there are challenges we have a good relationship so far."* (I12-I13)

Kevin said *"It has been very good in most cases even though she can be a bit unreasonable at times. But so far we are coping and ensuring that we address whatever that we happen to come across."* (K15-K17)

A very good relationship is described by McKinney and Sprecher (2014:19) as a relationship between two people who are interconnected in different aspects of their lives. They stated that the interconnection has a strong impact as most of their plans and future envisages include each other and it is for the long term. It is supported by Strong and Cohen (2016:44) that a good primary relationship is when a person accepts and tolerates their partner with their flaws and differences. This implies that the positive relationship involves a high level of cooperation, the ability to express oneself by sharing thoughts, fears and future plans of growing old together as well as bearing children. Concurring with the above author was Robinson (2018:66) who stated that a good relationship is when the partners value each other as well as going an extra mile to satisfy their partners. A good relationship is also built on a solid foundation of respect, compassion and understanding each other (Myers, Abell & Sani (2021:371, Regan, 2016:230).

System theory indicates that no person lives in isolation (See chapter 1, 1.5.1). All the aspects of a person are interlinked and how the proceedings in the natural (family) system will affect the formal (work) system. As stated by Ambrosino, Ambrosino, Hefferman and Shuttleworth (2015:134) a primary relationship is one of the systems that the systems theory refer to and when the particular relationship system is optimally functioning, satisfaction reigns within and the other systems, like the workplace, will also yield positive results.

This is also confirmed by Cohen (2016:402) and Hughes and Gosney (2016:3) that the systems, like family, work teams or departments within the system are interlinked, as much as they have different interests and goals when one suffers, it impacts the other systems. As indicated initially, no one lives in isolation, each system has its own rules and regulations that are created to balance its functioning. However, emotions can overwhelm an individual and the overwhelming emotions experienced in one system are transferred to the next system (Thomas. 2021:32). The said statements are in agreement with what the participants have touched on, like Buti who expressed that when he is happy in his relationship, it keeps him in the mood to face another day and look forward to going back to work. His situation is supported by Putnam and Mumby (2013:50) that an individual's systems in life are interdependent and operate within the next system, thus it is inappropriate to analyse an individual's situation by looking at one system without checking other systems in their lives and how they affect each other (Becvar & Becvar, 2018:4). This implies that the interconnection and effects between the systems are imminent

and they can be both positive and negative. This can be concluded that the description of a primary relationship by the participants differs between each individual and it also depends on the current state of the said relationship.

4.3.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Primary relationship described in a troubled manner

A troubled relationship is a kind of a relationship that is going through difficult times. Most couples go through ups and downs whether they are married or not married, however the wish to want to stay in the relationship and the provision that comes with the relationship, motivates the partners to work on their relationship. The participants have shown that going through a rough patch in a relationship does not make the relationship not worth saving. Problems are acknowledged in some relationships which causes one to say they go through the ups and downs; however, they are willing to trust each other against all odds. The trust comes with a willingness to work together in ensuring that the relationship survives the trials and tribulations. Below are excerpts from the transcripts that can attest to this.

Andile indicated that, "*I can say that the marriage has got ups as you usually know.*" (A12-13)

Celia "*as you know all relationships has ups and downs. Some days are good and some days are bad, we don't have those extreme problems. We live a good life like a balanced life. We don't have huge problems.*" (C10-12)

Dixon "*Ok with my partner I have a good relationship. We have our ups and downs like any other relationship.*" (D13-D14)

Jennifer indicated that "*Our relationship is like any other relationship, it has ups and downs. We do have sense of communication in most times but generally we try to solve them and it has been a three years' relationship so obviously there are challenges but nothing we can't overcome.*" (J11-J14)

Lerato "*we started working that's where we became partners so our relationship has its own challenges. We have our ups and downs.*" (L17-L18)

Gerald "*my primary relationship is my personal relationship, it's an open relationship were by we both trust each other against all odds.*" (G12-G13*)*

The statements mentioned by the participants are supported by Gottman, Gottman, Abrams and Abrams (2018:04) who indicate that couples fight sometimes and reach a point of being rude and insensitive to one another. The partner that often makes one happy is the very same person who makes one miserable. It all depends on the ability to prioritise and being dedicated to the

relationship that keeps the affection, admiration warmth and emphasis of the good times running in the relationship. Khaleque (2018:12) focuses on the downs of the relationship in that when a relationship experiences more downs than ups, the relationship is likely to suffer from disconnection, finance worries, lack of sex as well as conflicts regarding responsibilities.

The ups and downs in a relationship are inevitable and they may take an emotional toll on an individual as they might be disappointed and humiliated during the conflict, however the sense of self-worth and the ability to listen to each other's needs and wants may promote a healthy relationship (Neal & Collas 2013:36, Demaria & Hannah, 2013:81).

In order to avoid too many downs in a relationship, trust and honesty must reign in a relationship. Trust boosts one's confidence in their partner, and that is the reason why most people open up their emotions by sharing their feelings as there is a sense of feeling safe around their partners (Carlson & Dermer, 2017:921).

However, the issue of trust is acceded to by Khaleque (2018:02) and Spurr (2017:32) who state that when one tries to avoid too many arguments and trust their partner, this does not mean they must have blind faith but rather not ruin their relationship on a baseless suspicion. Trust is singled out in instances where a partner behaves and acts in a way that is acceptable and respectful in the presence and absence of the partner, it is described as a method that counters jealousy.

This shows that relationships are not a one-way stream, but rather a two-way stream because for the negative aspects not to take over the couple's life, the couple must put in effort in order to keep the relationship maintained (Berscheid & Regan, 2016:27). This implies that the ups and downs that were experienced by the participants are a necessity in a relationship in order to show dedication and commitment to the relationship. It is applicable if the partners acknowledge the situation happening in the relationship. The answers provided by the participants indicated that the description of a primary relationship is based on the current status of the relationship as it can either be described as good, and at times it can be described in a troubled manner.

4.3.2 THEME TWO: INFLUENCE OF PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP ON THE PARTICIPANT'S WORK

The ups and the downs of a primary relationship have an impact on a person's mood and work performance. The impact that the relationship can have on an individual can either be negative or positive depending on an individual's ability to deal with a problem. It is stated by Burke and Cooper (2016:213), and Putnam and Mumby (2014:386) that intimate relationships affect

employees' attitude in life and work performance and that is reflected through their change in behaviour as well as their reaction to people around them.

Primary relationships surrounded by happiness and joy impact the employee's life by creating an effect that reinforces connection, empathy and positive production in the workplace. Whereas unhappy primary relationships trigger stress and depression that in return affect work productivity negatively (Mitchell, 2020:60). When one is happy in their relationship they can be very positive and progressive in their workplace and when they are going through a rough patch they can be very non-productive as they will be investing more time and energy in their personal problems rather that concentrating on work. Other participants denied being affected whereas in essence they are hurting but trying to shy away from their problems. It was stated by Voydanoff (2014:77) that people who are in primary relationships as a system operate within a larger social context which includes family, community organisations as well organisations of employment. Thus they evaluate the benefits, contributions as well as demands of their belonging in terms of the broader context. The systems theory is a set of inter-dependant unit, different roles including the role of being a partner and an employee sets specific performing functions with expected contribution, attitude and balance to each role Boszormenyi-Nagy and Spark (2014:2).

This theme yielded two sub-themes; the first sub-theme focuses on the fact that a primary relationship has a positive influence on the participants' work performance. And the second sub-theme focuses on having a negative impact on work performance.

4.3.2.1 Sub-theme One: Primary relationship positive influence on work

Being happy and content in a primary relationship can yield good results in what a person is doing in other aspects of their lives. It was stated by Myers et.al (2021:371) that a positive relationship is accompanied by partners knowing each other, and the ability to express themselves about their feelings without fears bringing satisfaction to other life aspects like work or church. When one has a supportive partner who always ensures that they see the best in their partners and encourages them in all aspects of life they have energy to face another day at their office. Having a partner who always listens when they have had a rough day or even a funny day at work allows the participant to debrief and offload whatever is on their chest and heart. The participants indicated that having a partner that listens gave them a different opinion in attending to a matter that had been bothering him/her in their workplace. Most participants expressed how productive and happy they were at work when things were going well in their primary relationships. Below are excerpts from the transcripts that can attest to this.

Buti expressed how he is able to face another day even after having a difficult day previously "*I go through my day, how I was treated by complainants. That really gives me hope to remain in the force and get to work.*" (B25-B26)

Celia uses the personal relationship experience and applies it to her clients with relationship problems. "*Living with my partner assists me in handling most cases like relationship cases or domestic violence cases. I sometimes use what I discuss with my partner or what I experience with my partner to assist at work.*" (C16-C18)

Dixon uses the positive energy he gets from his wife to support other people who are going through the worst in life. *"I have a supporting wife because when things are going well in our relationship I become productive at work. Always smiling, always energetic."* (D24-D25). He further explained that, "*And I don't mind going the extra mile doing my duties and helping my colleagues especially those who are new in the service."* (D26-D27)

Elizabeth expressed how it helped having a partner that pays attention "*When I am stressed I know that he would listen to me and he would hear me out. He would give me sound advises and that gives me strength to go to work on the next day being ok, yah."* (E18-E20)

Ina had a supportive husband which makes it easy to talk about everything *"it assists me a lot because my partner is very supportive. When I have challenges at work I will talk to him and he will assist me to find solutions.*" (I14-I15)

Jennifer feels like the primary relationship she is in is her pillar of strength "*it assists me because it becomes a source of support wherever you had a long day or a frustrating situation at work I can come home and debrief and I can explain what is happening at work and I can also get an insight form of advice so it is a very good source of support for me."* (J15-J18)

Kevin reckons his partner's presence in his life brings about positivity. He said "*she lends me a listening ear most of the time and for that alone I am grateful for her in my life because her presence and availability sustains my mental well-being.*" (K20-K22).

Finally, Lerato also expressed how she gained a positive attitude from her partner who is helpful and available. She indicated that "*when you get support from the partner it becomes easier. The support in terms….. you know so many things in the household, the child issue. So yah and him listening to me, being there listening. I think that is also the strength aspect that helps in your day to day basis.*" (L41-L44)

Happiness and positive influence in a primary relationship brings about creativity, lower absenteeism at work as well as an improved relationship with colleagues (Tenney, Poole & Diener, 2016:27). Powell (2018:45) and Van Kleef (2016:87) agree as they indicate that the people that are satisfied in their relationship, are also productive and effective when performing their work duties. It has been found by Coombe, Anderson & Stephensons (2020:57) that there is a connection between happiness and the ability to be productive in this life domain inclusive of marriage, relationships, work performance and good health. This shows that a person needs to invest their time and energy in their primary relationship as much as they do with their other aspects of life as this confirms that the roles in one's lives are inter linked. This implies that employees and their partners must put more effort into their primary relationships as that will bring about happiness and stability in their lives. The stability and happiness will bring out good concentration and the ability and willingness to be creative in the workplace. Happiness has a positive spillover on meeting the employment organisation's goals and objectives. The positive outcomes of primary relationships prevent the inter-role conflict from manifesting in the family-work system that the employees belong to.

4.3.2.2 Sub-theme Two: Primary relationship negative influence on work

Having fights and disagreements, lack of communication and lack of control of emotions in a primary relationship can lead to a negative impact on one's performance at work as most participants indicated. It was stipulated by Vathakar (2017:248) that being a partner and an employee at the same time is called multiple roles. Thus having multiple roles involves giving or taking or resources like energy, time, attention or money from all roles resulting in inter-role conflict. It was reported that if the role conflict caused by primary relationship is high, job satisfaction will be low. It was also elaborated by Ajala (2017) that there has been an increase in inter-role conflict amongst employees who are married or in committed relationships because they try to balance the demands between their families, relationships and work role as their personal problems influence their work productivity. The negative impact can be seen in the form of lack of concentration, impact on behaviour where one will be taking out their frustrations on their colleagues or the people they are supposed to provide services to, and submission of sloppy and incomplete work. When a person loses concentration, production in the workplace is automatically hindered. It was stated by Segalla (2021:95) that there has been lack of successful handling of different roles by employees, from primary relationships to work performance which leads to inter-role conflict. However, the negative impact of a primary relationship does not only lead to poor concentration but for some it can lead denial of what is

happening in their lives. Denial is one of the defence mechanisms that individuals use when dealing with trauma or going through a difficult situation. Below are excerpts from the transcripts that can attest to this.

Andile expressed how he loses concentration "*the person who maybe comes to charge office and assist them in opening cases, eish you see my mind sometimes doesn't concentrate 100%. That makes it impossible to concentrate eish and be creative you see. Ai yah ai sometimes eish, sometimes solving the cases while your mind isn't, eish it's a bit of a problem you know.*" (A19-A21 & A27-A29)

Dixon "as *I mentioned in my relationship there are ups and downs, meaning when things are not going well I tend to lose focus at work. I find that I am making mistakes with my duties.*" (D32-D34)

Elizabeth said "*it does challenge me a lot because when we have conflict it affect me at work because I would be working environment but my mind would find that it's all over trying to think on how to face the matter that happened at home.*" (E21-E23)

Fred is one of those that experienced loss of concentration as he indicated that *"yah sometimes I can't concentrate because if I want to give the kids money.*" (F28)

Ina also elaborated that "*so it caused a lot of stress, you would find that at work I don't become interested in working, I feel tired. I have a little bit of stress because I am overthinking about my partner who is pushing me away.*" (I22-I25).

Jennifer indicated that *"when there is a challenge at home by default even at work you won't concentrate.*" (J30-J31)

Kevin said "*that alone created a lot of fights and I couldn't even concentrate at work in most cases and you would find that at that time I have a lot and lots of dockets that I must attend to.*" (K32-K34)

However, Celia was affected by her behaviour "*You will find that I am using emotions because I am angry (C28)*", she further indicated that *"yah I was once reported of the treatment because sometimes it went bad. There was a time that it went bad in that the person I treated badly reported me to my seniors.*" (C31-C33)

The behaviour and emotions also affected Lerato negatively in her line of duty because "*so it was hard for me to do my job, you know sometimes I lose focus at work and I struggled a lot to

take instructions you know it really affected my job. I was a bit aggressive. I think my seniors could see that I was a bit aggressive." (L58-L61)

Meanwhile Buti used the denial mechanism as he indicated that "*but I think I still have that excitement whenever I think of going to work. But I can't really say there is much or anything I can pinpoint and say or elaborate on that from my relationship I have carried this to work and then somehow affected me.*" (B54-B57), as well as Holly who denied that "*no it has not because at the end of the day when you are employed you have to tell yourself that your personal life has nothing to do with your service life because if you take your personal life to work that is when you are going to have a problem. But you decide that whenever I go to work I leave everything personal at the gate and enter a professional environment when you enter the office and sit then you will stay focused.*" (H39-H44)

Duck and McMahan (2021:39) agree with the statements said by the above mentioned participants that as much as people go to work in the morning to make a living, the workplace does not exist in isolation, in most instances people are unable to negotiate between the problems that they are experiencing at home and the roles they are experiencing professionally. This in return tends to affect one's ability to concentrate, to be focused and it negatively influences their performance at work. Greene (2019:147), Petersen, Sprich and Wilhelm (2016:277), and Cor, Ericksen, Oakes and Scragg (2017:64) relate that a primary relationship that is strained is associated with a lot of restlessness at night, stress, poor health, emotional upset, poor concentration at work and too much anger which builds up in a person. Lewis (2013:175) states that a lack of concentration affects people who are doing hard or manageable jobs. The effects of loss of concentration is visible in the workplace through mistakes made by the individual, and incomplete and unprofessional work being submitted. This in turn not only affects their productivity negatively at work but there is a lot of absenteeism at work, poor decision making and thinking clearly and their daily functioning gets affected negatively.

A change in behaviour is noticed by Dishion and Snyder (2016:01) that humans are fundamentally social beings, thus when they start experiencing dysfunctions in their primary relationships their behaviour and attitude towards other people and other aspects or situations in their lives changes/shifts. Unlike others who lose concentration and change in behaviour, there are those that are in denial that trouble is brewing in their lives and they choose not to focus on that. Apgar (2016:89) cites that denial is a defence mechanism that people use to cope with an upsetting situation that is happening in their lives as well as making the situation tolerable. He believes that sometimes denial can be dangerous when a person ignores the

seriousness of a problem they are facing in their lives and the way it affects their partners or other members of the family.

The sentiments shared by the participants, concur with the inter-role conflict theory (see chapter 1, section 1.5.2 for a discussion on inter-role conflict). Inter-role conflict occurs when an individual has obligations and roles to fulfil but they find themselves failing to meet and perform two roles at the same time. The roles might include being a spouse, a parent, employee, co-worker or even a friend. The failed ability to perform one role brings about frustration and stress in the neglected role (Mirowsky & Ross, 2017:15). Anatan (2013:89); and Sanz-Vergel, Rodriguez-Munoz and Nielson (2015:2) indicate that people are expected to have control of their emotions in the workplace, however when personal relationships are a sole contributor to stress, work life is affected negatively as the role conflict is explained by time, strain and behaviour.

The conflict of roles refers to employees having difficulties in tackling several responsibilities in their lives (Strong & Cohen, 2020:483) and this is attested to by Kevin who failed to concentrate at work and play the role of being a police officer because his role as a partner is going through a difficult time. With time being explained as the individual who focuses all their time on one responsibility, strain is when a person is going through a difficult situation in one role that makes it difficult to concentrate on the other role and behaviour is when a person is completely changed due to what they are going through in their lives.

This implies that as human beings we have different roles to play in our daily lives and in different systems. Employees are bound to fail juggling more than one role in their lives sometimes. It is also human to be overwhelmed by different roles that require one's undivided attention. For example, one is expected to play a role of partner and mother at home, and an employee and colleague in the workplace. When one role gets neglected or when one role is taken into the subsystem it is not supposed to, the other role gets affected. That in turn, causes inter-role conflict in an employee's life. Inter-role conflict also occurs when an employee neglects their roles intentionally because they are going through a hard time in that specific department.

Below the researcher will discuss the participants' coping with difficulties affecting their work performance.

4.2.3 THEME THREE: PARTICIPANTS' COPING WITH DIFFICULTIES AFFECTING THEIR WORK PERFORMANCE

Many couples go through difficult situations in their relationships which brings about fights and a lack of peace. The ability and willingness to crave peace and harmony depends on all the

parties involved. Coping is associated with different efforts applied by an individual as a way of dealing with issues (Blaisure, Saathof-Wells, Pereira, Wardsworth & Dombro, 2016:105). In most cases, people who are in relationships apply different approaches when addressing conflict in their relationships (Hinde, 2014:179). When matters are built up without being addressed, they tend to create more anger and frustration within. When a matter is dealt with by the couple, it becomes easier for them to go back to their normal lives. As stated by Collier (2018) incompatible roles that place demands in an individual's lives pulls them in different direction trying to respond to each demands. However, the same systems that expects a person to have different roles to play, that can create inter role conflict in employees also provides intervention and assistance for the people to deal with the conflicts and cope better. In dealing with conflict, Boweni and Van der Westhuisen (2020) indicated that individuals are aware of their personal problems thus conflict that is not well managed can have debilitating consequences in their quality of lives and work performance. For an employee to be have the ability to deal with expectations from different roles, they need to create a balance between work and family life Vathakar (2017).

People deal with issues in different manners. Some participants prefer talking to their partners about the problems, others prefer communicating with third parties like family and friends, others prefer not to deal with the matter, and others prefer to pray and use other coping mechanisms.

This theme generated four sub-themes which are discussed below. The sub-themes are 1. Communication with the partner, 2. Communicate with third parties, 3. Participants who indicate that their problems does not need to be dealt with and 4. Other coping mechanisms.

4.3.2.1 Sub-theme One: Communication with intimate partner

As indicated in chapter two, communication is a very important tool in a relationship. Communication with a partner enforces openness and transparency in a relationship. It enables a person to express their expectations, their hurt, their disappointment as well as their general feelings to the relevant person. Communication can be about one's day at the workplace or about the problems they have with their partners. Most partners indicated that they believed in the power of communication with their spouses before taking the matter outside the marriage or relationship. Below are excerpts from the transcripts that can attest to this.

Buti expressed that "*I learned to vent and when I come back I just pour and pour so she has the stress like a policeman wherever she is cos when I come back I pour and pour. So it's quite something. I think this relationship has a lot. It actually is a pillar of me as a cop.*" (B49-B52)

Gerald said that "*I had to make sure that is sit down with her, give her the assurance that there is nothing. There is absolutely nothing for her to worry about.*" (G33-G34)

Holly also believes that communicating with a partner is important "*ahh we sit down and talk as grown-ups.*" (H45)

Ina responded by saying "*so basically communicating with him helps a lot because I am able to pass the message and he understands, and life goes on.*" (I29-I31)

Kevin said that "*so I just sat down with her, spoke to her. Sometimes because you want to mend your marriage, I had to take her along to attend some scenes so that she van be able to see and believe when I tell her that I am going to work so at the end she did understand.*" (K35-K38)

The participants' responses were validated by what was written by the following researchers. Jones (2015:66) indicated that for the sake of a peaceful work environment, open communication between partners must be exercised because lack of communication builds up a wall between the couple. Thus, they must be open towards each other and ask each other open questions and provide honest answers as well. Guerrero, Anderson and Afifi (2018:17); Mona (2017:21); and Strong and Cohen (2016:240) stress that communication is dynamic, and conflicts are resolved through communication. It preserves the relationship as well as maintaining the same spirit of understanding, peace and harmony in the relationship. Communication can be done face-to-face, through calls and messages as well as non-verbal communication. However, communication done through conversation is more effective as all is laid bare for discussion. This implies that when couples have effective and efficient communication, it helps them deal with issues before they affect their well-being in their workplace as well as other aspects in their lives.

4.3.2.2 Sub-theme Two: Communicate with third parties

As much as communication with spouses is important, some people do not reach an agreement when they talk with their partners. Their communication ends in fights and noise. Others needs to hear another's opinion and others requires someone else's intervention. Seeking help from third parties like friends and colleagues is not a bad thing because a neutral person might not take sides and show the couple what is wrong and right. Other people have more insight, relevant opinions and knowledge regarding matters that others are going through. Thus, most participants felt that they felt better and e relieved after discussing their issues with a friend, family members or colleagues, as mentioned in the excerpts below:

Celia indicated that "*no there was this other lady at work, she was experienced. She is an old lady. She sat down with me as a grown up and she guided me. Like she talked me through so that I can see things another way. So that I cannot mix work and… business with pleasure in a way.*" (C36-C39)

Dixon expressed that "*But I ended up talking to my friend and he made me realise my mistakes and by that we managed to resolve our issues and we started understanding each other with my wife.*" (D46-D48)

Elizabeth said "*we sat down we spoke about it even though we didn't reach common ground together then as Christians we had to take the matter to our pastor.*" (E35-E36)

Fred also said that *"I just called her family and my family and tried to address the issue."* (F33).

As agreed by most researchers, some people find it easier to communicate with their colleagues and friends than to communicate with their partners at home (Manly, 2021:30). There are friends and family members who are willing to listen and provide honest support and suggestions to the couple who are going through a difficult situation in their lives (Woods, 2018:141). However, Evans (2018:91) believes that an individual must ensure that they can balance between sharing and oversharing when talking to third parties as the effect of what is being shared can cause the other person to be uncomfortable especially if the matter is being shared with people who are not professionals. Gambe and Gambe (2021:141) and Hegelson (2020) believe that women are more prone to sharing their feelings and intimate information with other people as compared to the men because men prefer having someone to do activities with rather than talking. Evans (2018:91) is against sharing with other people who are not professionals as he believes that talking to a professional person is best as they can give advice or assist with reflection. This indicates that sharing personal problems with other people is recommended but sharing with limits is cautioned. Researchers like Evans (2018) are against it as it is believed that it may cause more harm than fixing the problem shared. This implies that as much as coping with problems differs from person to person, people must do what they feel comfortable with as long as their strategy will not humiliate them and their partners in the end.

However, as indicated in the systems theory that people have different systems that they belong to. The systems form part of the achievements they experience as well as the conflicts they experience in their lives. Sharing some personal problems with others that caused the inter-role conflict can be done in different systems like at the workplace, with church members, with social members, traditional leaders or even with political affiliates.

4.3.2.3 Sub-theme Three: Participants who indicate that their problems does not need to be dealt with

It was indicated by McKay et al that avoidance of a situation is an operating condition applied by individuals by not focusing on the problem experienced in fear of the uncomfortable emotions associated with it. It was further described by Sinnamon (2021) that individuals experiencing primary relationships problems apply avoidance as a coping mechanism which involves avoiding the problems at hand, the feelings and the thoughts altogether.

Holly expressed how applying avoidance affected their relationship in a negative way, "*we don't go for counselling. And that on its own grows a lot stubbornness in a person. That's meant to say that when you meet your own personal problems you tend to say hai fokof I know this. I am not the first person to come across such. So even this one will pass too.*" (H19-H22)

An individual avoiding or being in denial about problems tend to develop stubbornness. The stubbornness brings withdrawal in a relationship because they do not see a need to address the matter. The withdrawal is both emotional and physical and it is projected on their partners shutting down communication which might lead to frustration on the part of the partner (Bosson, Buckner & Vandell, 2021).

Jennifer cited that *"you just continue as normal because in most cases you don't have time to debrief which is bad and when you wake up one day and the you feel like the weight is a lot."* (J39-J41)

The emotion focused coping method that is based on avoiding a situation as a way of coping, is also discussed in chapter two.

It was indicated by Fink (2016:361) and Coates (2017:67) that they are not fully against using denial as a method of dealing with personal problems that affect workplace productivity because for some people applying a denial mechanism, distancing oneself from a situation as well as wishful thinking has been effective in dealing with issues for a particular time as it gives people time to process and adapt to the problems they are going through, leading them to concentrate at work for a time. However, they believe that as much as it is a mechanism that can be used sometimes when dealing with issues when applied chronically, then it becomes a problem.

Facing a marital/relationship problem can bring about fear in people which leads the affected individuals to be in denial that a particular situation is happening in their union. Projection and denial flout the reality that one is living in resulting in serious negative consequences because acknowledging and processing emotions removes the delusions an individual is living under

(Epperhart, 2017:111; Werman, 2014:105). Amen (2016:27) indicates that people in denial that their relationship is going through a troubled phase is because they want to appear perfect in the eyes on the next person outside the relationship. This shows that people want to appear as perfect to the other people leading them to being in denial about a problem they are facing, they wear fake smiles and laughs just to appear happy to the next person. Other people like Holly who refuses to deal with the problem as they believe that are not the first person to go through such, this attitude helps them to forget about their personal problems for a short while so that they can concentrate on other activities like being productive in their workplace.

4.3.3.4 Sub-theme Four: Other coping mechanism

As indicated before that people deal with problems in different ways. What the participants believe in making their relationships flourish is different depending on how they choose to attend to a matter with their partners. As the saying goes "what works for one person might not work for the next person". As much as communication and talking to other people might be a solution to some people, others prefer to pray, read or exercise.

Elizabeth believes that "*reality is that he had sinned and he had to agree.*" (E34)

Lerato stated that in her case she reads and exercise "*you know I was reading books on coping with challenges, you know I was going through the internet to read more about how best I can deal with this matter so I tried sometimes during the weekend if I am not working I would do some exercises just to keep, just to distract myself.*" (L75-L78)

A range of coping mechanisms can be applied by an individual who is going through uncertainty in their primary relationship. Different coping methods and styles are applied by individuals because the problem/issue also differs from person to person (Argyle, 2013:270). A person might take a walk in the park/streets, read a book or newspaper about the topic of the issue they are going through as well as praying (McLeod & McLeod, 2021:14). It is reported by Scott-Elliot (2016:17) that people have shared their coping strategies when they are faced with hard times as a way to maintain sanity and creativity which included reading literature and reliance on spiritual upliftment. Jensen and Murphy (2020:188) indicate that praying together as a couple and asking for strength from the one above can help a couple deal with their problems. This implies that there are different ways of dealing with problems on this earth. All methods are effective for different people thus different approaches are being utilised.

4.3.4 THEME FOUR: PARTICIPANTS ADVICE TO COLLEAGUES ON DEALING WITH RELATIONSHIPS PROBLEMS

As much as all the participants have had their fair share of trials and tribulations in their relationships, they want to share what they experienced with their colleagues who are going through the same problems or who might find themselves experiencing problems in the future. Sharing of advice and experience by the participants is good because it enables them to realise how far they have come as individuals in life and the difference they can make in the next person's life. They shared experiences that they had also applied in their situations when they were faced with dilemmas as well as methods they did not apply but they felt might have assisted them should they have applied it, which included communicating with their partners, sharing with others as well as seeking professional help. Some of the advice shared was not applied personally, but they believed that they would be effective.

Theme four yielded four sub-themes that are elaborated on below. The sub-themes are 1. Seeking professional help, 2. Communicate with intimate partner, 3. Share with other and 4. Other advice.

4.3.4.1 Sub-theme One: Seek professional help

Seeking professional help involves going to a public or a private therapist. The participants advised that people seek professional help even though most have never consulted a professional themselves. They believe that a neutral professional person does not take sides and provides sound professional advice. As much as the majority has never consulted a professional, they have faith and confidence in the EAP.

Dixon indicated that "*because I have seen that it affects a lot negatively at work. Yes, also I would advise them to seek assistance from professionals like you as a social worker or EAP, psychologist or someone they can trust.*" (D53-D55)

Jennifer advised that "*the advice that I can give is that talking is key because in most cases at work there are people you can talk to, we have medical aid as employees so you can always approach the psychologist to debrief and social workers are being paid by the medical aid.*" (J45-J48)

Lerato also expressed trust in professionals when it comes to providing counselling to troubled relationships that "*so I would say people need to, if they are having challenges the lesson is that they need to find help. We need to talk to professionals.*" (L92-L93)

Seeking professional help allows the couples to have assertive communication where each person is given an opportunity to express their feelings whilst taking into consideration the feelings of the other person involved (Aluisy, 2016:36). The role of a professional in a session involving a couple going through a difficult time is to bring about positive change. Cognitive behaviour interventions are applied whereby the couple is made aware of their own behaviour and thoughts are applied (Zuberi, Zadeh & Bhutto, 2014:85). People attend to professional services in their own accord whereas others are referred by agencies.

The reason being that they want to talk about the unhappiness lingering in their marriages that affects other aspects of their lives like, the workplace. They seek to gain clarity on their roles as spouses in a relationship and a professional therapist/counsellor is the right person to help with that. The professional will also provide positive strategies on how to resolve conflict in a relationship (Glick, Rait, Heru & Ascher, 2016:150; Khalegue, 2018:270). However, Amen (2016) is of the opinion that there are some people who do not want to seek professional help because doing so is associated with being weak, defective or stupid. This kind of fear and inability to ask for help harms the relationship. When people seek professional help, both partners' participation and dedication to attending the sessions will determine the outcomes of the plans to restore the relationship (Afenyo, 2020:20). Bromwich and Rymkevich (2017) agree with the participants' sentiments on seeking professional help and EAPs', as professionals, should be considered by the employees because their main aim is to provide emotional, physical, psychological and mental health well-being for individuals whose work productivity and functioning is affected by home and work aspects. This implies that before we are other people's partners, we are our own person. We are different and we have different views when it comes to matters. That is why people have different views and opinions in their relationships. Thus, seeking professional help assists with venting to someone who is neutral, professional, considerate, applies different skills, is not judgemental and does not takes sides. Consulting a professional also assists with getting a profession perspective other than general advice.

4.3.4.2 Sub-theme Two: Communicate with intimate partner

As discussed in section 4.3.2.1, communication with a partner is important. The participants emphasised that it has worked for them on occasion and they advised their colleagues to do the same, as it paves the way for a clear communication and not supressing their feelings. It was emphasised by Kail and Cavanaugh (2016:332) that when individuals experience inter-role conflict, it is important for people in primary relationships to keep the communication lines open. One participant does not believe in talking to colleagues regarding personal matters as people

might use that against you in the future. This shows that some believe in the power of communication whereas others have a broken trust when it comes to sharing deep personal matters.

Elizabeth indicated that "*I emphasised the issue of communication. Communicate with your partner, don't bottle things up because since we are police we have guns. So bottling things up can make you to make wrong decisions.*" (46-E49)

Fred also believes in the power of communication as he cited that *"you have to concentrate to everything in the house because when you don't concentrate and you don't want to understand your wife, sometimes you lose your wife because or your relationship will be breaking down. So, you have to understand them, you have to listen to her."* (F39-F42)

Ina said "*I would advise that they must communicate with their partners. Communication is very, very important. Without communication your relationship will automatically break down because you will never know how the next person feels, how your partner feels about whatever action you are taking or things that you are doing in your daily living. So, communication is best, you must just communicate with our partners to make our lives easier so that we can be on the same page.*" (I32-I38)

Kevin expressed that *"but you need to realise that you have somebody at home. Make sure that you nourish your relationship. Even if you are going through some domestic problems, don't share them with your colleagues because that might be your downfall. That might be opening a door for other problems. They must also communicate with their partners about the difficulties they meet on their jobs because being open assists a lot in relationships.*" (K42-K47)

Talking and being open with one another as partners in a relationship creates a bond and connection between two people. It also creates the sense of a team as all the gestures are applied when one is communicating with their partner, including all the physical and emotional gestures (Stuti & Vipul, 2020:12). Communication with a partner is encouraged because a partner should be one's best friend who has a listening ear and provides sound words of encouragement when the need arises. Open communication promotes positivity in a relationship (Guiliano, 2014:221). Communication involves talking about issues that makes one uncomfortable so as to build a foundation that will keep the relationship strong. Partners need to stop blaming each other but rather work collaboratively with each other, ensuring that everyone is heard and feelings are taken into consideration Communication must not end after talking but rather action is needed as well as efforts from all the parties and a willingness to build

the relationship from both the spouses (Kusi & Kusi, 2017:3; Aponte, 2019:39). The participants learned that being open with each other brings closeness between couples. It helps them deal with problems early so that other systems where they have to play other roles, like work or church, are not excessively affected.

4.3.4.3 Sub-theme Three: Share with others

Basically, what the participants are advising their colleagues, is what they have applied in their lives. Sharing with others helped them when they were faced with problems thus they have the notion that it assists. Sharing with others is good but it needs to be done with caution especially when sharing with someone who is not a professional. Below are excerpts from the transcripts that can attest to this.

Buti "*okay, I think amongst my style of doing things, venting out. Having someone to share so even if you don't expect much from this person, but just a mere talking about it makes your life easier the next morning*" (B58-B60). "*And another thing is interaction. Interaction like engaging with people, learning how people are coping either colleagues either other people who are friends, families. Just learning from them how are their work, relating with their work how are they getting through whatever challenges that they are coming across.*" (B62-B66)

Celia indicated that "*I understand that some of the things are not easy. Even talking to someone you trust, I think it makes things easier. Like my situation I told you that I spoke to an older woman who is more experienced than me and she assisted me. And people must not bottle things up.*" (C63-C66)

Lerato cited that "*People we need to talk, we need to communicate. Talk with friends sometimes if you did not get access to EAP and yah seek help man.*" (L97-L99).

There are friends and family members that one can lean on as they are there to lend a listening ear as well as helping individuals to overcome grief and difficult situations (Singh, 2015:25). It is human nature to seek informal help before going for professional help. As some people feel more comfortable sharing with strangers, others share with family and friends. However, as much as sharing with friends and colleagues is supported by most participants; oversharing with non-professionals is not recommended by others. People are cautioned not to share their private and confidential information with just anyone for the sake of sharing but rather they must share with someone with good character and people of virtue to avoid embarrassment and being gossiped about (Popcak, 2014:237; Woodside & McClam, 2018:181). This implies that sharing is recommendable by most people as it affords individuals an opportunity to offload troubles that

causes them to lose focus in both their primary relationships and at their workplace. Thus, it may be advisable to share with caution to prevent future problems that may arise causing further conflict that may also affect an individual's productivity in the workplace.

4.3.4.4 Sub-theme Four: Other advice

Other than communicating with partners, seeking professional help and consulting with other people the participants provided other advice for learning to cope with difficulties in a relationship so that work is not negatively affected. Other advice provided to the colleagues was that as individuals they must have patience when dealing with other people. They must also have control over their anger as this will allow them to act calmly and not do something they might regret in the future. Below are excerpts from the transcripts that can attest to this.

Andile reported that "*but we must try by all means to not allow your anger to control you. Yah you must always cool down. You mustn't always take decisions same time cos you are angry that time. yah I keep telling them that when you are angry and you must make sure your gun is locked in a safe so that you won't do any stupid that that tomorrow you will regret.*" (A71-A76)

Buti "*and the communication, this communication is very key because you avoid unnecessary tension. Through communication you have clear mandate as to what should you do for the day, what is expected of you at that hour when you work it out you do communicate so I think communication is something that really, really helps a lot and I am living by it and its getting me somewhere. And patience.*" (B67-B72)

Holly "*By that I mean you need to remain professional, you need to remain content in every circumstance. You need to remain professional as much as you can because after all when that personal life affect productivity at work, it's going to give you problems to an extend that they start giving you written warnings.*" (H51-H54)

Patience in a relationship is important, as a partner in a relationship, a person must keep their expectations to a minimum when practicing patience. Patience requires not only a thought but rather a broad insight and a strategy when addressing issues in order for a situation to be stable and meaningful (McIleen, 2014:191; Smyth, 2017:25). People who are patient are familiar with the fact that it takes time to build a relationship and rebuild trust after it has been broken (Hirst, 2015:22).

Morgan (2020:163) believes that people's heads are filled with myths and an unfounded belief that anger cannot be controlled and managed by a person going through the most difficult situation in their lives, but the truth is that the ability to control emotions is within each and every

person, so everyone is able to control and deal with their anger. People need to know themselves what makes them angry and how they react when they are angry. They must also know what triggers their partner's anger. It helps to know how to control anger to avoid being lost in a situation one cannot deal with (Basma, 2020:75). This is to say that, couples must learn to be patient with each other. They must not be selfish in a relationship thinking about what they want and need, forgetting about the next person. Being patient helps one to control their anger and emotions in order for them to help each other build a relationship which will in return produce a happy and productive partner in the workplace.

4.3.5 THEME FIVE: PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCE OF ACCESSING EAP

Out of the twelve participants, one participant consulted with the EAP but he never finished attending the sessions because geographically they were not accessible. One participant believes the rumours that there is no confidentiality as they heard about people's problems after they had consulted with the EAP. The other ten participants had never consulted with the EAP but they do believe in the EAP and their capabilities except for their visibility and accessibility and that is why some recommended that people seek professional help when faced with problems.

Theme five yielded to sub themes which is the reluctance to access EAP as sub theme one, sub theme two is the preconceived negative perceptions of accessing EAP.

Sub theme one: Reluctance to access EAP

There were some participants who expressed reluctance with regard to accessing the EAP citing accessibility as the main concern. The responses from the participants helps part of the study which is to inform the EAP. The reluctance will bring broader light to the EAP as to what the employees on the ground feels.

Andile is the one who consulted with the EAP but complained that it was far "*Yes I did get an assistance but another thing I'm not basically on it because I am working here in Verena and then if you need assistance you have to drive to Kwamhlanga, you see. It's very far. Sometimes when you think of getting that assistance and you just decide not to go because it's far. My suggestion is it was going to be fair if maybe they just provide the office around here in Verena you see.*" (A78-A83)

The EAP service practitioners are supposed to regularly visit small offices where they do not have a full-time office based in order to be more accessible to those that want to consult them so that utilisation of the services is improved (Mugari, Mtapuri & Rangongo, 2014:257). Most

employees who have EAP's in organisations are under utilising the EAP services because they have issues with regard to their offices being too far for consultations, (Riba, Parikh & Greder, 2019:38; Mitchell & Dorian, 2017:213).

The issue raised by Andile indicates that SAPS as a department has made provision for the EAP but there are gaps in terms of accessibility which means it somethings that needs to be addressed. When employees are reluctant to utilise services provided to them due to issues like accessibility, then the utilisation of the programme will be low resulting in high stress level in employees.

Sub theme two: Preconceived negative perceptions of accessing EAP

Some of the participants had a problem of consulting with the EAP because they believe rumours being spread by some employees. It is believed that lack of trust and fear of lack of confidentiality by the professional and lack of confidence with regard to the service being effective in assisting them with the problems they are facing Riba *et.al.*

Celia is the one who felt that their trust was broken by EAP "*There is no confidentiality because there are lots of cases, I heard a lot of things in the passages from social workers and chaplains whereas people went to them with confidence that they will keep their secrets but at the end of the day they are the ones who are going around telling people's secrets. So I don't have confidence in them.*" (C54-C58)

Unlike Celia the participant who expressed a lack of trust in the professionals, (Csiernik, 2014:332) most people who have utilised the services of EAP expressed satisfaction with regard to the professionalism conveyed by the EAP practitioners as well as privacy and confidentiality being well maintained. Complete respect and client confidentiality are some of the key principles of the EAP and once trust and confidentiality is breached, the programme loses its credibility (Nankeruis, Baird, Coffey & Shield, 2020:334). It is indicated by Adams (2015:361) that the success and effectiveness of EAP is solemnly based on confidentiality, involving family members as well as having policies and support from management.

As much as there are preconceived negative perceptions regarding the EAP, the employees need to be made aware that the usage of EAP services is not only beneficial to the employees, but rather it brings about satisfaction in employees' lives because they would have received assistance with their personal problems. The management will also benefit when the employees' utilise the EAP services because the personal problems experienced by employees will be resolved and in return absenteeism is reduced. The employees will start being interested in

engaging in work responsibilities as well as improvements in their overall life aspects (Mark, 2019:626). The concerns raised by Andile and Celia are valid as the EAP must ensure that employees have confidence in the services rendered by the practitioners. It was found that when people do not consult a professional when faced with personal problems, their problems continue and end up affecting work productivity negatively. This also leads to poor utilisation of the EAP by employees which overshadows the relevance of the programme in the work institution. Thus, it is important for the EAP service practitioners to maintain confidentiality in all aspects as well as ensuring that they bring the services to the employees who need it.

4.3.6 THEME SIX: PARTICIPANTS ADVICE TO THE EAP

The participants provided advice and suggestions to the EAP regarding how they think the programme can provide effective and efficient services to the employees. The majority of the participants complained of the services and the programme not being as visible and accessible as they would like. They want to see more of the practitioners more often in their parades as well as meetings so that they can be reminded of the services rendered.

Theme 6 produced two sub-themes, namely. the EAP must be more visible and the EAP services must be geographically accessible, they are elaborated on below.

4.3.6.1 Sub-theme One: EAP must be more visible

Most participants have not yet consulted the EAP for its services because they believe that it is not visible and they do not market their services to employees as frequently as they should. The main challenge is the lack of EAP offices within the stations that participated, meaning anyone seeking help would have to travel from their main office to their station on other given days. This causes them to lose interest when they should consult the EAP.

Buti "*But otherwise I think if it is effectively used, if it is marketed well, it's forever on our eyes, it's a good thing.*" (B98-B100)

Celia "W*henever there is an imbizo at the station they must be there. Whenever there is a meeting at SAPS they must make sure they attend. Before they can start with anything they must address the employees about their services. And then they must guide them on how to behave, on how to conduct themselves.*" (C75-C78)

Dixon "*I think they must avail themselves to the members of the SAPS or to us as the members of SAPS. I am saying this because I know there are services offered by the EAP but they do not even come to our parade to remind us about the services they offer.*" (D62-D65)

Elizabeth "*I personally think that once in a week when the police are doing the parade, they must at least come and do presentation about their services. It's not like we are not aware of them but when presentations are not done it is easier for the employees to forget them so when they do presentation it will always ring in our minds about their services.*" (E56-E60)

Ina "*I feel like the EAP should come more often to the station maybe once a week to meet with the members like all members at the station like once a week. And they do one on one with each member at least once a month because we are experiencing a lot of trauma, a lot of stress in our relationships so we need someone to talk so when they come to us I think it makes it easier for us to open up because we wouldn't have to go to them because you find that you are tired.*" (I44-I50)

Jennifer "*so they should advertise and make us aware that you can consult even if you think you are fine. You mustn't wait until you have a problem at work that's only when they can see that ooh now you need to be referred to the EAP. So currently you see EAP as a problem solving entity, we don't view it as something we can use if we don't have a crisis yet.*" (K45-K49)

Kevin "*yah I think the things they can do is to come at least once a month. Have a session one on one with members at the station because they take time to come. Some of the members' spouses are not aware of what their spouses are going through, some of their spouses are bitter at home so it might be better if the members can be allowed to come with their partners to the sessions that are hosted by the EAP.*" (K49-K54)

Lerato "*You know first of all I think EAP they need to be as accessible as possible. We need to know where they are, their offices and what they do. Yes they do come to tell us about their services but I don't think come as much as we really need their trainings.*" (L114-L117), "*they need to market their services more, they need to conduct workshops more especially on relationships because relationships are very very straining. They are overwhelming.*" ((L121-L123)

EAP services were introduced to organisations because the employers realised the important services rendered by the programme. Dipela and Sithole (2021) cited that in order to rate the effectiveness of the programme it must be utilised by the employee to the maximum. The maximum utilisation is accompanied by extensive marketing which can be done through posters, emails and meetings. Marketing must also reach those that are working night shifts as well because every employee's well-being is important. Accessibility to the programme by the

employees, an open door policy as well as marketing that is visible to the employees are the priority of the programme (Adams, 2015:112).

It is alluded to by Mitchel and Dorian (2017:213) and Csiernik (2014:331) that most employees do not access the EAP services because they do not know much about the services rendered by the programme and most of the employees are newly appointed. It is believed by Mugari, Mtapuri and Rangongo (2014:261) that frequent dissemination of information by the practitioners during meetings and workshops is of importance because it will assist in improving and making the programme popular. It was also cited by Maiden (2014:24) that EAP services must be marketed accordingly because that in return increases the maximum usage of the programme and develops it as well. With that being said, all the authors share the same sentiments with the participants with regard to accessing and marketing the services. The practitioners need to market their services as much as possible. Marketing the programme reminds employees about the kind of help that is available for them when they feel overwhelmed. They need to be reminded and reassured that professional help is always on their doorstep when they need it and they do not need to feel ashamed to utilise it.

4.3.6.2   Sub-theme Two: EAP services must be geographically more accessible

Having to drive many kilometres to access the services is having a negative impact on the programme because one participant even left the programme without finishing their sessions because of the distance they had to drive to access the programme. The participants felt that the EAP should either have an office that is based fulltime in the station or they should visit the station more frequently than they are visiting now.

Andile "*An office around Verena, Yah if one is going through some marital problems so that they can be assisted easily."* (A85-A86)

Elizabeth "*They must also be accessible…… they don't have an office around Verena*" (E61 and E62)

Gerald "*With the EAP the problem is that we don't have access to it right now, so we do not have such in our area."* (G46-G50)

Ina "*I feel the EAP should come more often to the station maybe once a week to meet with members at the station like once a week".* (I44)

Kevin "*Yah I think the things that they can do is to come at least once a month. Have a session one on one with members at the station because they take time to come*". (K49-51)

Lerato "*You know first of all I think they need to be as accessible as possible*". (L114-L115)

Offices that are not within the premises of the organisation are not user friendly for employees in terms of distance. This is supported by the participants and Maiden (2014:22) who states that effective usage of the EAP is based on the physical location of their offices. The closer the offices and the confidentiality assurance of the offices the more the consultation by the employees. The physically accessible offices must also accommodate people with disabilities who would like to utilise the services. Campbell and Langford (2014:83) concur with the above as they indicate that organisations' biggest priority is the physical accessible offices that provide confidentiality to the employees.

Accessing EAP services may not be as easy for everyone as it is believed to be and that in turn most employees may have vague information about the programme and its services (Csiernik, 2014:332). However, due to financial constraints most organisations cannot afford to have EAP offices in each and every police station thus the lack thereof. This implies that a lack of an EAP in a local police station does not mean the employees must be neglected. Methods like weekly visits to the offices might assist those that are unable to drive long distances to access the services.

4.5 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The chapter elaborated on what the twelve participants working in Thembisile sub-district (Verena, Kwamhlanga and Mkobola police stations) said. The researcher obtained sufficient information for the purpose of the study and she is happy that she has sourced meaningful lived experiences, and information-rich responses. That has enabled the researcher to reach data saturation. The phenomenology research design was applied by the researcher where the explorative, descriptive and contextual strategies assisted in reaching data saturation. All the participants are in a committed relationship, some are married and others are in a serious relationship. A total of six themes were formulated and each theme had two to four sub-themes except for theme six. A description of primary relationships, impact of the primary relationships, coping with the difficulties experienced in the primary relationships, advice to colleagues, experiences consulting with the EAP and their advice to the EAP were addressed and each theme and sub-theme was supported by a literature control to confirm or differ from what was expressed by the participants.

In chapter five below the researcher will present the conclusions and the recommendations of the study which investigated the influence of the SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their work productivity in the workplace: informing the EAP in SAPS.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the conclusions and recommendations of the findings that were derived from the study of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace and informing the EAP in SAPS.

In this chapter, the researcher will give general conclusions and specific recommendations on chapter one which covered the introduction, the background of the study, the problem formulation and problem statement, rationale of the study, theoretical framework, research question, goals and objectives, the research methodology and methods she planned to apply, data collection, method of data analysis and data verification applied in the study. Conclusions and recommendations will also be provided on chapter two in relation to the literature and previous studies on the topic of primary relationships and their impact on work productivity. The researcher will further provide conclusions and recommendations on chapter three's discussion of the research methods she applied to conduct a complete qualitative research process. And lastly conclusions and recommendations on chapter 4, the research findings will be provided. Limitations to the study will also be discussed.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions will be drawn from the planning of the research (chapter 1), the literature review (chapter 2), the application of the research process (chapter 3) and the findings (chapter 4). The limitations to the study and recommendations based on the findings, to the EAP/social workers, the employees, further and future researchers will also be provided in this chapter.

5.2.1 Conclusion of chapter one - Introduction

In chapter one, the researcher introduced the envisaged research study of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace and informing the EAP in SAPS. It is concluded that the primary relationships in an employee's life are a major contributor for performing the duties they were hired to do in the workplace. Primary relationships are found contribute both negatively and positively in the family and work domain. As introduced in chapter one, kind of primary relationships the researcher focused on are the relationship with their husbands/wives, boyfriends/girlfriends, married or cohabiting. It was indicated by Noller and Feeney (2013:71) who agreed with most authors cited in chapter one and chapter two that there is a link between the two life domains, namely, primary relationships and work productivity,

research has shown the spill over model where stress at work affects family/marital life as well as that family and intimate relationships affect work productivity.

It was found that individuals (such as SAPS employees) have different roles to play in the community they live in. Roles such as family roles, work roles as well as community roles. It was thus found to be of utmost importance that SAPS employees must strike a balance between their primary relationships and their responsibilities in their work as both roles are important to their existence. With that being said, the employers in both private and government sectors realised the hardships experienced by their employees caused by both personal and work environments. They thus introduced the EAP (also in SAPS) which addresses the personal, work-related, emotional and psychological well-being of their employees.

EAP services are provided by different professionals from different professions, including social workers (Refer to chapter 1, 1.2). The introduction of EAP in South Africa by different organisations was due to the loss the organisations were suffering due to employees experiencing personal problems that ended up affecting their work performance. An interesting point was raised by Bezzerra, Paterson and Paphitis (2021:292) that when EAP was introduced in South Africa, it was a holistic approach that also focused on the issues that were created by colonisation where people left their families in the rural villages to travel to the cities for job opportunities. The services of EAP were provided in terms of providing counselling and psychotherapy sessions to the employees.

The problem statement of the study was posed as: there is insufficient scientific information available about the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace, the knowledge gap between relationships and one's focus in being productive at work and informing the EAP has enabled the employees to address such occurrences more effectively.

The problem statement informed the rationale of the study and was the motivation for the study. The rationale confirmed that there was no study about the influence of SAPS employee's primary relationship experiences on work productivity in the workplace: informing the EAP conducted in Mpumalanga province, Thembisile Hani sub-district. The population was chosen because no study had ever been conducted regarding the same or similar problem. It afforded a limited group of individuals who had never participated in a study like this to be able to express their lived experiences without fear of being judged. It can further be concluded that the rationale of the study has given other researchers and the SAPS employers a clear understanding of their employees' experiences that they were not aware of.

The researcher concluded by applying the systems theory and the inter-role conflict theory as these were the relevant theoretical frameworks for the study. The systems theory was applied by explaining the link between systems in human lives. It explained that the SAPS employees as individuals are linked and connected systems, such as to family, religious organisations, the workplace and the larger settings that provide rules, laws, regulations and guidance to the employees' lives. The family and the workplace systems were concluded to be the most relevant to the study because the focus was on primary relationships (family system) and work productivity (Work system). This gave a clear indication, direction and support to the study that as employees of the SAPS they do not live in isolation and one system in their lives has a direct impact on the other systems. The impact the systems in a SAPS employee have on each other can be both positive and negative depending on the type of situation experienced.

Inter-role conflict was linked to the study as employees at SAPS belong to different systems in their lives. Not only are they responsible for the roles they are hired to perform in the organisation but they have other roles that they perform outside their workplace. They have a role to play at home as spouses as well. The inter-role conflict occurs when one role consumes the time and the energy that leads to the other roles being neglected. This study explored the role of being a spouse in a relationship, and the conflicts experienced in the relationship that ended up affecting the employees' abilities to concentrate, produce quality work as well as maintain professionalism with colleagues and members of the community they serve as SAPS at large.

It is concluded that the systems theory and the inter-role conflict theory provided dimensions that linked them together. There are different roles an employee has to perform in different systems. The roles require the employees to be dedicated and selfless at all times. However, neglect, lack of prioritising and under performance in one role leads to inter-role conflict.

In order to answer the research question, 'What is the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace?' the researcher applied the qualitative research method which permitted in-depth exploration of the study. The qualitative research allowed the researcher to choose a phenomenology research design along with explorative, descriptive and contextual designs for 12 participants from Thembisile Hani sub-district (Verena, Kwamhlanga and Mkobola stations) in Mpumalanga. The methods provided insight and direction in discovering and making sense of the in-depth experiences shared by the SAPS employees about their primary relationships and the impact on work productivity. The response to research question is taken from the findings: the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace is both negative and

positive. This is elaborated on further in section 5.3.4, where the conclusion of the themes is provided. The research question assisted the researcher in achieving the research goal which was: To develop an in-depth understanding of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace.

Having a research goal assisted the researcher remain on course during the research. The research goal was achieved through the application of the qualitative method as an in-depth understanding was obtained through the semi structured interviews conducted.

It can be concluded that the process of attaining the research goals assisted in achieving the research objectives set at the beginning of the study:

- To explore the influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace

- To describe the findings in terms of the influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace

- To report the findings, draw conclusions, and make recommendations in relation to the influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace.

Objective one was to explore the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace which was achieved through the application of qualitative research. A qualitative research approach allowed the participants to share their lived experiences during interviews conducted by the researcher. The research design accompanying the qualitative research was a phenomenology research design which ensured an explorative strategy where participants gave the researcher a better understanding of their primary relationships, a descriptive strategy where the participants described in their own words how their primary relationships influence their work productivity, and a contextual strategy where participants were given the freedom to express the context of their primary relationship experiences and how they affected their work productivity. It can be concluded by the researcher that all the data collected about the lived primary relationship experiences and how they influence work productivity was achieved by using semi-structured interviews. The researcher applied semi-structured interviews where the questions were prepared in advance. The interviews were carried out with 12 participants excluding the two participants who were used for pilot testing.

The interviews were conducted face-to-face for some participants, and telephonically and virtually with other participants. The interviews afforded the participants the opportunity to express themselves in-depth and use their own words about their primary relationships, how it is to be in that relationship, how it contributes to their happiness, their sorrows, their ability to concentrate on important things, how conflict affects their productivity if left unaddressed and how the EAP can improve the services rendered in the programme. The in-depth responses from the participants relied on the researcher's probing skills, communication skills, empathising skills and active-listening. The social work ethics of informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, beneficence and management of information were applied. The methods, the skills and the in-depth responses from the participants assisted in achieving the objective of exploring the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationships on their productivity in the workplace and reached data saturation.

In conclusion, exploring the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their work productivity provided both a negative and a positive influence (as discussed in theme one). The positive influence was derived from the happiness and warmth experienced by the SAPS employees and the negative was brought about by the fights and conflict experienced in a relationship. Both the negative and positive influences from the primary relationship were found to affect work productivity in the workplace.

Objective two was to describe the findings in terms of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the work place. The findings are well elaborated on in chapter four. It can be concluded that the findings were provided after proper data analysis and verification were done. The data analysis methods were helpful in guiding the researcher to ensure that the findings were valid and a true reflection of the participants' responses. The researcher concluded that data was analysed through the transcription of the recorded data word for word. It was further verified by ensuring credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (see the conclusion in 5.2.3).

In conclusion, the objective of describing the findings in terms of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace was achieved through the themes that were created by the independent coder, approved by the researcher and the supervisor. The findings were grouped into six themes and fourteen sub-themes. The themes and the sub-themes derived from the transcripts of the interview recordings.

Theme one provided the description of primary relationships by the participants which had two sub-themes, namely, sub-theme one, the primary relationship was described as good or very good and sub-theme two, the primary relationship was described in a troubled manner.

Theme two provided the influence of the primary relationship on the participants' work and had two sub-themes. Sub-theme one was the primary relationship's positive influence on work and sub-theme two was the primary relationship's negative influence on work.

Theme three was described as the participants' coping with difficulties in the workplace and it provided four sub-themes. Sub-theme one was the communication with their partner as a coping mechanism for dealing with problems that affected their work productivity, theme two was to communicate with third parties. In sub-theme three the participants indicated that the problem does not need to be dealt with and sub-theme four provided other coping mechanisms such as praying and exercising.

Theme four was participants' advice to their colleagues who were going through challenges in their relationships and provided four sub-themes. Sub-theme one was to seek professional help, sub-theme two was communicate with their partner, sub-theme three was that they should share with others and sub-theme four was other advice that suggested that they must improve their communication skills as well as focusing on themselves.

Theme five provided participants' experiences of accessing EAP. Theme six provided advice from participants to the EAP with two sub-themes. Sub-theme one indicated that the EAP must be visible and sub-theme two indicated that EAP services must be geographically accessible.

The researcher can safely attest that objective two was met as the findings stipulated broadly in chapter 4 described the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace

Objective three to report the findings, draw conclusions and make recommendations in relation to the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace. The findings were discussed in chapter 4 where they indicated that the SAPS employees working in Thembisile Hani sub-district police stations experience the spillover in terms of primary relationships and work productivity. The findings were also compared and contrasted with relevant literature.

The conclusion of the findings is provided in section 5.2.4 in themes and sub-themes. The conclusions and the recommendations are provided in section 5.5 of this chapter.

The general introduction is concluded in relation to the background, rationale, question, goal, and research objectives of the study including the research methodology.

5.2.2 Conclusion for chapter two - Literature review

The researcher can conclude that the compiled literature review on the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace and informing the EAP. The aim of applying the literature was to compare and contrast what other authors have researched so that it can be compared with what the participants expressed during the interviews.

The background of the study was introduced and it was inclusive of what a primary relationship is and how important it is in human lives. It also included how family and primary relationships have an impact on other aspects of an individual's life including their performance in the workplace. The researcher explored studies conducted on an international and national level on how primary relationships affect employees' emotional well-being and productivity in the workplace. The studies targeted employees in different organisations and in relationships or marriages. It was indicated in the findings of the studies conducted that primary relationships do affect employees' work concentration.

The effects were found to be both positive and negative. The positive effects of a primary relationship led to high concentration, a boost in employees' confidence, a good relationship with their colleagues, a willingness to do more work as well as high energy when providing services to people and being productive in general. The negative effects emanated from conflict experienced in the primary relationships, including the employees losing focus with what they were supposed do, producing sloppy work, being short tempered and unprofessional work as well increased absenteeism. This was also confirmed by some participants in the study conducted by the researcher where they indicated that the mood of their primary relationships determined the productivity of their work.

Literature indicated that no person lives in isolation. Individuals have structures and organisations that shape them as people. The systems that connect an individual with family, work, church, school, and workplace policies and regulations that guide and channel them to behave and perform in a regulated manner. The employee holds different roles in each system. An individual can experience challenges at home as a partner, which contribute to him being emotionally overwhelmed leading to him/her neglecting other roles in other systems that he must perform. This leads to inter-role conflict.

The implications of the systems theory and the inter-role conflict indicated that employees must not turn a blind eye to the level of impact their primary relationship can have on their performance in the workplace because, the connection between their personal relationships and workplace can strike a balance between the two when properly managed. The psychological, emotional and social well-being of the client are taken into consideration when addressing issues that create inter-role conflict. Other employees want to escape their troubles by ignoring the conflict happening in their primary relationships that affect their work performance in the workplace. However, that is seen as not being helpful because the conflict remains unsolved for a long time causing emotions of frustration.

The two theories (systems theory and the inter-role conflict) indicate that the employee and the therapist are able to address matters taking place in the employees' lives if they are not afraid to acknowledge problems and conflicts happening in the systems as well as not being ashamed to seek assistance in order to cope or rectify the changes brought about by the conflict. Attending to issues that can cause inter-role conflict in the systems is found to be of importance because it saves an employee from suffering from stress and burnout.

The effects of conflict in primary relationships and its impact on work productivity were discussed and the researcher indicated that conflict affects employees negatively because loss of concentration and negative emotions take over. However, as much as conflict exists in relationships people have strategies they use in dealing with the conflict which is problem-based, emotion-based and communication. Problem-based and communication were elaborated on as involving confrontation of the problem they were facing in a discreet manner. Emotion-based included the ability to control emotions amid tensions and problems experienced. Emotion-based also includes denying the existence of a problem as a way of dealing with the issue, which is not recommended, because it is a method of denial. The utilisation of EAP by the employees' indicated the under-utilisation of the services because they are not geographically accessible, and they were not fully marketed. Lastly, the role of EAP was explored and their roles were cited as providing confidential assistance to employees who were experiencing both personal and occupational problems that affects their performance in the workplace.

In conclusion the literature review was a major contribution to the study because it provided guidance of what different researchers studied and how similar their studies were to the current study. The difference between the existing literature and the researcher's is that the researcher focused specifically on the influence SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences had on

their work productivity, whereas the existing limited literature focused on employees other than the SAPS. However, its contribution is important to the social work research fraternity.

5.2.3 Conclusion for chapter three - Research methodology

It can be concluded that the research methodology provided intensive guidance for the researcher with regards to the methods that were applied to the study leading to answering the research question, posed as: What is the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace as well as answering the research goal and objectives mentioned in section 1.6.

The researcher followed the qualitative research approach. The approach was chosen because it allowed the participants to express themselves regarding their in-depth experiences in their primary relationships and how these affected their productivity in the workplace and to also make suggestions for the EAP services. The qualitative research enabled the researcher to make sense of their shared experiences as they were expressed in their own words without interruptions or judgement. The qualitative research was accompanied by a phenomenology research design which was supported by explorative, descriptive and contextual research strategies, which afforded the SAPS employees an opportunity to explore their personal relationship problems which existed in their lives.

The population chosen was the SAPS Thembisile Hani and Dr JS Moroka sub-districts, however only Thembisile SAPS employees participated in the study as alluded to in chapter three. The researcher applied for ethical clearance from the University of South Africa Social Work Research Ethics Committee which was approved as a lower risk research study and given the go ahead to conduct the study. The researcher requested permission to conduct the study in Mpumalanga SAPS from both the national and provincial offices.

The permission was granted in writing. After getting permission from the national and the provincial SAPS, the station commanders were used as gate keepers to access the employees through meetings and contact details were left for those that were interested. The inclusion and exclusion criteria (as explained in chapter one and chapter three) were explained to the staff during the time slot allocated to the researcher. Non-probability sampling was implemented because a certain number of participants was needed to represent the larger population. From the population that volunteered to participate in the study, none from the Dr JS Moroka sub-district volunteered to participate. The ones who agreed to participate were from Thembisile Hani sub-district police stations only. Other participants agreed to participate initially but later

withdrew. However, others were recruited to replace them so that the intended number of participants could be reached. A total number of 12 participants took part in the study.

Interviews were chosen as the mode of data collection because interviews allowed participants to express their experiences without limits using their own choice of words. Semi-structured interviews were utilised because the researcher needed standardised questions to provide direction. Prior to the actual interviews pilot testing was done using two participants to check the effectiveness of the interview guide.

The interview guide was proven to be effective by the researcher in agreement with the supervisor. The interviews were conducted face-to-face (five participants), telephonically (two participants) and virtually for the other five participants. Mobile data was bought by the researcher for those who did the virtual interviews and the office of the social worker (the researcher) was used for the face-to-face interviews. All Covid-19 protocols were observed by the researcher and the participants. The ethical considerations were all adhered to as confidentiality and anonymity of participants was insured by using pseudonyms as a way of protecting the identity of the participants. Informed consent was implemented, and no one was forced to partake in the study, which is why participants were able to withdraw from the study. Beneficence was implemented by explaining to the population how the research would benefit the employees and the organisation, and the management of information was also implemented through the safe keeping of the data collected during the interviews in a password-protected folder.

The researcher can further conclude that data analysis was achieved because the interview proceedings were analysed using the eight steps by Tesch. The researcher started by transcribing the recordings from the research process word for word. The independent coder created themes and sub-themes which were agreed with the researcher and the supervisor. For data verification the researcher followed the Lincoln and Guba model (1985) to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings. The trustworthiness was applied by the researcher in terms of credibility by allowing member checking of the transcribed data and giving the participants an opportunity to check the true reflection of the transcribed data before analysing the findings, peer debriefing by having a professional to check the data and member checking where the participants were given an opportunity to check the findings represented by the researcher, transferability providing a clear explanation of the process taken to conduct the study and that no generalisations were made but each SAPS participant's response was represented, dependability by being consistent when checking the data collected using the same transcripts,

and arriving at the same conclusion, and finally, confirmability by ensuring that the conclusion of the findings is exactly what the participants presented not the researcher's views or feelings.

In conclusion the research methodology applied by the researcher ensured that the research question, goal and objectives were answered individually. The conclusion of the verified and analysed findings is provided below:

5.2.4 Conclusion for chapter Four - Research findings

The research findings were discussed extensively in chapter four. The findings were collected from the 12 participants working at the SAPS stationed at Thembisile Hani sub-district at Verena, Kwamhlanga and Mkobola police stations. All the participants were appointed under South African Police Act and none of them held a management position. Six participants were males and six participants were females. Six participants were married and six were in a long term relationships. Two participants did not have children as yet in their relationships and ten had children ranging from five to one per employee. The majority of the participants had more than 5 years of experience as employees with the SAPS. The findings were grouped into six themes and fourteen sub-themes and the conclusions made for each theme/sub-theme are as follows:

Theme One: Description of primary relationship by participants

The study revealed that the employees at SAPS believe that there are positive and negative feelings in their description of a primary relationship. Under the positive feeling the participants expressed that their relationship is good and for some it was described as not so good.

Sub-theme One: Primary **relationship described as good or very good**

The good and positive aspect emanated from being able to be comfortable around their partners. They loved the happy atmosphere their spouses created in their home as they were able to offload their work's frustration and also to be relaxed in the comfort of their own homes.

 It can be concluded that the SAPS employees in Thembisile recognise and value the importance of primary relationships in their lives. This is recommendable because it gives the participants an opportunity to work on their relationships because they know the joy that comes from being in a happy relationship.

Sub-theme Two – Primary relationship described in a troubled manner

The troubled manner indicated the negative aspect which included the majority of participants expressing that they do go through ups and downs in their relationships. Some days are said to be better and other days are said to be not good. However, they have come to accept that each

and every relationship goes through good times and bad times. The researcher concluded that participants' willingness to see potential in making their relationships to work was because being in a relationship completes them.

Theme Two: Influence of primary relationship on the participant's work

As indicated in theme one the primary relationships of the participants working at SAPS brought positive and negative feelings to their lives, as does the impact. The participants indicated that a particular feeling and atmosphere in their primary relationships determined the outcome of how they perform in the workplace. The impact is controlled by the current situation experienced in the relationship. That is to say that the impact of primary relationships is both positive and negative on the employees' work productivity.

Sub-theme One: Positive influence on work

The study revealed that a positive influence is brought about with the happiness experienced by the SAPS employees in their primary relationships. The participants felt that their primary relationships had a positive influence on their work productivity because they became productive and energetic when they knew things were going well in their relationships. They also expressed that when their primary relationships were going well, they felt motivated to assist complainants at the charge office.

It is concluded that having a partner who is willing to listen as well as provide emotional support, strengthens the employees to go back to work the following day and assist complainants who visit the stations. It is important for employees to maintain happiness, balance and stability in their primary relationships because then work performance will not suffer in the process.

Sub-theme Two: Negative influence on work

The participants expressed the negative influence the primary relationship had on their work productivity. The participants confirmed that negativity emanated from them experiencing conflict in their primary relationships. Conflict that was not addressed as it happened in their lives. This in turn led to them being unable to concentrate fully on their work which in return hindered the effectiveness of productivity. They indicated that they lost focus to a point where they started making mistakes in their line duty as SAPS employees. For the others it also caused them to lose interest in work due to overthinking matters happening in their personal relationships.

Some participants revealed that when there was a conflict in their primary relationship, their behaviour and attitude towards complainants was affected. They found themselves taking their

frustrations out on the complainants visiting the police station looking for help. It was found that some participants portrayed an aggressive behaviour towards members of the community seeking help from the police. This placed one employee in trouble with their supervisors as the matter was escalated to the superiors because according to Batho Pele principles, courtesy is one of the principles that government employees must uphold, which means the employee must provide services to the members of the community with respect and empathise with their situation.

It was also being discovered in the findings that the influence of primary relationships on work productivity led to other employees being in denial. The said employees pretended as if everything was going well in their primary relationships so that they were able to focus on their work uninterrupted. It is a short-term solution because if problems are left untreated, the outcome becomes damaging to both the employee and their spouse. It can be concluded that the SAPS employees working in Thembisile Hani sub-district are unable to separate home from work situations that are affecting them emotionally which in turn brought about inter-role conflict. The employees took their personal experiences into the workplace which in turn affected their work performance.

Theme Three: Participants' coping with difficulties affecting their work performance

The study revealed that problems experienced in primary relationships affect people differently, the negative impact of the participants experiencing difficulties in their primary relationships required that they applied different coping mechanisms. The participants expressed that when they are going through problems they overcome their troubles by communicating with their partners, communicating with third parties, others were in denial that the problems did not need to be dealt with whereas others indicated other coping mechanisms elaborated below.

Sub-theme One: Communication with intimate partner

It can be concluded that having mature, verbal and calm communication helps clear misunderstandings and problems faced by the SAPS employees. The participants believe that through communication, their partners are given the assurance that they matter in their lives. Communicating with their partners by sitting down to talk as adults helped clear the misunderstandings that in turn brought peace to the lives.

The peace brings concentration in the lives of the employees pushing them to focus and become productive in the workplace. Communication is effective and efficient when both partners are willing to listen to each other and avoid shouting.

Sub-theme Two: Communicate with 3ʳᵈ parties

The study revealed that when others preferred talking to third persons regarding the problems they were experiencing, this affected their well-being in the workplace. Third parties being family, friends, pastors or colleagues. This was because talking to a third party meant expressing feelings to someone who provided constructive advice on how they could address the conflicts experienced in their primary relationships.

The participants expressed that talking to someone they trust made things easier because they sometimes could not reach common ground when they addressed their problems with their spouses. So they involved their friends and families in their personal problems for intervention. In conclusion it can be confirmed that involving a third person is helpful sometimes because a different perspective can be given to the issue at hand. However, confidentiality is not guaranteed this instance.

Sub-theme Three: Participants who indicate that their problems does not need to be dealt with

As indicated in chapter 4, section 4.3.2.3 some participants were in denial of the problems they were facing in their relationships, they also applied the same mechanism when coping with the problems. It can be concluded that some participants tended to turn a blind eye to whatever they were going through. This was done with the hope that the problem would go away on its own because they were not the first people to go through this. Being in denial was not been helpful in the long run because people ended up feeling that the weight was too much for them to carry. However, most participants did not prefer using this mechanism but rather they preferred other coping mechanisms such as communicating with their partners or involving other people.

Sub-theme Four: Other coping mechanisms

For some participants the study revealed that people resorted to praying to God about their problems, others expressed that reading and exercising helped them cope with difficulties. All these coping strategies were expressed by the participants as working effectively and efficiently in their lives. We can conclude that we are different people, with different personalities and our ways of addressing difficulties in primary relationships are not the same. As much as talking is therapeutic, some people prefer other coping mechanisms including less talking.

Theme Four: Participants' advice to colleagues on dealing with relationships problems

All the participants in the study have gone through a difficult time and situation in connection with their primary relationship which later affected their productivity in their workplaces. They

applied different methods and strategies that assisted them in dealing with their problems. They were able to offer their colleagues who are going through similar problems in their primary relationships advice. Seeking professional help, communicating with their partners, communicating with third parties and other advice are concluded below:

Sub-theme One - Seek professional help

Most participants had not approached professional therapists and counsellors when they were faced with primary relationships problems. However, they saw it as relevant to advise their colleagues that whenever they were going through marital or relationship problems they should seek professional help. They knew and could see how conflict in primary relationships affected people negatively in their productivity at work. The researcher can conclude that a referral to professional social worker, psychologist or therapist was valued as important because they are trained people that can be trusted and they will help them to deal with the conflict in their personal primary relationship that is hindering them to focus attentively at work. Professionals are able to maintain confidentiality. They provide professional perspectives that allow room for the employees to make decisions on their own.

Sub-theme Two - Communicate with intimate partner

The study revealed that the participants suggest that their colleagues communicate with their partners when they are faced with problems in their primary relationships. They expressed that as SAPS employees, they work with guns, thus it is dangerous to bottle things up as it can build up anger within themselves and lead to wrong decision making. They detailed that communicating with a partner affords the employee the opportunity to know how their partner feels and how they can overcome their challenges. It can be concluded that it is a good thing to talk to their partner because it allows them to voice their frustrations and disappointments in the relationship and a decision can be made by both the employee and their partners.

Sub-theme Three - Share with others

The study revealed that a few of the participants suggested that their colleagues should share their problems with other people, be it colleagues, family or friends. They expressed that venting their frustrations and disappointments would help to reduce the load in their heart and mind. This helps not to take out the frustrations on the wrong people like the members of the community seeking help at the police station However, not all participants agreed with the sentiment of sharing their problems with colleagues as they believe it will be their downfall. This was due to the fact that confidentiality is not guaranteed. It can be concluded that not every participant

shared the same sentiments when it came to share primary relationships matters with friends and colleagues.

Sub-theme Four - Other advice

Other advice revealed in the study provided by the participants to their colleagues was that people need to improve their communication skills. In conclusion, SAPS employees must learn how to speak to their partners as well as how to remain calm when addressing matters that affect their mental well-being. Effective communication is advisable. Employees must be aware that as much as situations in their primary relationships leave them angry, they must not allow anger to control them because anger is a very dangerous emotion that leads to bad decisions in most cases. They must remain professional at all times; it is not good to be getting written warnings due to primary relationships affecting work productivity.

Seeking professional help, communicating with their partner, consulting with a third party and other advice were found to be effective methods when dealing with conflict experienced in primary relationships that affects their ability to be productive in the workplace.

Theme Five - Participants experience of accessing EAP

The study revealed that more than ten participants had never consulted with the EAP. Only one participant who was going through marital conflict tried to seek help from the EAP but ended up not attending the arranged services because of the distance he had to travel to where the EAP offices are based.

Sub theme one: Reluctance to access EAP

Some of the participants cited the inaccessibility of the programme in their respective stations. These are the logistics that can be fixed by the management of SAPS when the matter is escalated. It can be concluded that the majority of employees have no experience in consulting with the EAP. However, the relevance and importance of the programme are seen and appreciated by the employees. A few hiccups that can be drawn from the employees' experiences in consulting with the EAP are discussed below.

Sub theme two: Preconceived negative perception of accessing EAP

The study revealed that only one participant believed that the EAP did not uphold the confidentiality principle because she believed she had heard a lot of people's confidential information from the responsible social workers and chaplains. The participants expressed fear of having their personal problems being shared to other members of the organisation without

their knowledge nor consent. Preconceived perception is dangerous because it hinders people to utilise services provided to them for free without facts or valid points.

Theme six- Participants advice to the EAP

The study revealed that most people have trust in the services rendered by the EAP as they believe that they uphold the professional conduct in their sessions (except for one participant). However, their level of consultation to the EAP offices for assistance was very low. Inaccessibility and lack of visibility was the main barrier and they are discussed below:

Sub-theme One - EAP services must be more visible

The participants would like to see more visibility of the EAP services. They expressed that they would like to see more of the practitioners during meetings and parades doing presentations regarding their services. As much as they are aware of the services, they feel that they are not reminded often enough, taking into consideration that the EAP are not based within their vicinity. A suggestion of coming to the police stations at least once a week or once in every two weeks was made as it is believed that it is what is needed by SAPS employees. The participants believe that they tended to forget about EAP when they were overwhelmed by problems that were affecting their concentration in the workplace and this was caused by the invisibility of the practitioners.

It can be concluded that frequent reminders to the employees by the EAP is crucial because it helps remind the employees about the relevant important services designed to help them as individuals. This is because being a member of SAPS can be overwhelming for employees sometimes due to the demands of their job. This will help increase the utilisation of the services rendered in the programme.

Sub-theme Two - EAP services must be geographically more visible

The study also revealed that the participants failed to consult the EAP due to the fact that they had to drive in order for them to access the services. They cited that the offices of the EAP were not geographically accessible to them. Others had to drop out of the arranged sessions because they could not afford travelling. It was suggested that it would be beneficial for them to have an office within the police station or they have the practitioners visit their stations as often as possible. Thus, it can be concluded that it is important to have EAP services available at a closer reach for the employees in order to ensure maximum utilisation of the services.

In conclusion, the themes are important for the purpose of the study because the development of an in-depth understanding of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship

experiences on their productivity in the workplace has been elaborated on and achieved in the themes. The themes also contributed to the local body of research which is currently limited. The themes of the study were able to inform the EAP because the participants expressed the things they would like to witness changing or improving for the better when it comes to the EAP services.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The researcher had planned to conduct the study on employees working in Thembisile Hani sub-district and Dr. JS Moroka sub-district police stations. However, participants from Dr JS Moroka never volunteered to participate in the study so only employees from SAPS Thembisile Hani were included. This limited the study in a sense that a broader demarcation was not represented as initially planned.

- The researcher had planned to conduct all the interviews face-to-face for all 12 participants. However, due to the Covid-19 protocols the plan was changed in order to minimise the possible infection and spread of Covid-19. This limited the study in the sense that the researcher could not see the non-verbal communication expressed by participants who did the telephonic and Microsoft Teams virtual interviews.

- The initial plan of the researcher in the inclusion criteria was to include participants from both heterosexual and same-sex relationships. However, only employees in heterosexual relationships participated. This limited the study in that no experiences of the primary relationship influence on work productivity from same-sex relationship employees could be explored.

5.4   RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations drawn below emanate from the findings of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace and informing the EAP. Recommendations for social workers, recommendations for EAP and recommendations for future and further research are provided below:

5.4.1 Recommendation to SAPS employees

- As stipulated by the participants in the study, the researcher recommends that the employees at SAPS department have to be aware of the foundation in their personal relationships and their workplace as the two environments are interconnected and a balance between the two must be found. The realisation thereof can be achieved by the employee ensuring that they do not focus their energy on the problems they are faced

with daily but rather find better solutions to deal with the situation. By so doing, it will assist the employees' psychological functioning with ideas of how, as people, they can maintain stability in their lives.

- Productivity in the workplace was found to be negatively affecting employees who were facing challenges in their primary relationships. It is thus recommended that the employees must ensure that they apply effective coping mechanisms that involve identifying the problems clearly in order to come up with a suitable solution. This will allow them to regain control of their overall well-being and return back to their normal lives.

- The researcher recommends that employees that are in a committed primary relationship must ensure that they maintain a healthy environment in their relationships by trusting and being honest with their partners. This will be beneficial for them and their partners and in return uplift their mood and help improve their productivity in the workplace.

- The influence of primary relationships on the employees' productivity in the workplace cannot be overlooked nor underestimated, the researcher recommends that the employees strengthen their communication skills with their partners. Communication must be strengthened by being open, vocal (appropriate vocabulary) and upfront with their partners because their partners will thus know what they want, like, dislike, what their expectations are, what they appreciate as well as what makes them happy. This in return will benefit both the employee psychologically and bring about healing, coping and restoration in a relationship.

- The researcher further recommends that the employees must also utilise the professional programme brought to them by their employer because it provides services that enhance their ability to become productive in their workplace.

5.4.2 Recommendation to social work

The recommendations for social work are based on the findings from the study conducted:

- The researcher is of the opinion that social workers must dominate the EAP sectors by studying further in the EAP field because social work skills and services of doing intake, assessment of the problem, planning and contracting, intervention, evaluation and termination put them in an advanced position.

- It is recommended that social workers continue advocating for employees in the workplace.

5.4.3 Recommendations for EAP in SAPS

Based on the responses from the participants regarding their lack of confidence in terms of consulting the EAP for professional assistance, the researcher recommends the following:

- It is recommended that The EAP as a professional body must prioritise confidentiality of employees because the profession of EAP is practiced by social workers and psychologists amongst other professionals, whose code of ethics emphasises confidentiality. The researcher recommends that confidentiality must be ensured through safe keeping of all files and information of employees in locations were other people have no access to it. This will reassure and give the employees a guarantee when consulting the EAP that their private and personal matters will be confidential always. This will help boost the confidence of employees in the programme

- The researcher recommends that visibility of the EAP services is important thus the EAP practitioners must do proper presentations about the services offered by the programme to the employees at SAPS, the effectiveness of the programme, the benefits of the programme and the assurance of keeping confidentiality a priority in the programme. Employees must be informed by the EAP practitioners during the presentations that they do not need to consult when they experience challenges only but rather when they want to maintain positive mental health that helps them tackle both life and work effectively. Visibility is of importance because the employees will be reminded frequently of the available help at hand, as others are overwhelmed by problems and tend to forget the help available within the organisation.

- EAP offices that are not accessible which leads to poor consultation and poor utilisation of their services. The local station is in a rural area and does not have EAP offices within the station. Considering the Verena and Mkobola employees do not have an accessible office, it is recommended by the researcher that the EAP visit the stations as often as once a week for consultations. They must also ensure that they go to the employees for follow up sessions to ensure that all sessions are adhered to. This will also ensure the maximum utilisation of the programme by the employees at all the Thembisile sub-district police stations.

- It is recommended that the EAP practitioners render awareness campaigns and workshops for the employees about keeping their relationships in a positive spirit in order to sustain happy employees because once they are happy, work performance and creativity also increases. In turn this will benefit both the employer and the employee.

5.4.4 Further and future research

This recommendation is based on the findings about the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace. The following is recommended for further and future research:

5.4.4.1 Further research

- This study only focused on a limited number of employees in one sub-district out of seventeen sub-districts in the whole of Mpumalanga, the researcher recommends that further research could study the whole province and include same-sex relationships about how primary relationships affect the work productivity of SAPS employees. This will benefit all the employees employed in other districts who are in primary relationships to participate and have the opportunity to share their lived experiences.

- The study also indicated the long distance some employees had to drive to access the EAP services, it is recommended by the researcher that further research explore how the SAPS can apply strategies to have practitioners in each police station. This will assist in reducing the distance the employees drive in order to access the EAP services.

- Most participants are overwhelmed with emotions and sometimes they fail to balance their lives. However, they are unable to express themselves due to superiors who are unapproachable. It is recommended that further research be done on how supervisors and superiors in the SAPS can be more involved in their supervisees' lives in order to spot troubled employees for further referral.

5.4.4.2 Future research

- Future researchers must be aware of pandemics that can hit the world forcing them to make changes to the plans they had for conducting their research, thus they need to be extra prepared and flexible in adapting to the changes they have no control over.

- It is recommended that future researchers must conduct other similar studies. The studies must focus on specific problems experienced in primary relationships that are major contributors to productivity in the workplace.

5.5 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter provided the conclusion of the general introduction of the study, the existing literature on the influence of primary relationships on work productivity, the research methodology that was applied, and the findings derived from the interviews conducted. It further provided conclusions on how the applied qualitative research methods helped to achieve the

goal of the study, which was to develop an in-depth understanding of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their work productivity. It also provided conclusions on how the applied qualitative research methods assisted in achieving the objectives of the study, which were to explore the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their work productivity, to describe and report the findings, draw conclusions and make recommendations in relation to the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their work productivity. It also provided recommendations to the SAPS employees, to the EAP in SAPS and for further and future research considering the responses from the participants.

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ADDENDUM A: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Research title:
The influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace: informing Employee Assistance Programme

Researcher: KC Setabola
(65994566)

Ethics clearance reference number:
Research permission reference number:

Date: January 2020

The influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace: informing Employee Assistance Programme

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Kgaugelo Caroline Setabola and I am doing research with Prof H.M Williams, lecturer/professor in the Department of Social Work towards a Social Work MA at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled the influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace: Informing EAP.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?
I am conducting this research to find out more and to develop an in-depth understanding of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in their workplace.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

You have attended the staff meeting where the research study was introduced and discussed and because you have indicated that you will be interested to partake.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?
The study involves semi-structured interviews and a digital recording will be used during the interviews in order to afford the researcher the opportunity to analyse the data once the interview is done. The kind of questions that will be asked are about the experienced you have as an employee about your primary relationships and how it affected your performance in the workplace, you will also be asked amongst other things how you applied yourself in those problems and if you received professional help or not. The duration of the interviews will be approximately 90 minutes so that all questions can be addressed without being under pressure of time.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason, but once the interviews have been done you cannot withdraw.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

Your participation in the study will enable you to vent out your experiences, frustrations, your abilities and coping skills. It will also help you realise the kind of strength you have as a person and your achievements in life.

ARE THEIR ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

The negative aspect that might happen during the research is the triggering of past hurtful memories that have been bottled up without being addressed. However, EAP has been arranged in advance for such kind of events should they arise.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

You have the right to insist that your name will not be recorder anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your involvement in this research [this measure refers to confidentiality] OR your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give [this measure refers to anonymity].

Your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings [this measure refers to confidentiality].

The transcriber and the external coder are the people who will have access to the data provided, however, the researcher will ensure that they sign the confidentiality forms in order to keep the data confidential. The data provided will also be reviewed by Research Ethical Committee of the university.

However, your anonymous data may be used for other purposes, such as a research report, journal articles and/or conference proceedings. Privacy will be protected in any publication made because your personal information will not be used in such reports.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a minimum period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet in Tzaneen (researcher's house) for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. The provided information will be destroyed by deleting from the hard drive of the computer.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

Please note that no payments nor rewards will be given for participating in the study. The researcher will ensure that the interviews are held at a place that does not require that the participant pays for anything nor spends money on petrol.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL?
This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?
If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact K.C. Setabola on 073 814 8395, email 65994566@mylife.unisa.ac.za or fax 013 963 7182. The findings are accessible for a period of 5 years. Please do not use home telephone numbers. Departmental and/or mobile phone numbers are acceptable.

Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact K.C. Setabola contacts 073 814 8395, email 65994566@mylife.unisa.ac.za, in, 013 963 7111/39.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Prof H.M. Williams, email willihm@unisa.ac.za, phone number 012 429 4269 and fax number. Contact the research ethics chairperson of the Department of Social Work, Unisa's Research ethics committee, Dr K. Malesa at maleskj@unisa.ac.za or 012 429 6054 if you have any ethical concerns.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

Signature:
Name: KC Setabola

ADDENDUM B: RESEARCHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

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RESEARCHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Research title:

The influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace: informing Employee Assistance Programme

Researcher: KC Setabola
(65994566)

Hereby, I Kgaugelo Caroline Setabola, ID number 8507190671087 in my personal capacity as a researcher, acknowledge that I am aware of and familiar with the stipulations and contents of the

- Unisa Research Policy ● Unisa Ethics Policy
- Unisa IP Policy and that I shall conform to and abide by these policy requirements

Signature: ....

Date: ..24/10/19...........................

Research title:

The influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace: informing Employee Assistance Programme

Researcher: KC Setabola

(65994566)

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the digital recording of the interview.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname…………………………………………… (please print)

Participant Signature……………………………………………..Date…………………

Researcher's Name & Surname…………………………………………(please print)

Researcher's signature……………………………………………..Date…………………

ADDENDUM D: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE/ QUESTIONNAIRE

Research title:

The influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace: Informing EAP.

Researcher: KC Setabola

(65994566)

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Biographical questions

- Are you appointed according to the SAPS Act or PS Act?

- For how many years are you in the SAPS?

- Are you married?

- Do you have children, if so, how many and what are their ages?

- Do you have a live-in partner?

Research interview questions

- Tell me about your primary relationship / Who would you say you have a primary relationship with/ What makes you believe this as a primary relationship?

- How is what you experience in this primary relationship assist you in terms of your day-to-day job as a SAPS employee?

- How is what you experience in this primary relationship challenge you in terms of your day-to-day job as a SAPS employee?

- What have you done to address the challenges in order for what you experienced in your primary relationship not affect you in your day-to-day job as SAPS employee

- What lessons can you share with others that have had an effect on your productivity at work?

- Have you ever consulted with the EAP regarding your relationship?

- Kindly explain in as much details as possible in what way can the EAP services of SAPS provide support to staff.

ADDENDUM E: RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">RISK ASSESSMENT</td></tr>
</table>

Complete the Research Ethics Risk Assessment by answering each question below. If you answer **"YES"** to any of the items, the outcome of the risk assessment is considered to vary from a low to high risk level. The UNISA research ethics review system is based on the UNISA Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Research Ethics Risk Assessment. If you are an external applicant, a copy of this document can be requested from urerc@unisa.ac.za; internal applicants can click on this link to obtain the document. If you are unsure about the meaning of any of these concepts, please consult your supervisor or project leader.

1	Does your research include the direct involvement of any of the following groups of participants *(Refer to Section 4 in the SOP)*	YES	NO
*Place an 'x' in box [if yes, provide details in the space allocated for comments]*		
	a) Children or young people under the age of 18 Include the parental consent letter and explain how assent will be obtained in section 6.1 of the application form.		X
	b) Persons living with disabilities *(physical, mental and/or sensory)*[2]		X
	c) Persons that might be considered vulnerable, thus finding it difficult to make independent and/or informed decisions for socio, economic, cultural, political and/or medical reasons *(such as the elderly, the dying, unconscious patients, prisoners, those in dependant relationships, women considered to be vulnerable due to pregnancy, victimisation, etc.)*		X
	d) Communities that might be considered vulnerable, thus finding it difficult to make independent and informed decisions for socio, economic, cultural, political and/or medical reasons		X
	e) UNISA employees, students or alumni Indicate that you will apply for permission at the UNISA Research Permission Subcommittee (RPCS) in section 3.1 of the application form to involve any of these participant groups in the proposed research.		**X**
	f) Persons whose native language differs from the language used for the research Attach the translated data collection instrument(s), interview guide(s), participant information sheet and consent form in the participants' first language, as well as a letter from the language practitioner certifying the credibility of the translated material. The services of an interpreter may need to be secured for field work activities.		X
	g) There is a likelihood that a person or definable group will be identified during the research process and it is likely to be of concern.		X
	h) Other[3]. Please describe.		X
**Comments**: If you selected any option above, please describe it in detail here.		

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²⁻ˋ22q1 Describe whether and how proxy or gatekeeper consent will be obtained in section 6.1 relevant to items 2.1. a – e

[3] Form 1 does not apply to plant, molecular or cell research, animal and environmentally related research.

2	Does your research involve any of the following types of activity that could potentially place the participants at risk of harm?	YES	NO
Place an 'x' in the box provided [if yes, provide details in the space allocated for comments]			
a) Collection, use or disclosure of personal, identifiable information <u>without</u> the consent of the individual or institution that is in possession of the required information (with the exception of aggregated data or data from official databases in the public domain)			X
b) Collection, use or disclosure of personal, identifiable information directly from participants <u>with</u> consent			X
c) Personal, identifiable information to be collected about individuals from available records (e.g. employee records, student records, medical records, etc.) and/or archives			X
b) Participants being exposed to questions which may be experienced as stressful or upsetting, or to procedures which may have unpleasant or harmful side effects		X	
e) Participants being required to commit an act which might diminish self-respect or cause them to experience shame, embarrassment, or regret			X
f) Any form of deception of participants, concealment or covert observation			X
d) Examining potentially sensitive or contentious issues that could cause harm to the participants			X
g) Research which may be prejudicial to participants			X
f) Research which may intrude on the rights of third parties or people not directly involved			X
f) Audio-visual recordings of participants which may be of a sensitive or compromising nature (with or without consent)			X
g) Disclosure of the findings of the research could place participants at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to their financial standing, employability, professional or personal relationships			X
h) Any form of physically invasive diagnostic, therapeutic or medical procedure such as blood collection, an exercise regime, body measurements or physical examination			X
k)*Psychological inventories / scales / tests			X
q) Other. Please describe			X
Comments:			

Please add details on copyright issues related to standardised psychometric tests and registration at the HPSCA of test administrator if test administration is in South Africa or of an equivalent board if administration is non South African.

3	Does your research involve any activity that could potentially place the researcher(s) at risk of harm?	YES	NO
a) There is a possible risk of physical threat, abuse or psychological trauma as a result of actual or threatened violence or the nature of what is disclosed during the interaction			X
b) There is a possible risk of being in a compromising situation, in which there might be accusations of improper behaviour			X
c) There is an increased exposure to risks in everyday life and social interactions, such as working with hazardous materials or sensitive information			X
Comments:			

4	Does any of the following apply to your research project?	YES	NO

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a) Participants will be offered inducements or incentives to encourage their involvement in the research		X
b) Participants will incur financial obligations as a result of their participation in the research		X
c) The researcher(s) can anticipate financial gains from involvement in the research (i.e. contract research)		X
d) Any other potential conflict of interests, real or perceived, that could be seen as compromising the researcher(s) professional judgement in carrying out or reporting on the research		X
e) Research will make use of Unisa laboratories		X
f) Research will be funded by UNISA or by an external funding body that could compromise the integrity of the research project		X
Comments: If you selected any option above, please describe it in detail here.		

5	Guided by the information above, classify your research project based on the anticipated degree of risk. *[The researcher completes this section. The ERC critically evaluates this benefit-risk analysis to protect participants' rights]* *Place an 'x' in the box provided*

Category 1 **Negligible** No to indirect human participant involvement. If you choose this option, stop completing this form and contact URERC@unisa. ac.za		Category 2 **Low risk** Direct human participant involvement. The only foreseeable risk of harm is the potential for minor discomfort or inconvenience, thus research that would not pose a risk above the everyday norm.	X	Category 3 **Medium risk** Direct human participant involvement. Research that poses a risk above the everyday norm, including physical, psychological and social risks. Steps can be taken to minimise the likelihood of the event occurring.		Category 4 **High risk** Direct human participant involvement. A real or foreseeable risk of harm including physical, psychological and social risk which may lead to a serious adverse event if not managed responsibly.	

(a) Briefly justify your choice/classification   The low risk is selected because the said participants have already survived the experiences that they will be sharing and they have already applied their surviving skills as coping mechanism.
(b) In medium and high risk research, <u>indicate the potential benefits</u> of the study for the research participants and/or other entities.
(c) In medium and high risk research, <u>indicate how the potential risks of harm will be mitigated</u> by explaining the steps that will be taken to minimise the likelihood of the event occurring (e.g. referral for counselling, debriefing, etc.).

ADDENDUM F: PERMISSION LETTER TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Research title:

The influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace: informing Employee Assistance Programme

Researcher: KC Setabola

(65994566)

Request for permission to conduct research at South African Police Service (Thembisile and Dr J.S Moroka Sub Districts Police stations) about "The influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace: Informing EAP".

Date: 23 October 2019

To: Lt Gen BM Zuma

South African Police Service

Mpumalanga

013 762 4755/ mppcso@saps.gov.za

Dear Lieutenant General BM Zuma

I, KC Setabola am doing research with Prof HM Williams, an associate professor in the Department of Social Work towards a Social Work MA at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled the influence of South African Police Service employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in the workplace: Informing EAP.

The aim of the study is to develop an in-depth understanding of the influence of SAPS employees' primary relationship experiences on their productivity in their workplace

Your department has been selected because no formal research was conducted on Thembisile/Dr JS Moroka Sub-districts SAPS with regard to how primary relationships affects the employees' productivity in the workplace.
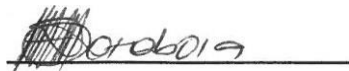
The researcher will be doing one on one interviews with the employees and questions will be asked with regard to their personal experiences relating to work productivity and primary relationships. An audio recorder will be used during the interviews so that the information gathered will be analysed for future referencing.

The benefit of this study is that the employees will be afforded an opportunity to vent out their lived experiences and to share their coping mechanism.

Potential risks are that the sharing of the lived experiences could trigger bad memories, but an arrangement with the local EAP has been made should such prevail.

Feedback procedure will entail providing participants and the employer the final research report with regard to analysed data.

Yours sincerely

Ms. K.C Setabola MA Unisa student

ADDENDUM G: ACCEPTANCE LETTER AND CV FROM DEBRIEFER

SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

SUID AFRIKAANSE/ POLISIE DIENS

Reference	:	7/2/1
Enquiries	:	Capt. K.G. Malatja
Telephone	:	0712938248
Fax number	:	0865632331
E-mail address	:	kheeepo@gmail.com

OFFICE OF THE EMPLOYEE HEALTH
AND WELLNESS
PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES
PRIVATE BAG X 4001
KWAMHLANGA
1022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I Mr. K.G. Malatja (HPCSA REG.NO. PMT 0077577) hereby confirm that I am employed by SAPS in Employee Health and Wellness Unit: Post designation (Principal Psychologist) for seven years now.

I can further confirm that I am willing and able to mentor/help Mss. K.C. Setabola with debriefing cases at the end of her research.

Regards
Captain K.G. Malatja
(Principal Psychologist)

ADDENDUM H: APPROVAL LETTER FROM SAPS NATIONAL OFFICE

South African Police Service *Suid-Afrikaanse Polisiediens*

| Privaatsak | Pretoria | Faks No. | |
| Private Bag X94 | 0001 | Fax No. | (012) 393 2128 |

Your reference/U verwysing:

My reference/My verwysing: **3/34/2**

THE HEAD: RESEARCH
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE
PRETORIA
0001

Enquiries/Navrae: Lt Col Joubert
AC Thenga
Tel: (012) 393 3118
Email: JoubertG@saps.gov.za

Ms KC Setabola
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SAPS: THE INFLUENCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICES (SAPS) EMPLOYEES PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP EXPERIANCES ON THEIR PRODUCTIVITY IN THE WORKPLACE: INFORMING EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA: MASTERS DEGREE: RESEARCHER: KC SETABOLA

The above subject matter refers.

You are hereby granted approval for your research study on the above mentioned topic in terms of National Instruction 1 of 2006.

Further arrangements regarding the research study may be made with the following office:

The Provincial Commissioner: Mpumalanga:

- Contact Person: Col Moodley
- Contact Details: (013) 762 4673/060 992 2042
- Email Address: MoodleyPV@saps.gov.za

Kindly adhere to paragraph 6 of our attached letter signed on the 2021-05-13 with the same above reference number.

BRIGADIER
ACTING COMPONENT HEAD: RESEARCH
DR GJ SCHWARTZ

DATE 2021-06-14

1

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ADDENDUM I: APPROVAL LETTER FROM SAPS PROVINCIAL OFFICE

SAP 2

SUID-AFRIKAANSE POLISIEDIENS   SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

Privaatsak / Private Bag   X11299   NELSPRUIT   1200

Verwysing Reference	3/34/2
Navrae Enquiries	Maj Gen Manamela Brigadier Griffiths
Telefoon Telephone	013 762 4713
Faksnommer Fax number	086 586 5936

The Provincial Commissioner
South African Police Service
MPUMALANGA

A.   Division: Research
South African Police Service
PRETORIA
0001

B.   KC SETABOLA
Matipane Village Stand No: 341
Ga-Modjadji, Tzaneen, 0850

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SAPS: THE INFLUENCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICES (SAPS) EMPLOYEES PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP EXPERIENCES ON THEIR PRODUCTIVITY IN THE WORK PLACE: INFORMING EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA: MASTERS DEGREE: RESEARCHER: KC SETABOLA

A.1   Your letter with reference no: 3/34/2 dated 2021-05-13 refers.

2.   Permission is hereby granted for KC Setabola to conduct research in relation to the above mentioned topic.

3.   The contact person is Col Moodley. Contact details:
(013 762 4673) Cell: 060 992 2042 and email address: MoodieyPV@saps.gov.za.

****

B.1   Approval is hereby granted for you to conduct the research in the Province.

2.   The contact person is Col Moodley. Contact details:
(013 762 4673) Cel: 060 992 2042 and email address: MoodeyPV@saps.gov.za.

Kind regards.

MAJ GEN
ACTING PROVINCIAL COMMISSIONER: MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
PT PHAHLA

DATE: 2021-03-2(6

ADDENDUM J: LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Kim N Smit Editorial Services

Declaration of Professional Editing

30 September 2022

This letter serves to confirm that Kgaugelo Caroline Setabola submitted a thesis to myself for editing. The thesis is entitled, 'THE INFLUENCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICES (SAPS) EMPLOYEES' PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP EXPERIENCES ON THEIR PRODUCTIVITY IN THE WORKPLACE: INFORMING EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME'.

The following aspects were edited:

- Spelling
- Grammar
- Consistency of layout
- Sentence structure
- Logical sequencing
- References (Reference checking involves proofreading and perhaps some editing with regards to the simple formatting of the references into the referencing style required i.e. changing the order of the elements - author, date, title, series, place, publisher, journal, volume, issue, pagination etc.)

My involvement was restricted to language use and spelling, completeness and consistency, referencing style, and formatting of headings, captions and tables of contents. I did no structural re-writing of the content and did not influence the academic content in any way.

Should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Kim Smit

Tel: +27 (0)78 493 6554   Email: kimnsmit@gmail.com
Member of the Freelance panel for the University of South Africa
Member of the Freelance panel for the University of Pretoria
Full Member of the Professional Editor's Guild

ADDENDUM K: TURNITIN RECEIPT

turnitin

Digital Receipt

This receipt acknowledges that Turnitin received your paper. Below you will find the receipt information regarding your submission.

The first page of your submissions is displayed below.

Submission author:	Kc SETABOLA
Assignment title:	Revision 2
Submission title:	Dissertation
File name:	65994566_Setabola_KC_Dissertation.docx
File size:	135.26K
Page count:	125
Word count:	43,265
Character count:	233,392
Submission date:	12-Sep-2022 09:47AM (UTC+0200)
Submission ID:	1897802178

THE INFLUENCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICES (SAPS) EMPLOYEES'
PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP EXPERIENCES ON THEIR PRODUCTIVITY IN THE
WORKPLACE: INFORMING EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

NAME: KGAUGELO CAROLINE SETABOLA

STUDENT NUMBER: 65994566

ADDENDUM L: TURNITIN RESULTS

Dissertation

by SETABOLA Kc

Dissertation

ORIGINALITY REPORT

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