

**EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME IN THE
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE: A CASE
STUDY OF MOROKA POLICE STATION**

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE: A CASE STUDY OF MOROKA POLICE STATION is my own work and that all the sources that I have used are used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature

RAJIN JEANIE

Date

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ABSTRACT

Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs), when they first were introduced in the United States of America (USA), were support programmes providing assistance to alcohol addicted employees. During the 1960s, EAPs became comprehensive and offered employee assistance services (EAS) such as financial, marital and family, psychological, work-related stress, chemical dependency (alcohol and drugs), depression, health, anxiety, and even job boredom problems that affect employee work performance. Since then, EAPs have proven to be valuable because skilled and high performing employees who experienced problems could receive assistance in the workplace and once they overcame their problems, they often became more productive and more employers could benefit from EAPs.

Due to the benefits provided by EAPs to both employees and employers, South Africa is one of the many countries that have adopted this performance-enhancing strategy. EAPs in South Africa are a relatively new workplace management phenomenon designed similarly to the USA model and thus do not have a long history. In the South African Police Service (SAPS), EAPs are as a result of the operational nature of policing services and the demanding conditions under which police services are carried-out. The EAPs are provided as a means of employee support to promote employee wellness and to create a working environment that is conducive to an effective and efficient delivery of police services.

This research investigated the implementation of EAPs at Moroka Police Station, the biggest of the eleven (11) police stations that are situated within Soweto. This station serves approximately a total population of two hundred and fifty thousand (250 000) community members. The research gathered opinions of three selected groups of respondents (non-commissioned officers, EAP practitioners and commissioned officers) about the effectiveness of EAPs in the study area and how they can be improved. Employees in this police station, as in many others, are exposed to daily traumatic events since their duties require them to attend to crime scenes such as murder, collisions of varying seriousness, and often witness the

murder of their colleagues. These incidents have a profoundly adverse impact on their psychological well-being and work performance.

The findings show that even though remarkable progress has been made with the institutionalisation of EAPs, there are a few concerns which still require management's attention. From the results of the interviews held with the non-commissioned officers, a few concerns, that if attended to could improve the effectiveness of EAP, include concerns about non-commissioned officers' lack of knowledge of the functions of EAP, their general experience of EAP, the credibility and adherence by EAP practitioners to ethical guidelines, the frequency of the consultations as well as concerns about the accessibility of the EAP to them.

The findings of the interviews held with EAP practitioners tended to be less complimentary than those gathered from non-commissioned officers, and a longer list of concerns was recorded. Numerous concerns that relate to the circumstance under which they administer EAS were articulated. These include concerns about how employees perceive the EAP and their understanding of EAS.

Lastly the findings of the questionnaires administered to the commissioned officers, as compared to both the findings gathered from the non-commissioned officers and EAP practitioners, were more positive, especially their understanding of the EAP, how the EAP functions, their overall experience of the services provided through the EAP and their overall satisfaction of the EAS. Although the findings were positive there were few concerns that they identified as needing attention. These concerns are the functions of EAP, implementation of EAP, general experience of EAP, feedback from the EAP practitioners and resistance by employees to consult EAP practitioners. This research concludes by offering recommendations for each of the three groups, and by offering a research agenda for further investigation in this field.

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KEY WORDS:

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Employee Assistance Practitioner, Non-Commissioned officers, Commissioned officers, Employee Assistance Services (EAS), South African Police Service (SAPS), on and off duty parades, Chaplains, Moroka Police Station.

SUMMARY

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) when they were initially institutionalised focused on alcohol addicted problems that were experienced by employees in workplaces of the United States of America. As time went by, the scope of the services offered through EAPs became comprehensive and accommodated employee problems such as financial, family, psychological, work-related stress, chemical dependency, depression, physical health, job boredom that affected work performance. The programmes have become valuable and are seen by employers as tools to enhance productivity. The South African Public Sector workplaces have adopted EAPS and are now a legislative requirement. The study area at which the research activities were carried out was Moroka Police Station at which two groups of respondents (non-commissioned officers and EAP practitioners) were interviewed and questionnaires administered to commissioned officers. From the results of this research it becomes pertinent to note that even though considerable progress has been made, there still remain challenges that, if attended to, would improve the functioning and effectiveness of the EAP.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND STATEMENT

Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) in the United States of America (USA) were first introduced at Akron, Ohio in 1935 (Dewe, Leiter & Tom, 2000:216). The programmes during that time were solely designed to offer assistance to alcohol addicted employees and served to counteract their dismissal from the workplace (Masi, 1992:3; Buon & Taylor, 2007:6). In partnership with Alcohol Anonymous (AA) the first workplace counselling programmes for alcoholic employees were established in major industrial private sector companies such as DuPont and Eastman Kodak Corporations. These programmes developed rapidly during the 1960s and the 1970s, and a new EAP model that offered comprehensive EAP services to employees such as financial and marital counselling was introduced.

According to Carrel, Kuzmits & Elbert (1989:471) the EAP is a programme through which distressed employees are recognised, counselled, rehabilitated, and placed back on the job. The programme addresses psychological and physical problems, work-related stress, chemical dependency (alcohol and drugs), depression, marital and family problems, financial problems, health, anxiety, and even job boredom. These programmes are initiated by employers as a humanitarian and a moral act to assist employees not only to adhere to legislative prescripts (EAP Handbook, 1999), but to assist employees to cope with workplace demands and to overcome the difficulties that are work related.

As a result of the awareness of the benefits of comprehensive EAP models and changes in the environment within which institutions in the public and private sector function, the employers that offer EAP support to their employees have increased. Employers recognise the ability of the programmes to enhance profitability (in private sector institutions) and service delivery (in the public sector) by reducing absenteeism, employee turnover, tardiness, accidents and medical claims (Carrell *et al.* 1989:471). Besides offering assistance to distressed employees, EAPs promote

positive employee-relation climates, contribute to the well-being of employees and enhances their ability to function productively in the workplace, at home, and in the communities they serve. EAPs are an indication that the managers care for and support employees (Cascio, 1992:604). Through the use of EAPs, employees are encouraged to voluntarily participate in the programme and are made aware of the consequences of poor work performance, the result of which may be disciplinary action and an ultimate termination of employees' service (Cascio, 1992:567). According to Carrell et al. (1989:396), EAPs have proven to be valuable because skilled and experienced employees who experience problems can be helped. Once employees have overcome their problems, they often provide more productive years of service.

This research investigates the implementation of EAPs at Moroka Police Station. This station is one of the police service nodes established by the South African Police Service (SAPS) to reduce crime in parts of the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality and has come to be recognised as being amongst the most important service nodes in achieving the mandate bestowed upon SAPS in this area. This recognition is given mainly due to the location of the police node (station) in Soweto and the nature of the community it serves. Moroka Police Station is one of the eleven (11) and the largest police station in Soweto. During the period in which this research was conducted, the station had a staff complement of five hundred and two (502) employees. The Moroka policing area has a number of tourism nodes that are frequently visited by international tourists. This station forms part of Moroka Cluster, which consist of Jabulani, Lenasia, Lenasia South, Protea Glen, Dobsonville and Naledi Police stations. As a result of the operational nature of policing services and the demanding conditions under which police services are required in this area, and in South Africa in general, the SAPS acknowledges its responsibility to create an environment that is safe to the citizens. In order to achieve such an environment EAPs are offered as a means of employee support to promote employee wellness and to create a working environment that is conducive to an effective and efficient delivery of such services. The EAP was established in 2003 as an employee wellness intervention to reduce problems that affect the work performance of employees (SAPS National Instruction 3/2003:1). The SAPS through

institutionalising the EAP, has introduced measures through which it aims to promote the quality of life of its employees, taking their personal circumstances and rights into account.

1.2 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

According to *The Citizen* newspaper published on the 29th September 2009, absenteeism of police employees cost South African taxpayers at least R500 million a year. This newspaper reported that from January 1 to December 31 in 2008, police employees took sick leave costing tax payers R 536 402 000, with a total of 1,2 million work days lost. This figure indicates that serious problems exist in the police service [and the public sector in general] and might adversely affect service delivery to targeted communities. Many institutions, in both the public and private sector, recognise the importance of employee wellness in order to achieve core objectives for which institutions are established. EAPs have been shown to yield an excellent return on investment. In 2005, as noted in this newspaper article, a comprehensive study confirmed findings that workplace programmes can achieve a 25 to 30% reduction in medical and absenteeism costs in an average period of about 3, 6 years.

The SAPS, like many other public institutions, has acknowledged its responsibility towards its employees and therefore the institutionalisation of EAP in 2003 was a result of such an acknowledgement. The nature of services provided by SAPS, for example attending to gruesome accidents, murder scenes, incidents of rape, to mention a few, are stressful in nature and have various negative consequences for individual employees. These incidents have negative implications on employees' work performance and experience has shown that, if not attended to urgently, might lead to employees frequently booking off sick. SAPS, as the employer, therefore, have to ensure that its employees are healthy physically and mentally, and are productive and perform their duties in terms of the requisite performance standard. The SAPS renders an essential service to the members of the public and as a result they must at all times be available to discharge their duties in good time and efficiently.

The fundamental goal of Public Administration as a field of study, amongst others, is to advance the management of public institutions, to ensure that policies are implemented and to guide the behaviour of public officials. The SAPS is a public institution in which government policies are implemented and where public officials render a service to the society. The employees of SAPS are public administrators that perform an essential public service (safety and security). In order for these employees to effectively and efficiently perform their duties, their wellbeing is of the utmost importance. Therefore, EAP services are necessary to lower absenteeism and increase productivity. Employees who experience personal and work-related problems can be referred to consult with EAP practitioners, from whom they are able to receive immediate assistance. This research contributes to the theory and practice of public administration by exploring how efficient the EAP is implemented in the SAPS.

The need for the EAP in the SAPS was necessitated by a number of factors. According to a SAPS circular (2007), the management of the SAPS has noted the need for EAPs due to problems relating to, amongst others, ill-discipline, corruption, fraud and poor service delivery. According to Nielsen (2007:4) 57% of complainants in 2006, reported crimes to the police and felt that during their interaction with the police they were treated badly and that the police appeared uninterested in the complaints that they reported. More than a third of the complainants had little confidence in the police and this resulted in their not reporting the crime, and those who did not report crime (61%) blamed police inefficiency for not responding to complaints, though they were officially reported (Geldenhuys, 2007:4). Not only are the problems related to poor service delivery that necessitates the need for EAPs, but problems in the internal policing environment. Many problems experienced by police employees of the SAPS include committing suicide, employees taking packages at an early age, and frequent sick leaves, which all impact negatively on the ability of SAPS to deliver its services.

At the Moroka Police Station there are employees who take lengthy leaves of absence due to stress related illnesses and excessive intake of alcohol. Those who do come to work are sometimes unable to satisfactorily perform their duties. At no

given time is there an attendance of 100% employees in the Moroka Police Station. Visits to the homes of affected employees do get arranged, but not as often as is necessary due to time and resource constraints. Distressed employees are referred to consult EAP practitioners, who then provide counselling and visit employees and their families. According to employees in the Social Work Services Section at the Moroka Police Station, different workshops were held during January to June in 2007 to create awareness of the services offered by the EAS unit. The workshops were, amongst other factors, initiated in order to institute remedial action and to curb unnecessary expenses resulting from absenteeism and related employees performance related problems. The attendance at the workshops was less than 100% and employees provided different reasons for not attending the workshops, for example that they did not consider themselves in need of EAS on offer since they are not suicidal and not experiencing psychological problems. However, police employees at Moroka Police Station are exposed daily to a number of traumatic events such as attending to various crime scenes such as serious injury, deaths of colleagues, murder scenes, and serious collision scenes. These incidents have an impact on their psychological and daily functioning, as reluctant as they are to own up to this aspect of their professions.

The continuous and excessive exposure to critical incidents without counselling can ultimately lead to post traumatic stress disorder (Nel & Burgers, 1996:17), which has the potential to decrease employees' ability to experience job satisfaction. If employees do not receive the necessary counselling, conditions for rendering effective professional services are non-existent. In order to assist the employees suffering from stress, to prevent psychological and social malfunctioning, SAPS has established the EAP (Schoeman, 1998:166) in terms of its National Instruction (3/2003). No research has been conducted to date to determine how well the EAP in the SAPS is implemented.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite the introduction of the EAP in the SAPS, in particular Moroka Police Station, there are still a proportionate number of employees who do not make effective use of the programme. From the observations of the researcher, many awareness

programmes and workshops were conducted, correspondences regarding the institutionalisation of EAP were circulated and yet attendance to the programme remained weak. In addition to poor attendance of awareness programmes and workshops, another observation is that there are employees whose work performance does not meet the required standard, which as observed has a direct link to the rising rate of absenteeism in Moroka Police Station.

Employees who are absent from duty without producing medical certificates face departmental charges, and this de-motivates them and adds to their stress situation. Absenteeism figures of employees who booked off sick repetitively for stress related illnesses at Moroka Police Station during 2005 alone were recorded at one thousand and fifty seven (1057). For the period 2006 the number of employees who repeatedly booked off sick increased to one thousand one hundred and twenty two (1122). From these statistics, it can be seen that the frequency of employees booking off sick for stress related illnesses have increased between the periods 2005 and 2006. In total there is a proportionate increase of sixty five (65), in terms of the frequency of employees booking off sick for stress related illnesses. The number of days lost to absenteeism during the period 2005 was six thousand (6000) and during 2006 it was six thousand six hundred and sixty eight (6668). These figures are only given for those employees who booked off sick. The high absenteeism of employees is one of the biggest challenges to professionalism at the Moroka Police Station.

During 2005, 26% of employees were internally charged for absenteeism without leave and their inability to produce medical certificates for their absence. These departmental charges are administered through the SAPS Regulation 18 (1-38) of 1996. In comparison to the period 2005, the number of employees charged departmentally increased by 9%. The figures of the absenteeism and departmental charges are indicative of employees' problems which have a direct link to the inability of the police station to render an effective service. EAP in Moroka Police Station can play a major role in mitigating such problems in this regard. There is little public administration research on the field of EAP and in particular, how EAPs can be used to improve performance of different public institutions.

The main research question that this research anticipates to provide an answer to is: how well is the EAP at Moroka Police Station functioning?

These following questions, therefore, become central in this research:

- What is the background and fundamental theory of Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs)?
- How does the EAP at Moroka Police Station function?
- Is the implementation of EAP effective as envisaged and does it contribute to solving problems that are experienced by individual employees at Moroka Police Station?
- What are the experiences of employees who previously consulted the EAP?
- Based on experiences of employees of Moroka Police Station, what are the recommendations that can be put forth?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research counteracts the notion of limited public administration information on the field of EAP and in particular, how EAPs can be used to improve performance of different public institutions. The overall objective of the research is to gain insight into the functioning of EAP in Moroka Police Station. Following the research questions stated in the previous section, this research:

- outlines the fundamental theory of EAPs;
- establishes the processes of how EAP function at Moroka Police Station;
- determines the extent to which EAPs solve work-related problems experienced by employees at Moroka Police Station; and
- recommends procedures to aid the functioning of the EAP at Moroka Police Station.

This research provides recommendations to the management of SAPS on how the functioning of EAP can be improved. Although the chosen research area is Moroka Police Station, the findings of the research can be useful to police stations that experience similar problem(s) countrywide. The unit of analysis for this research is EAPs and the point of focus will be its functioning whilst the unit of observation is of

employees of Moroka Police Station, that is, employees appointed in terms of the SAPS Act (48 of 1995).

1.5 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The following concepts are frequently used in this research.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

The EAP is a workplace-based programme, offered free of charge as a support intervention for distressed employees. Although EAPs are not unique to South Africa, the circumstances under which they are implemented in the SAPS are unique. EAPs in this research are seen in the context in which employers (management in Moroka Police Station) provide a specialised support service to assist employees to identify and resolve work related problems.

Employee

The word 'employee' refers to an individual employee in the service of the SAPS, including employees of the Reserve Police Service, appointed in terms of section 48 of the South African Police Act, 1995 (SAPS National Instruction 3/2003). This definition excludes employees appointed in terms of the South African Public Service Act (PSA), 1994, section 41 since it focuses on those that perform operational duties, for example crime prevention, detective services and other police services noted in the subsequent part.

Police service

Police service include functions such as the maintenance of public order and to prevent, combat and investigate criminal activities. Members of the police are held accountable for protecting and securing the citizens, their property, and to uphold and enforce the law. The police service in South Africa is classified as an essential service, and according to section 213 of the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995, essential service is the service the interruption of which endangers the life, personal safety or health of the whole or any part of the population. This police service must be rendered in a professional, client-centred manner that is effective, efficient and accountable.

On and off duty parade

On and off duty parades in the SAPS are conducted by supervisors, during which they inspect and communicate with the employees before they are posted on and off duty. Employees are inspected with particular reference to confirming that they are sober, wearing bullet-resistant vests, properly briefed and whether they have clear postings and are debriefed. Information received during the shift is consolidated and communicated. On and off duty parades are also held to ensure proper supervision and control, as well as to ensure intelligence driven patrols and action steps to prevent crime.

Chaplains

Chaplains are employees appointed in terms of the SAPS Act. They are councillors who are employed by the SAPS to offer all spiritually related services to the employees. Despite being appointed in terms of the provisions of the SAPS Act of 1995, their duties differ significantly to operational police services in that they administer spiritual support service to employees. The Chaplain Service is one of the three core functions of the EAP in the SAPS.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology applied in this research uses both literature review and an empirical investigation, which are briefly explained in the following sections.

1.6.1 Literature review

A literature review of recent scholarly work on EAPs forms an integral part of this research. The literature review will provide an overview of existing publications on the implementation of EAPs in workplaces internationally and in South Africa and most importantly, will focus on the fundamental theory and application of EAPs. The literature review includes published scholarly books journal articles as well as information retrieved from internet sources.

1.6.2 Government legislation and reports

This research also makes use of South African legislation, SAPS National Instructions (NIs), government reports and circulars.

1.6.3 Empirical investigation

1.6.3.1 Interviews

Standardised open-ended interviews were held with two representative samples of selected employees at Moroka Police Station. The first group of employees were selected from a pool of non-commissioned officers (salary levels five (5) to seven (7)). The employees within these salary levels perform operational duties, crime prevention, community service center and sector policing and do not form part of the management in the study area and SAPS in general (see Appendix A). The second group of employees that were interviewed consisted of employees that perform Employee Assistance Services (EAS) (see Appendix B).

The standardised open-ended interviews consisted of a set of questions carefully worded and arranged with the intention to take each respondent through the same sequence of questions. The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. The purpose of recording the interviews, as explained to the respondents, was to facilitate checking the accuracy of the facts at the stage of interpreting results.

1.6.3.2 Questionnaires

The questionnaires were administered to a selected group of managers in the study area. Managers, in terms of official SAPS occupational classification and salary levels, are classified between salary levels eight (8) to thirteen (13). The questions that were administered in the questionnaire were in most instances similar to those administered to operational employees. However, the questionnaires consisted of two additional questions intended to gather information on whether managers refer supervised employees to EAP and the progress thereof (See Appendix C).

1.7 LAYOUT OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1

This chapter orientates the reader to the study and gives background information around the existence of EAP's, in particular where they come from and their value for institutions, especially a public institution such as the SAPS. The chapter provides a justification of the study and further explains the research problem, objectives of the research, definition of concepts as well as the research methodology.

Chapter 2

The purpose of chapter 2 is to provide a sound literature review on the fundamental theory of EAPs. A conceptual analysis of EAPs, their historical origin, the roles and functions of the EAP practitioners, the objectives of EAPs, reasons necessitating employers' involvement in the implementation of EAPs as well as various EAP models are discussed in this chapter. Furthermore, this chapter provides a literature review of the principles and benefits of EAPs. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the marketing of EAPs.

Chapter 3

In this chapter the research design and methodology are explained. An analysis of the procedure in conducting both the interviews and administration of questionnaires is furthermore outlined. Before explaining the research design and research methodology, the author finds it appropriate to introduce the study area at which research activities were carried out and the institutionalisation of EAPs in the study area.

Chapter 4

This chapter presents an analysis and discusses the findings of the research. The data obtained through both the interviews and questionnaires are interpreted and analysed.

Chapter 5

This chapter concludes this research and presents a discussion of both the concluding remarks and the recommendations. Both the concluding remarks and recommendations explained in this chapter provide guidelines on how the functioning of EAPs in the Moroka Police Station can be improved.

CHAPTER 2

THE FUNDAMENTAL THEORY OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter of this dissertation was introductory in nature. Its major intention was to, amongst other, outline the need for research on EAPs in the discipline of Public Administration. The implementation of EAPs by government institutions is relatively a new phenomenon and there is therefore little research about its functioning, successes and challenges. This lack of research on EAPs exists amidst the need for them to provide the best possible assistance to unlock employees' performance and create working conditions in which they are able to realise their potential. Most public institutions, such as the SAPS, have invested efforts in EAPs to assist employees in overcoming stressful circumstances under which they often are expected to perform assigned duties.

According to Byars and Rue (2006:342), EAPs play an important role in reducing absenteeism, workplace accidents and grievances. This chapter focuses on the theory of EAPs and in particular, it pays special attention to how EAP is conceptualised, its historical origin, the roles and functions of EAP practitioners in making a success out of it, the objectives that employers intend to achieve with its implementation and the reasons behind their [employers'] involvement in implementing it. Furthermore, the chapter explains various EAP models, the benefits of EAPs as well as the marketing of EAPs.

2.2 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

EAPs are termed differently (Scanlon, 1991:16) by various employers and are often referred to as Employee Counselling Services (ECS), Personal Counselling Services (PCS), Occupational Chemical Dependency Programmes (OCDP), the Special Medical Services (SMS) or Employee Health and Wellness Programmes (EHWP).

Most private and public sector institutions' EAPs are staffed with professionals who have the expertise to attend to a variety of employee work-related problems.

The concept 'EAP' is widely used to identify services that address the employee problems in the workplace. EAPs are an employer-sponsored benefit consisting of diagnostic and referral services for employees and their families. They are defined in Newton, Hayday and Barkworth (2005:1) as worksite programmes intended to assist in the identification and resolution of employee concerns, which affect, or may affect work performance. The EAP is an intervention designed to provide professional services to employees whose job performance is affected negatively by work concerns (Newton, Hayday and Barkworth, 2005:1), and personal problems (Blair, 1985:5). Work concerns, according to Newton, Hayday and Barkworth (2005:1) include working relationships, stress, workloads, fairness at work, work-life balance, harassment and bullying, whilst personal problems may include, according to Blair (1985:5) alcoholism, emotional difficulties, stress, drug dependence, financial problems, legal complications, anxiety and family disagreements.

EAPs are structured and organised programmes that utilise technical, administrative, and professional employee service, on either a contractual or full time employment basis to meet the needs of the distressed employees (Meyers, 1984:4). Nankervis, Compton & McCarthy (1999:414), describes EAP as "a set of company policies and procedures for identifying, or responding to personal or emotional performance". They are seen as institutional plans that provide employees with assistance and counselling for personal problems, such as substance abuse, career planning and advice, financial and legal problems.

The aim of EAPs is to provide mechanisms for counselling and other forms of assistance, advice and information to employees on a systematic and uniform basis and to recognise performance standards. These interventions are designed to help employees and their families with problems arising from work-related and external sources. Some of the products provided by EAPs include toll-free telephone consultation for employees who wish to talk about their problems, as well as on site access to medical and psychological professionals (Greenberg & Baron, 2003:131;

Cunningham, 1994:5). EAPs emphasises the drive for professionalism necessary to confer occupational status and the social recognition of expert personal services (Berridge, Cooper & Highley-Marchington 1997:16).

Masi (1992:1) explains EAPs as professional assessments and referrals and/or short term counselling services offered to help employees with personal problems that affect their work performance. The interventions may at times include managerial-supervisory consultations, training and employee education. Employees are either self-referred to consult EAPs or are sometimes referred to such services by supervisors. They are seen as interventions for improving employee's resilience to work related problems. These interventions use behavioural science knowledge and methods for the control of certain work-related problems that adversely affect job performance (Berridge *et al*, 1997:16). Some EAP services providers, according to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (no date), are also able to provide other services such as retirement or lay-off assistance, health promotion and fitness (such as weight control, nutrition and exercise or smoking). Others may offer advice on long-term illness, disability issues, counselling for crisis situations (for example death at work), or advice specifically for managers or supervisors in dealing with difficult situations in the workplace. As further noted by the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, EAPs should be designed as part of an institution's plan to promote wellness that involves written policies, supervisor and employee training, and where appropriate, an approved drug testing programme.

2.3 THE HISTORICAL ORIGIN OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

As explained in chapter 1, EAPs originated out of the occupational alcoholism programmes (OAPs) whose aims were to provide services primarily to alcohol and/or drug-dependent employees. During the 1940s, there was an increase in the number of programmes set up to deal with alcoholism (Scanlon, 1991:16; Masi, 1984:7). EAPs were then chiefly for the purpose of helping employees with alcohol drinking problems and other personal problems that were work-related. The focus of EAPs during this period was on job performance rather than on symptoms related to alcoholism alone.

The managers and supervisors in the workplace were expected to monitor behavioural, physical, and social indications of alcohol abuse and the manner in which these impacted negatively on work performance. Managers and supervisors were also trained to detect symptoms such as red-nose, monitor intoxicated employees and those that smelled of alcohol (Scanlon, 1991:16). Most of the EAS had been linked to treating alcohol dependency and were seen as a health management intervention. During the 1960s, the OAPs became increasingly professional as they were run by social work specialists. During the 1970s, EAPs were extended to include employee assistance on personal problems such as drug and substance abuse.

Following the expansion of the scope of services of EAPs in the 1970s, the scope of EAPs had since then broadened to include providing treatment for all types of substance dependence, abuse or addiction, as well as therapy and counselling for personal problems such as marital problems, stress or depression and financial problems (Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk & Shenk, 2003:559), all whose impact are profound on employee work performance. According to Buon & Taylor (2007:6), by offering a comprehensive range of employee assistance services (EAS), the new EAPs became acceptable since they were responsive to the nature of work related problems experienced by employees. Apart from being responsive to the nature of problems experienced by employees in workplaces, the broadening of the scope of services became apparent after managers and supervisors realised that EAP practitioners had significant expertise in handling other employee problems, and not only problems related to drinking. Counsellors were required to deal with a wider scope of employees' concerns (Cunningham, 1994:3).

EAPs in South Africa are a relatively new workplace management phenomenon since they emerged during the early 1980s (Maiden, 1992:1). These programmes were initially programmes designed after the USA models and were introduced to South African workplaces by social workers and psychologists who had studied the programmes in the USA. EAPs in South Africa do not have the colourful history that has accompanied their development in the USA (Maiden, 1992:1). In South Africa EAPs were initiated by private sector companies during the 1980s. The focus of

these programmes, as in the case of the USA, was providing solutions to problems relating to alcoholism and substance abuse (Gerber, 1995:31). As part of their development in South Africa, there has been the increasing dominance of occupational social workers as EAP practitioners (Cunningham, 1994:2) in workplaces, particularly public institutions.

Like in the USA, the roles that EAPs play in institutions have changed drastically since their inception during the 1980s. Not only do they provide assistance to the symptoms of alcohol abuse by employees, but are designed to help identify and eradicate the root causes of problems experienced by employees. Observers have postulated that the change of EAPs to broad-brush approach have diluted their initial focus on substance abuse problems. The EAPs are now designed to address all problems that negatively affect the employees' well-being or job performance (Merrick, Volpe-Vartanian, Horgan & McCann, 2007:1). Hartwell, Steele, French, Potter, Rodman & Zarkin (1996:1) also argue that currently the EAPs have become a more prevalent point of access to employees with personal problems. In South Africa EAPs are viewed as agents of change for social conditions in the work environment. The confidential nature of EAPs provides employees with an avenue to discuss personal and work-related problems and raise concerns that affect their performance (Maiden, 1992:3). As a result of the developments in the EAPs, practitioners have their own areas of expertise/specialisation and credentials, and they offer a variety of specialised services. These professionals now help employees to cope with an extensive range of personal difficulties, for example individual psychological problems, marital, and family difficulties, work stress, financial and legal concerns, as well as substance abuse that historically were not part of EAPs (EAP Handbook, 1999:2).

2.4 THE ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE EAP PRACTITIONERS

Before looking at the objectives of EAPs in the workplace, it becomes worthwhile to pay attention to the roles that practitioners play in administering these services and how such roles and functions have evolved over a period of time. The changes in the roles of EAP have also influenced the role of EAP practitioners. Practitioners are specially trained to handle different employees' problems and may provide a brief

counselling if required to do so. In situations where the problem is complicated, the practitioner refers the employee to a specialist for diagnosis and treatment. It is expected of the practitioners to follow up on the cases which are referred to the specialists (Campbell & Langford, 1995:154).

As argued by Scanlon (1991:50), EAPs employ professionals from various disciplines, such as psychiatry, psychology, social work and counselling and at times institutions might have only one practitioner that assesses problems and then refers the employee for assistance. The practitioner, as opposed to the initial stages in the development of EAPs, has to provide on-going social support and to monitor the employees' progress. Currently EAP practitioners are experiencing issues and expectations which were not foreseen by those who entered the field just a decade ago (Cunningham, 1994:2). Dewe *et al.* (2000:227) emphasises that the practitioners' roles have become complex since their roles include acting as referral agents, legislative analysts, researchers/evaluators, mediators, liaisons, ombudsmen, programme development specialists, teachers/trainers, benefits administrators and consultants. It is also the responsibility of the practitioners to put strategies in place to enhance the utilisations of the EAP. Practitioners are to motivate employees to have a positive attitude towards the EAP (Merrick *et al.* 2007:2).

2.5 THE OBJECTIVES OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

Both the discussion of the historical development of EAPs and the roles and functions of the EAP practitioner give an indication of the objectives that employers intend to achieve with the institutionalisation of EAPs. The discussion in this part identifies three sets of objectives that employers intend to achieve with the institutionalisation of EAPs. These objectives tend to be similar among institutions that have institutionalised EAPs.

2.5.1 Conformity to statutory obligations and a common law of duty of care

According to Newton, Hayday and Barkworth (2005:1) most employers, especially in public and private sector institutions, implement EAPs to conform to statutory obligations and a common law of duty of care for their employees. Experience,

especially in the South African mining industry has shown that managers in this environment are legislatively bound to ensure that they comply with the safety requirements for which provision is made in the legislation. On the part of public sector institutions, the implementation of EAPs is a legislative requirement as well, in particular for public institutions that provide protection services (e.g. SAPS, Correctional Services). The reason for this is mainly due to the dangerous and stressful nature of work that employees in these institutions provide to the society.

2.5.2 Provision of support and the wellbeing of employees

The employers are concerned with the well-being of the employees for increased performance. In terms of this objective, EAPs are designed with an objective of helping or supporting employers to solve problems and create an environment in which managers and supervisors become diagnosticians, attempting to identify employees that are in need of assistance and referring them to receive appropriate support and care (Masi, 1984:5; Scanlon, 1986:18). While the objective of EAPs is to provide assistance, the goal is to keep employees performing and free of problems that could affect the job satisfaction and performance.

2.5.3 Employee retention and productivity

Another objective of EAPs, as described by Campbell & Langford (1995:81) is to motivate employees to seek help before their personal problems reach a chronic stage that reduces the employee's ability to perform their job well, to retain valued employees, restore employee's productivity and to enable them to lead a meaningful and happy life whilst they are in the workplace.

2.6 THE EMPLOYER'S INVOLVEMENT

Traditionally, employers were not interested with personal problems experienced by employees and as a result employees felt that their employers were not interested in their well-being (Masi, 1992:1). As Scanlon (1986:3) argue, it is cost effective for employers to use EAPs because the cost of, for example, rehabilitating the chemically dependent employee, is less than training a new employee. Large institutions are compelled to institutionalise EAPs to avoid low productivity and to

improve the lives of employees. EAPs have high recovery rates among employees who accept referral for help (Scanlon, 1991:69).

With the institutionalisation of EAPs, employers believe that they will save money by helping employees and as a result employees tend to gain confidence in such employers, knowing that the employer is concerned in their well-being. EAPs which are sponsored by the employers have increased, because the programmes enhances profitability by reducing absenteeism, employee turnover, accidents and medical claims (Carrel *et al.* 1989:471). According to Dickman, Emener, & Hutchinson (1985:13), EAPs are an important resource for employers and their employees mainly because of the expectations of each.

Employees are expected by their employers to perform their duties, so that the employer can achieve his or her objectives. It is therefore important that the employer maintain a motivated team of employees, who contribute to the success of the organisation. Although EAPs are designed to help employees resolve their problems, employers are also helped. EAPs have received considerable recognition for both clinical and organisational accomplishments. Larger organisations regard EAP as an essential component of human resource (HR) function (EAP Handbook, 1999:9). Because of the value that is attached to EAPs, in recent times most managers have organised them as component parts of their organisations.

In South Africa, most public institutions, for instance the local police stations, fire departments, and municipalities offer EAS to their employees.

2.7 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME MODELS

There are many types of EAP models. Most employers offer EAPs such as diagnosis and treatment, whilst others prefer to offer those that are based on education alone (Byars & Rue, 2006:342). Four EAP models (in-house, out-house, consortium and affiliate) have been identified for discussion in subsequent sections.

2.7.1 In-House model

The in-house-model is a type of EAP with which diagnosis and the treatment services are provided within an institution. In this type of model, the employer maintains a full service facility and employs EAP practitioners on a full time basis (Byars & Rue, 1994:510; Dessler, 1997:524). Whilst using the in-house model, employer, as explained by Masi (1992:6), employ the entire employee assistance staff and organises their functions into components of a unit. The manager of that unit is held accountable for supervising the unit's staff, to developing EAP policies and frameworks and to design procedures that will be followed in the implementation of policies. With the use of in-house model, EAPs are situated within the organisation and in some instances the offices are located away from the worksite.

There is a general agreement between managers that in-house EAPs are less costly when compared to out-of-house models and that managers are able to directly use internal control measures. Furthermore, more employees that require assistance can easily be identified and referred for appropriate interventions by supervisors. Campbell & Langford (1995:81) add that in-house EAP models gives managers not only direct control of the programme, but ensures that goals and objectives for which EAPs are institutionalised are understood by EAP practitioners. The advantage of in-house EAP models, according to Carrel, *et al.* (1989:4) is that EAP practitioners become emphatic to employees, than EAP practitioners that do not poses any knowledge about the institution. In-house EAPs provide employees with a sense of security because they are not given a quick diagnosis and sent to an outside source.

2.7.2 Out-of-House models

The out-of-house model is a type of EAP with which employers come into a contractual agreement with external EAS providers to provide employees with EAS at either the facility of the service provider or the facility provided by the employer (Dessler, 1997:524). Whilst using the out-of-house model, employers usually liaise with outside contractors to provide employee assistance staff and services. The out-of-house model, as explained by Masi (1992:6) provides better accountability, lower legal liability, and ease-up start and implementation. With the use of out-of-house model, confidentiality is often maintained (Blair (1985:35), than when in-house EAP

models are used. According to Campbell, *et al.* (1995:81), the disadvantage associated with the use of this model is that usually it requires employees to travel to the office of the contractor, something that can make employees reluctant.

2.7.3 Consortium model

Dessler (1997:524) states that in the consortium model, the different institutions combine all their resources (for example finances, personnel, facility) to develop an EAP. The consortium model is usually common for small sized institutions. These institutions usually partner to form a consortium that will provide EAS to their employees. With the use of the consortium model, EAPs are designed, structured and staffed by the employers who are members of the EAP consortium and the cost of offering such services is divided amongst member institutions. An advantage of using the consortium model is that smaller institutions get a cost benefit of carrying out employee assistance, which they cannot afford on their own (Blair, 1985:35). Operating consortium models may be complex and may require a difficult decision-making process (Masi, 1992:6).

2.7.4 Affiliate model

The affiliate model is almost similar to the out-of-house model of EAP; however it focuses mainly on short term emergencies as and when they arise. With the use of the affiliate model, the employer works in partnership with the contractor, who in terms of the contractual agreement, is liable for providing EAS. The contractor is the service provider, who subcontracts with local EAS professionals rather than the use of internal staff. This enables the service provider to reach the employees in an institution's location in which the contractor might not have an office. Whilst using the affiliate model, the contractor may have less control over a subcontracted professional; however, this has become a vehicle with which employees at various locations can be reached by one responsible contractor. Each employer will have to consider the size of the institution, geographic location and diversity, employee population, values and goals as important aspects when choosing which model to utilise (Masi, 1992:7).

2.8 THE PRINCIPLES OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

Authors from different disciplines use different terminology to refer to the principles upon which EAPs are based. Often these principles are referred to as parts of the 'code of good practice' and sometimes 'ethical guidelines'. The application of EAPs is based on a number of principles to which EAP practitioners are required to adhere to. Four main categories of these principles have been identified for the purpose of this discussion, namely the total person, confidentiality, reactive and proactive strategies and professional counselling. A brief explanation of each principle follows in subsequent discussions.

2.8.1 The total person

As explained by Nankervis, *et al* (1999:415), an effective EAP is based on the belief that institutions employ the total person and not just forty (40) hours per week, per person. This belief is based on the fact that employees do not leave their problems at the front door when entering their workplaces. In many cases employers employ not one person, but indirectly their partner and a number of children. The view that institutions indirectly employ not only one person is in contradiction to the views of early management writers such as Dickman and Meyers, who saw individual needs as being subordinate to employers' needs. If it can be argued that job characteristics play a significant part in an employee's physical and mental health, then it is the total person who may need assistance. The problems that employees experience may or may not be work related, but they may affect their work performance.

2.8.2 Confidentiality

When an employee consults an EAP service provider, a confidential record is opened. This principle requires that EAP service providers keep a record of each employee in strict confidence and that they do not disclose such information to any other unauthorised person. The disclosure of information to unauthorised persons is seen by many professions as a serious transgression of the codes of conduct and is a punishable act. The principle of confidentiality in the application of EAPs has been identified by Blair (1985:61) and Greenberg & Baron (2003:131) as one of the obstacles that makes employees to be hesitant in consulting EAPs, mainly as a result of the fear that personal information will not be kept confidential.

Confidentiality, as described by Winegar (2002:57) refers to the professional's obligation to maintain the confidentiality of therapeutic or consultative information about clients and their personal problems.

One way of ensuring that confidentiality is maintained is that client's records that are usually kept by EAP practitioners should not be kept in the employees' personal files (Scanlon, 1986:58). The reason for that being that employees other than EAP practitioners may have access to personal files and in that case, information about the clients' consultations and their identities can be compromised. According to Campbell & Langford (2000:80), many employees are often ashamed to even consult, which makes it necessary to keep clients' identities confidential. Therefore the details of the consultations and the identities of clients must be filed by EAP practitioners and not by employees in for example, the registry or human resources management department offices.

2.8.3 Reactive and proactive strategies

The third principle of effective EAPs is that they need to be both reactive and proactive. The EAPs according to Nankervis *et al* (1999:415) have historically been reactive rather than proactive and this has led to action been taken after the problem became apparent. Employees were, referred by supervisors, only after the employee had failed to meet the required performance standard. The current EAPs takes both shape of being proactive and reactive in approach to employee assistance and care (Winegar, 2002:91).

2.8.4 Professional counselling

The fourth principle of an effective EAP is professional counselling. The success of the EAPs, as explained by Roman (1990:192) rests on the observational skills of the supervisors. Supervisors, mainly as a result of their daily interactions with subordinates, are able to identify personal problems that affect job performance negatively. The supervisor can use such interaction to help employees solve their problems by referring them for counselling or treatment long before the problem deteriorates. As a point of caution, Nankervis, *et al.* (1999:415) advise that supervisors should avoid being involved in employees' private matters for which they

do not have the required competencies and skills. If the private matter is not affecting the work performance, then the supervisor should not be involved. The most important point to note is that the counselling must be voluntary and it must be provided by qualified and experienced professionals, who are capable of working with a broad range of personal problems.

2.9 BENEFITS OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

Volpe in (Yende, 2005:36) and Scanlon (1986:129) identify four set of benefits of EAPs to both employers and employees. These are briefly explained below.

Firstly, EAPs may be used as a strategic tool in the development and retention of employees, because it reduces absenteeism in the workplace. The EAP is a cost-effective way to promote productivity, increase morale and decrease medical expense and promote employee health and wellbeing.

Secondly, if implemented appropriately, EAPs have the potential to provide considerable relief to the management and employees in both public and private sector institutions. This is particularly relevant to South African conditions in which employees face different kind of stressful conditions (for example the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, crime, and high levels of poverty and unemployment.

Thirdly, EAPs are both beneficial to employees and employers. In terms of the benefit to employees, they are able to receive appropriate assessment and counselling for personal problems. In terms of the employers benefit, EAPs are an indication that an employer cares for their employees. In addition, the use of EAPs may result in an increase in the level of productivity and morale.

Fourthly, EAPs are cost-effective and may lead to improved employee relations, occupational health and safety, humanistic concerns, corporate social responsiveness, family benefits and improved work performance.

2.10 MARKETING THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

The basic contention of incorporating a discussion of the marketing of EAPs is that, if both employers and employees are unaware of the benefits discussed above, they will be unable to take advantage of them. Marketing plays an important role because it keeps employees and employers informed, it creates awareness, and it also determines the rate at which EAP services will be used by employees. Meyers (1984:135) sees the reasons for ineffective counselling programmes being the result of the absence of marketing. In avoiding a situation like this, the managers are responsible for marketing the services that are offered through EAPs. The benefits can be communicated in the employees' handbook and counsellors' articles in the employer's newsletter. Memos, e-mails, posters and presentations including information slides, films and brochures should be accessible to all employees.

2.11 CONCLUSION

The main intention of this chapter was to explain the fundamental theory of EAPs. Through the discussions in this chapter, it became evident that there is an abundance of research on EAPs in other disciplines rather than in Public Administration as an academic discipline. This research is abundant, especially on aspects such as the historical evolution and development of EAPs, the objectives that employers aim to achieve with implementing it and the reasons behind employers' involvement in implementing EAPs. This theory is also rich in the fields of EAP implementation models, how employers and employees benefit from implementing EAPs and how they go about in marketing them. A major conclusion that can be drawn from the discussions in this chapter is that authors tend to be consistent defining and describing the objectives and importance of EAPs for employers, though they use different concepts to refer to the same type of services. From the historical point of view, EAPs emerged from being a service that targeted alcoholic and drug dependent employees, but since their development, have become a comprehensive service that provide assistance to employees experiencing a variety of personal problems. From the discussions it also emerges the EAPs are a critical component of the success of institutions, in particular public institutions' ability of deliver services to meet expectations. EAPs have a direct link with both individual and organisational performance. Employees do not leave their personal problems at

home, but instead carry them to work. These personal problems have an effect on employees' work performance and low productivity in general, thereby resulting in weak performance and productivity. In this case, managers must ensure that employees are referred to the EAPs to receive appropriate assistance. The well-being of the employees determines the well-being of the institutions they serve.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus in chapter 2 has been to discuss the theory of EAPs. Insight from the discussions in that chapter is that there is minimal research on EAPs, especially in Public Administration as an academic discipline. This lack of research is mostly evident in the inability to access academic texts such as journal articles and scholarly books that rigorously explore the practice and theory of EAPs in public institutions. This research would be important in examining the functioning of the EAP and how it influences employee performance in a public institution.. Amongst the topics discussed in chapter 2 were the historical origin and developments of EAPs, the objectives that employers attempt to achieve with the institutionalisation of EAPs, the reasons behind employers institutionalising EAPs, as well as the various EAP models. Furthermore, the chapter discussed the principles upon which EAPs are based, the benefits of EAPs to employees and employers, as well as the necessity for marketing EAPs.

The major intention with the discussions in this chapter is three-fold. The first is to provide a brief background of the study area at which research activities were carried out, secondly, to explain the research design that was used and thirdly the research methodology. The chapter outlines the reasoning behind the choice of the research design, the process that was followed in collecting data, the administration of the data collection instrument and the manner in which the data was analysed.

3.2 THE STUDY AREA

Moroka Police Station was the site where the research activities were conducted. According to the Operational Plan of Moroka Police Station (2007-2008), this police station is the biggest of the eleven (11) police stations that are situated within the

Soweto¹ area. The size of the policing area for which Moroka Police Station accounts is twenty six square kilometres (26 km²). The station serves approximately a total population of two hundred and fifty thousand (250 000) community members (Moroka, 2007-2008). The name of the police station is derived from the name of the communal area in which it is located – Moroka, part of South Africa’s largest township, Soweto. In accordance with the rich history of Soweto in general, Moroka attracts vast numbers of both domestic and international tourists since it is one of the most frequently visited areas in Soweto. Moroka Police Station has a staff complement of five hundred and two (502) employees. The Station Commissioner of the Moroka Police Station, following the restructuring process that abolished Area or Regional Commissioners’ offices in 2005, is Director M J Seaba, who was not taking part in the research, but generously allowed the police station to be used for research purposes.

3.2.1 Structural composition and number of employees

According to the Moroka Police Station (2009), Moroka Police Station comprised of four (4) major functional components or units, namely Crime Prevention (CP), Detective Services (DS), Community Service Center (CSC) and Support Services (SS). Both the CSC and DS respectively account for the majority of employees in the police station. Table 1 below illustrates the structural composition and number of employees in Moroka Police Station.

¹ An urban area of the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality in Gauteng Province, South Africa, that borders the city's mining belt in the south. Its name, an English syllabic abbreviation for South Western Township refers to its origins as a Black township under South Africa's Apartheid government. The population has historically [and currently] been overwhelmingly Black and some of the watershed events in the struggle against Apartheid occurred in the township.

Table 3.1: Structural composition and number of employees

COMPONENT	TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
Crime Prevention (CP)	81
Detective Services (DS)	111
Community Service Center (CSC)	218
Support Services (SS)	92
Total number of employees	502

Moroka Police Station (2009)

As illustrated in Table 3.1, the number of employees attached to CP and SS is not as high when compared to those in the CSC and DS. Table 3.1 above provides a numerical breakdown of the employees in various portfolios of the police station. The employees attached to the CP unit perform duties such as patrolling the streets (e.g. foot patrols) and conducting road blocks.

The employees attached to the DS component investigate all the case dockets of the crimes that are reported. Complaints of serious crimes, domestic violence and collisions are attended to by the employees attached to the CSC. The employees attached to the Support Services component perform support or administrative duties, for example human resources management (HRM), supply chain management (SCM), finance and loss management.

3.2.2 The rank structure of employees

At the time at which the research activities were carried out, the SAPS ranking structure consisted of eight (8) ranking structures to which employees appointed in terms of the SAPS Act 68 of 1995 interacted. The ranking structure illustrates lines of authority and is basically meant to outline the seniority of employees, and in particular the levels within which they interact. As shown in Table 3.2, the majority of employees in Moroka Police Station are inspectors, followed by constables and then student constables.

Table 3.2: Rank structure of employees

RANK	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
Student constable	60
Constable	71
Sergeant	19
Inspector	208
Captain	43
Superintendent	14
Senior Superintendent	5
Director/ Station Commissioner	1

Moroka Police Station (2009)

The student constables are police trainees that report to or whose performance is supervised by Field Training Officers (FTOs). Student constables are placed in different police stations after they have completed their basic police training. Employees in this rank are at the entry level of the police ranking structure. The Constables, Sergeants and Inspectors are referred to as the Non-Commissioned officers, as they have not been commissioned by the President of the Republic of South Africa (RSA), (South African Police Act 68 of 1995). Employees in these ranks perform police operational duties. The employees at the ranks of Captain, Superintendent, Senior Superintendent and Director are referred to as the commissioned officers and operate as middle and top managers. In terms of the SAPS Act 68 of 1995, Commissioned officers such as captains (junior managers), superintendents and senior superintendents (middle managers) and Directors (senior managers) also perform operational duties, but in a supervisory capacity. Following the 2005 SAPS restructuring, most of the Station Commissioners in Police Stations are Directors, especially police stations that account for large and often complex policing areas.

3.3 THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF EAP IN THE STUDY AREA

There is no way in which one can talk of the institutionalisation of EAP in Moroka Police Station without making reference to the reasons that necessitated its institutionalisation by government in general and in the entire SAPS. The institutionalisation of EAP by the SAPS emanates from the various responsibilities that government was bestowed with by legislation during 1997. This legislation obliges government departments to render EAP services to their employees. These legislative obligations are viewed in the light of assisting government to overcome problems of poor service delivery, by improving employees' performance. The cost of paying for EAS would be covered by government and would accrue as an employment benefit to government employees. Ideally, the EAS, as mentioned in chapters 1 and 2, are ideally meant for employees whose potential to perform is not being fully utilised due to, for example, misplacement in the workplace, inefficient recruitment, selection and/or placement procedures, uncertainty, or disruption in their careers. It is also meant for those that experience problems (such as domestic, emotional or physical problems) that impact negatively on their work performance.

Furthermore, the EAPs are meant for employees with limited abilities for satisfactory work performance, poor working relationships and morale. Whilst delivering EAS, the costs of treatment are managed in such a way that no additional expenses are incurred by the police officers. In the case of the SAPS, EAP practitioners administer EAS continuously until there are observable changes in employees' performance. Before employees are referred for rehabilitation, the EAP practitioner checks or confirms with the police medical aid scheme (Polmed), to ascertain whether the cost of treatment at the rehabilitation centre will be paid by the medical aid. This is done to ensure that employees do not carry an extra burden of having to pay for the cost of treatment themselves. The EAP practitioners are at all times required to exhaust all treatment avenues, before they can refer the employees to external service providers.

The SAPS, upon which this research focuses enjoys legislative support for providing EAS to its employees. A few pieces of legislation that makes provision for the institutionalisation of EAP is the SAPS Act, 68 of 1995, Section 24, the SAPS Code

of Ethics and Conduct, Health Professions Act 56 of 1974, Social Work Amendment Act 102 of 1998 as well as the Ethical Codes of Conduct for Social Workers and the various ethical codes and church orders of religious denominations to which the various chaplains adhere to. The objectives of the SAPS' EAP are to assist employees with the early identification and resolution of problems that affect or that have the potential to affect the work performance negatively.

The responsibility to implement EAP at the National Commissioner's office (SAPS National Head office) is bestowed upon the Divisional Commissioner of Personnel Services, who in terms of appropriate legislation, delegates it to Section Head of the EAS and the sub-section heads of Social Work Services, Psychological Services and Spiritual Services. The persons to which the responsibility is delegated are held responsible for its effective functioning at all national units of the SAPS. The responsibility to institutionalise EAPs is further delegated to the nine provincial Commissioners in the country. With regard to the provincial structures, the responsibility is bestowed upon the Provincial Commissioners' offices, which delegate the responsibility to Deputy Provincial Commissioners of Support Services, and further down to the provincial heads of Personnel Services, EAS and the sub-section heads of Social Work Services, Psychological Services and Spiritual Services.

Within the structures of police stations it is the responsibility of the Station Commander, who delegates the responsibility to the Head of Support Services, and further down to the Human Resource Manager. The EAS employees who used to perform EAS functions at the Area level, have post the 2005 restructuring process, been deployed to police stations. The Heads of EAS in police stations, and sometimes in a cluster of police stations, co-ordinates the functioning of the EAS component. The contact details of the EAP practitioners are communicated to all employees and managers, whether in a cluster of or individual police stations. Managers and supervisors of various working units are able to make referrals for employees to consult EAP practitioners.

3.3.1 Rank structure of EAP practitioners

The institutionalisation of EAP in Moroka Police Station is rather complex, since it cannot be neatly confirmed as either being an in-house or consortium. The reason underlying this complexity is that the EAP offices and EAP practitioners do not report at Moroka Police Station. Despite administering EAS to Moroka Police Station employees, EAP practitioners are responsible for administering EAS to a cluster of other six police stations, namely Jabulani, Lenasia, Lenasia South, Naledi, Protea Glen and Dobsonville. EAP practitioners provide EAP services to all employees that are attached to these police stations, including Moroka Police Station. Table 3.3 below shows the ranking structure of EAP practitioners that are attached to Moroka Cluster.

Table 3.3: Rank structure of EAP practitioners

Rank	Occupational Rank	No of employees
Captain	Social Worker (EAS Cluster Head).	1
Captain	Social Worker	2
Inspector	Social Worker	1
Captain	Pastor	1
Inspector	Pastor	2

Moroka Police Station (2009)

As illustrated in Table 3.3, there are seven EAP practitioners that are attached to EAP component or unit. These employees administer EAS to all employees in the Moroka Cluster. During the time at which the research activities were carried out, the unit consisted of a Section Head (at the rank of Captain) whose responsibility is to oversee all EAS activities in the cluster. There were also two Social Workers that were appointed at the rank of Captain as well. One of the captains is appointed as sub-section head of social work services, and is responsible for providing support to the section head by overseeing social work activities. There was also a Social

Worker, appointed at the rank of Inspector, a Pastor, appointed at the rank of Captain and two Pastors that are appointed at the rank of Inspector.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

As noted in chapter 1, employees appointed in terms of the SAPS Act 68 of 1995 at Moroka Police Station were identified as the target population for this research. For clarity purposes, the research targeted SAPS employees that are appointed in terms of the SAPS Act, 68 of 1995, who perform policing services. The main reason for choosing such a target is that, as opposed to those that perform administrative services, they tend to be severely exposed to problems explained in chapter 1. The employees that perform policing services tend to work under extreme pressure and the nature of the work that they perform is often dangerous and stressful.

3.4.1 Research sample

Stratified random sampling was used in selecting the respondents and three main groups of respondents were identified, i.e. non-commissioned officers, EAP practitioners and commissioner officers. In choosing respondents, a simple random selection of names from the police station's employees was done. In total, eighteen (18) non-commissioned officers, seventeen (17) commissioned officers, and all EAP practitioners who are responsible for the cluster served as respondents. Questionnaires were administered to commissioned officers whilst the other two groups of respondents were interviewed. The major reason underlying administering a questionnaire to commissioned officers is because, in most instances, due to the nature of the work they perform, they are often not readily available to be interviewed. Non-commissioned, as opposed to commissioned officers were accessible and made it much easier to be interviewed. In terms of the experience of the researcher, it was advantageous to get access to non-commissioned officers since they tend to be exposed to problems explained in chapter 1. The nature of their work, which is operational policing, exposes them to dangerous and traumatic situations on a daily basis. However, since they work on a shift basis, appropriate arrangements were made for the purpose of conducting the interviews. A similar procedure was followed for conducting interviews with EAP practitioners.

The ranking order of the respondents was also considered. The consideration of the ranking structure was based on the fact that at the time at which the research activities were carried out, student constables had only been deployed to Moroka Police Station a month earlier and due to their lack of experience about the functioning of the EAP were not considered potential respondents. In selecting a representative sample, the gender of respondents was also considered as important. The reason behind considering the gender profile of respondents as important is based on the researcher's supposition that male and female employees' experiences in the workplace are different and that they might be exposed to different challenges.

In total, 10% of the total number of non-commissioned officers in Moroka Police Station was interviewed. From those non-commissioned officers that were interviewed 57% were male and 43% were female. Due to the limited size of the EAP unit, it became possible to interview all (100%) the EAP practitioners. In terms of gender categories, 25% are male and 75% were female interviewees. The interviews were conducted in English. All categories of respondents did not articulate any problems with participating in the interviews. In total, the research population comprises 42 respondents selected from the 3 ranks of police structures.

3.4.2 Research methods

As explained in chapter 1, two main research methods were used to gather data for this research. Firstly, the interviews were conducted with non-commissioned police officials and EAP practitioners and secondly, a questionnaire was administered to a group of selected commissioned officers (managers) of Moroka Police Station. An explanation of the research items covered in both the interviews and questionnaire follows in the subsequent discussions.

3.4.2.1 The interviews

Standardised open-ended questions were used for the purpose of the interviews. The interviewer followed the same sequence of questions to all categories of respondents to maintain consistency whilst interviewing both non-commissioned officers and EAP practitioners. The data obtained through these interviews focused on gathering respondents' experiences, opinions, knowledge and understanding of

functioning of EAP in the study area. The first group of interviewees consisted of non-commissioned officers. Since EAP offices are not located at the study area, appointments to interview them were made and they were consequently interviewed at their offices.

These arrangements were done to ensure that the respondents, as Neuman (1997:375) insists, felt comfortable and at ease. One of the most important aspects that was considered during the interviews was the privacy of the respondents and the strict interviewing procedure, that amongst other factors, introduced the interviewees to the objectives of the research, informed them of the use of the information that will be gathered from them and to basically assure them of their anonymity in the research process. The interviews were conducted on a face to face basis and hopefully all possible pressurising factors were minimalised. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The purpose of recording the interviews and the use of the contents of the recordings were explained to all the interviewees.

3.4.2.1.1 Interviews with non-commissioned officers

Interviews with non-commissioned officers focused on gathering information about nine basic interview items (See Appendix A). The interviews gathered data on:

1. understanding of EAP;
2. how it is communicated;
3. the functioning of EAP;
4. general experiences of the EAP;
5. general opinions about the credibility and adherence of EAP practitioners to ethical guidelines;
6. the frequency at which non-commissioned officers consulted EAS;
7. opinions about the EAP;
8. the accessibility of EAS services to them; and
9. the changes they felt needs to be introduced to ensure that EAS are effective.

3.4.2.1.2 Interviews with EAP practitioners

In addition to the interviews held with non-commissioned officers, EAP practitioners were also interviewed using a different set of questionnaire items (See Appendix B). The reason for the difference in questionnaire items was to ensure that factors relating to appropriateness and relevance were considered. The interviews with EAP practitioners focused on gathering information about their opinions on:

1. the circumstances under which EAS are provided;
2. the challenges that are encountered by the practitioners in the EAP unit;
3. whether EAP practitioners market the services that are provided by the EAP unit;
4. whether supervisors do refer employees (subordinates) to consult the EAP;
5. the impact of EAS on the performance of employees;
6. the general opinions of employees towards EAS; and
7. whether employees understand the functioning or functions of the EAP unit.

3.4.3 Research questionnaire for commissioned officers

In addition to conducting interviews with non-commissioned officers and EAP practitioners, a research questionnaire was administered to a group of commissioned officers. Before a final questionnaire was constructed, measures to ensure that it was valid were undertaken through a questionnaire pre-test. This pre-test was conducted to ensure that the questions that are posed were clearly understood by respondents. This was to ensure that the questionnaire items are not ambiguous and vague and that they are interpreted consistently by the respondents.

The research questionnaire consisted of open ended questions that offered respondents an opportunity to elaborate in areas where they were willing. The main intention of administering a questionnaire for commissioned officers was to allow them space to give management specific opinions. These research questionnaires were distributed and collected at specified dates. The research questionnaire focused on gathering data on sixteen items, which a few were posed to non-commissioned officers (See Appendix C).

These questionnaire items gathered data on:

1. understanding of EAP;
2. the functions of EAP;
3. how is EAP implemented within the police station;
4. general experience of EAP;
5. whether they are satisfied with the way EAP is implemented or not;
6. their opinions of what can be done to make EAP effective ,
7. how frequent do they consult EAS;
8. whether they previously attended any EAP sessions;
9. the circumstances under which they make referrals;
10. whether they previously had referred any of their employees to the EAS;
11. how the referrals affected employees;
12. what are the strengths and weaknesses that are associated with EAS;
13. whether they received feedback from EAP practitioners about the employees they had previously referred; and
14. whether there was resistance when they referred employees to EAS.

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Whilst carrying out the research activities in the study area, all the ethical considerations governing research management were in the SAPS were adhered to. The researcher applied for a special permission to conduct research activities and permission was granted (see Appendix D). Respondents were assured of their anonymity and that all the information gathered from them will strictly be used for the purpose of the research and that their names will be withheld and not disclosed to any other party, whether SAPS management or any other party that might be interested in the information. The respondents were also accorded the necessary respect and sensitivity that they deserve. Their participation, of which they were informed of, was voluntary and they could decline responding to questions they did not wish to respond to.

3.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the study area at which research activities were carried out, the research design and the research methodology. As noted in the discussions, the study area - Moroka, situated in Soweto, is a tourism node that is frequently visited by both domestic and international tourists. In order to maintain the economic opportunities that are brought by tourism in the study area, the rate of crime has to be reduced, the role within which the police in the study area play a significant role.

The ability to deal with crime requires dedicated police officials that are able to perform optimally and who are free from personal problems that have a potential to affect their work performance in a negative way. This research used two research techniques for data collection, namely interviews and questionnaires. The interviews administered to non-commissioned officers and EAP practitioners, whilst the questionnaire was administered to commissioned officers. The subsequent chapter (chapter 4) presents the analysis and discussion of the findings of the research and follows the sequence of both the interviews and questionnaire items introduced in this chapter.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The intention in chapter 3 was to explain the research design and methodology. The chapter considered introducing the study area and explaining the institutionalisation of the EAP as critical to creating a proper understanding of how the design and research methods were applied, especially to accommodate aspects such as the size, gender composition, operational structure and ranking structure of the study area. As explained in both chapters 1 and 3, the research activities were carried out at Moroka Police Station, and three main groups of respondents were identified as target population from which a representative samples were drawn: non-commissioned officers, EAP practitioners and commissioned officers. Data, as explained in chapter 3, was gathered using two research methods – interviews and a research questionnaire. This chapter presents the findings and follows a sequence that was introduced in chapter 3.

4.2 THE FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

This section analyses and discusses the data as obtained from the respondents in their various capacities. This study does not attempt to attribute sentiments discussed here to all officers in Moroka Police Station, but views them as providing a means to thinking about the provision of EAS, and how to improve service delivery.

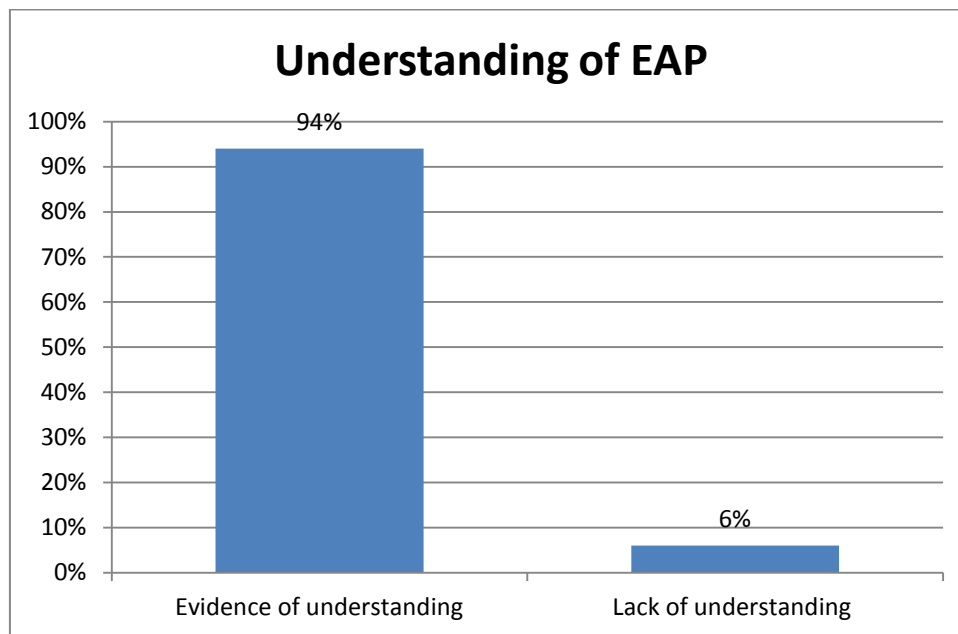
4.2.1 FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS WITH NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

As an important component of the command and service structure at Moroka Police Station, the perceptions of non-commissioned officers are as important as those of officers performing in other levels higher up in the ranking structure. Determining non-commissioned officers' level of understanding EAP is important since they are the ones that perform operational duties that often expose them to traumatic and stressful incidents. Of the 42 subjects that comprise the total research population of this study, 18 were non-commissioned officers, and the following discussion pertains to their responses.

4.2.1.1 Understanding of the EAP

The frequency at which non-commissioned officers consult EAS is dependent on their understanding of EAP and the nature of information they have about it. The research item is based on the notion that employees in Moroka Police Station will only be able to consult and benefit from EAS only if they understand the reasons behind its institutionalisation. Of the 18 respondents, an overwhelming 17 (94%) claimed to have an understanding of the EAP, while one (6%) respondent did not. The diagram below illustrates this outcome.

Diagram 4.1



As noted during the interviews, those who claimed to understand the EAP cited understanding its role in assisting employees who experienced problems at the workplace and at home that may affect their work performance negatively. These interviewees were in most instances able to give examples of services that are performed by EAP practitioners and were also able to reflect on specialist fields of the EAP, for example social workers, chaplains and psychologists. Apart from the fields within which EAP practitioners specialise, they were also able to mention categories of services that are provided by EAP practitioners, for example HIV/Aids counselling. A respondent (6%) that claimed did not understand the functioning of

EAP related information that does not necessarily fall within the scope of EAP practitioners, for instance the role of social workers in developing employees, and in career-pathing and acquiring of skills. The minority response should not be taken as an indication that this aspect of EAS delivery is without problems, but it can be taken as an indication of that the efforts of publicising these services within the police service are practically significant.

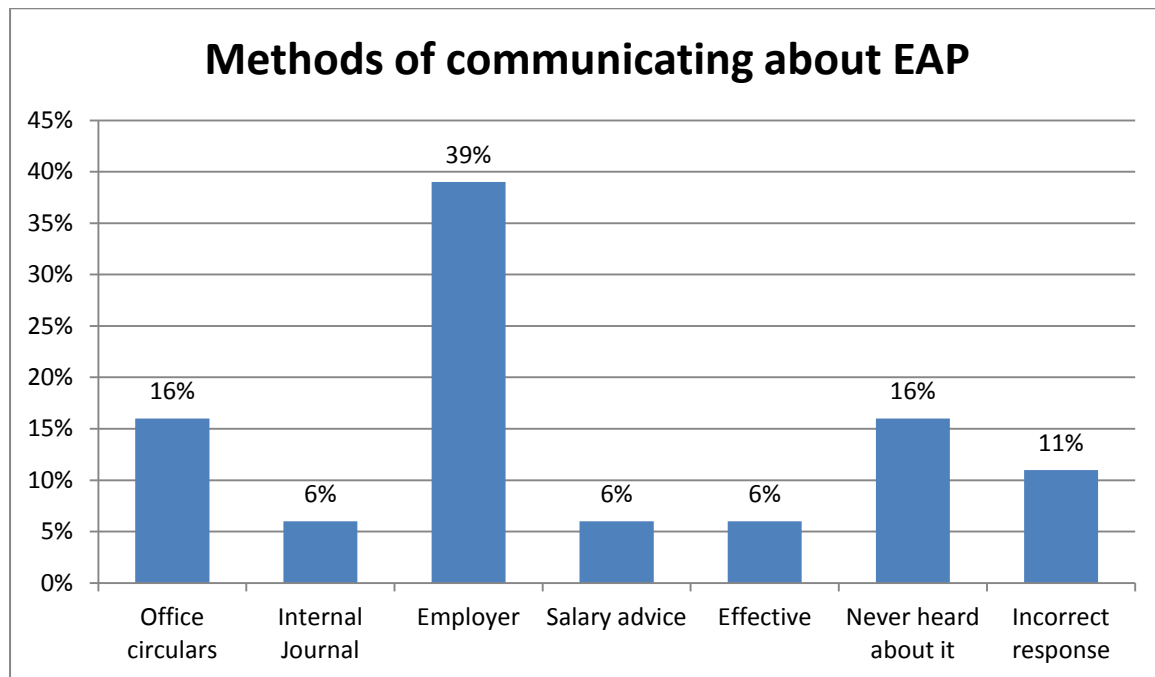
4.2.1.2 Communication of EAP

The second question was intended to determine how effective was EAP being communicated to non-commissioned officers by examining what they knew about the dissemination of information. The most common and usual ways with which the SAPS communicates with employees is by means of information circulars, the Internal Communication Journal (commonly known to employees as Servamus), the employer and, publication of information on the reverse side of salary advices.

The SAPS official circulars are distributed widely to communicate instructions by higher authorities (both the offices of the SAPS National and Provincial Commissioners) to employees at the police stations and business units. Servamus is an internal communication journal that is published monthly and covers a range of information on different topics. It often contains news clips about, for example the crime rates in demarcated policing areas, cross transfers and any other information that is brought to the attention of SAPS employees. Some of the articles that were published in the issue of January 2010, were for example, about the new Port of Entry, Preparations for the FIFA 2010 World Cup, Crime Series, Crime Prevention, Informants, Organized Crime, and Firearm Management.

Diagram 4.2 below illustrates the methods of communicating EAP in Moroka Police Station as well as the responses of the research subjects. The methods of communication that are listed in Diagram 4.2 are not only used for communicating EAS to employees, but are rather used to communicate various other instructions to the entire employee population of the SAPS.

Diagram 4.2



The typical examples of 'employer' as a method of communication refers to information explained during workshops, meetings, publicising information on notice boards and during on or off duty parades. Employees receive salary advices monthly and in addition to the personal financial information printed on salary advices, different types of information is printed on the reverse side of salary advices.

Thirty nine percent (n=7) of non-commissioned officers reported that the source from which they have heard about EAS was through communication by the employer, during workshops and during on or off duty parades. Sixteen percent (n=3) of the non-commissioned officers indicated that they read about the EAP in information circulars. Six percent (n=1) of the respondents read about EAP in the Servamus, a monthly journal of SAPS. Six percent (n=1) of the respondents stated that they read about it in the reverse side of salary advices.

The diagram also charts the percentages of responses to the question regarding efficiency of communication strategies. Sixteen percent (n=3) of the respondents were of the opinion that EAP was effectively communicated to them. Six percent

(n=1) responded that they had never heard about EAP and two (n=2; 11%) of responses were errors; they were not relevant to this question.

The results seem to correlate with those of the previous section- most officials are aware of the information and how it is made available to the police community. As a result, the police service system can hardly be faulted in making the availability of this service known.

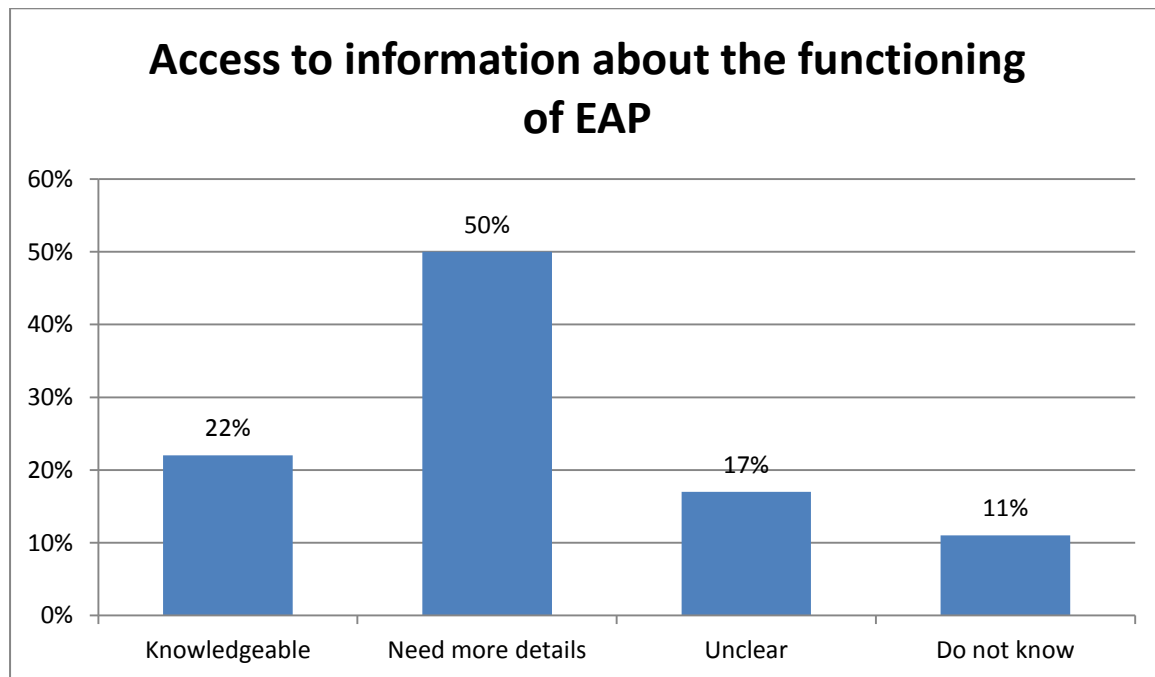
4.2.1.3 Information about the functioning of EAP

It became important to determine whether the non-commissioned officers were informed about the functioning of the EAP in the study area. The reason for the inclusion of the functioning of EAP as a research item is that most researchers in the field holds a belief that, in addition to the understanding of EAPs, it is important that employees are continually updated of how effective the implementation of EAP is conducted, and the progress that is made with such implementation.

This question determined whether non-commissioned officers were as well informed about policies and procedures relating to the implementation of EAP by the SAPS as opposed to their managers (commissioned officers). The policies and procedures often include programme-specific (in this regard EAP) information about the principles, purpose and benefits of EAPs to employees.

Non-commissioned officers were given a choice of four alternatives from which they were able to choose an alternative that best described their knowledge or are informed about the functioning of EAP. Diagram 4.3 below illustrates the employees' information about the functioning of the EAP as well as the response patterns.

Diagram 4.3



From Diagram 4.3 it can be seen that the majority of non-commissioned officers (n=9, 50%) did not have detailed information about the functioning of EAP. This is followed by 4 respondents (22%) who reported that they know the functions, followed by seventeen percent (n=3) of the respondents that were unsure about the functioning of the EAP and eleven percent (n=2) of the respondents that lacked information about the functioning of the EAP in the study area.

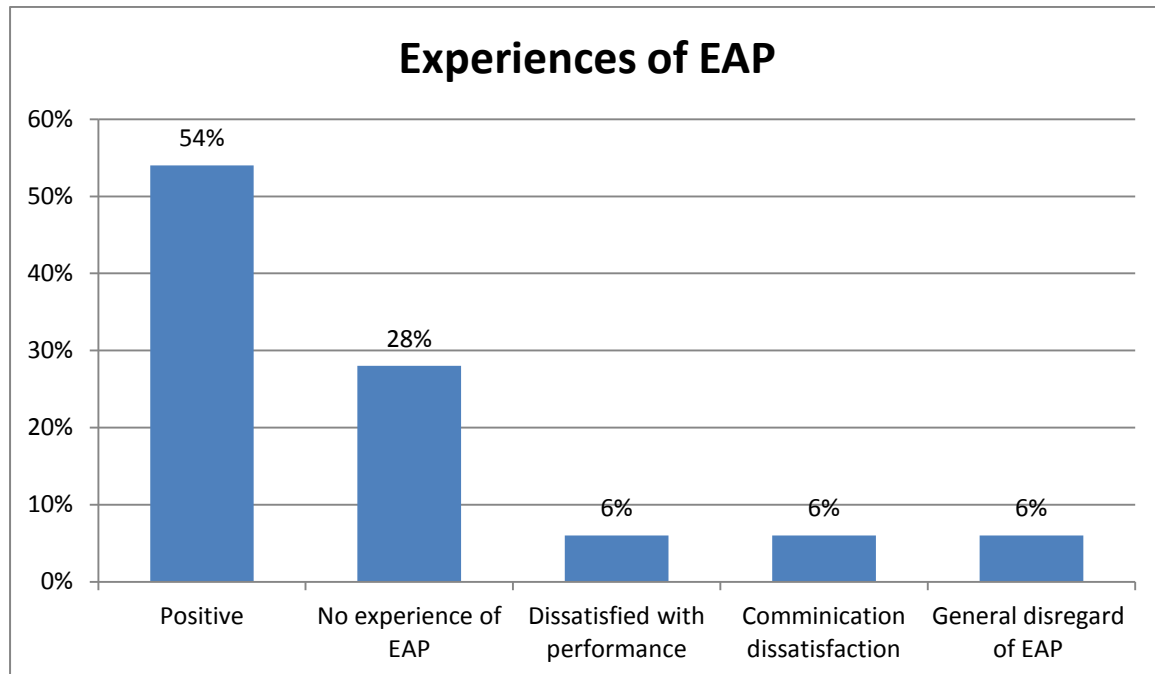
It is interesting to note the discrepancy in numbers between the majority that claimed to be informed about EAP in the previous section, and the majority in this section who felt they needed more information. This data also helps in differentiating between knowing and fully understanding the intricacies entailed in the EAP, which will be instructive when deciding on the next actions to take in improving EAS.

4.2.1.4 General experiences of EAP

According to Thibault, Lynch and McBride, (2004:340), when EAPs were first institutionalised, most employees refrained from using them for fear of being thought to be spoilt and petty. The research item determining the general experiences of the

EAP gathered employees' experiences and opinions and how they evaluate the benefits and outcomes of EAP after they have consulted EAP practitioners.

Diagram 4.4



Fifty four percent (n=10) of interviewed non-commissioned officers had positive experiences from their consultation of EAP. They claim that EAP is helpful since they were able to receive the required assistance during and after consultation. The second majority of interviewees (n=5, 28%) indicated that they have not had any consultation with the EAP and therefore, did not have any experience of EAP. Six percent (n=1) of the respondents stated that the EAP practitioners must do their work according to their job descriptions, meaning that the employees are not performing the tasks indicated in their job description. This is an indication that the respondents did have a negative experience about how EAP practitioners perform their functions. This experience might possibly be relating to cases in which EAP practitioners overstep their officially assigned duties and thereby creating negative impressions.

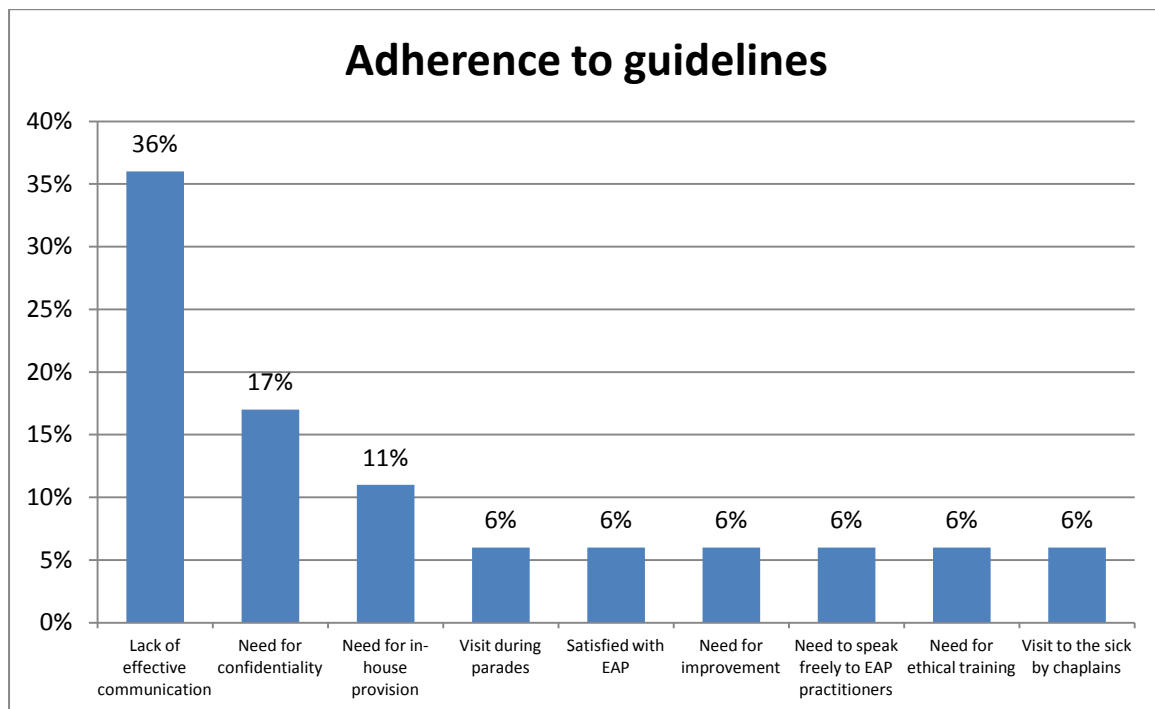
Six percent (n=1) of respondents felt that the EAP is not functioning well because it is not communicated well to employees in the study area. The last response from 6% (n=1) of respondents felt that employees within the study area disregard EAS.

These responses indicate a mixed reception and regard for EAPs, particularly the response pertaining to the need for EAP practitioners to keep to their job descriptions. Because of the research instrument used, i.e. interviews, it was impossible to explore this line of thinking further, but it would have been useful to find out how they think EAP practitioners have crossed the boundaries of their positions. However, it is still possible to deduce that there is discord regarding the performance of EAS, that there are weaknesses in the provision of EAS, and the minority responses need to be considered if EAS is reviewed.

4.2.1.5 Credibility and adherence to ethical guidelines by EAP practitioners

Credibility for EAPs is best achieved by practitioners adhering to stipulated ethical guidelines (Singer, 1990:241). Masi (1992:8) writes that most employees will not participate in the programme unless they feel assured that EAP practitioners' conduct is at all times ethical. If the employees do not trust the practitioners, all of SAPS' efforts will be in vain (Campbell & Langford, 1995:80). Trust is an essential aspect of EAP provision, and trust is usually cultivated and earned over time.

Diagram 4.5



Thirty six percent (36%) of non-commissioned officers felt that the ethical guidelines to which EAP practitioners have to adhere to whilst carrying out their duties need to be communicated to all employees. Seventeen percent (17%) stated that the employees must be assured of confidentiality. Respondents felt that EAS attends to personal problems and therefore the problems should at all times be held confidential. Non-commissioned officers further stated that they felt free or comfortable to disclose their problems to EAP practitioners because their managers will obviously be informed of such problems. Eleven percent (11%) of non-commissioned officers expressed the need for EAS to be provided in-house. The condition, in which EAS are provided in their workplace, according to them, will improve the relationship of trust between EAP practitioners and employees in the study area. Currently, EAP practitioners' offices are located at another area away from the study area, thus the distance has an impact on the relationship of trust between the two parties. As noted by Werner & Simone, (2006:408), the willingness of employees to consult the EAPs is directly linked to their familiarity with and trust in it.

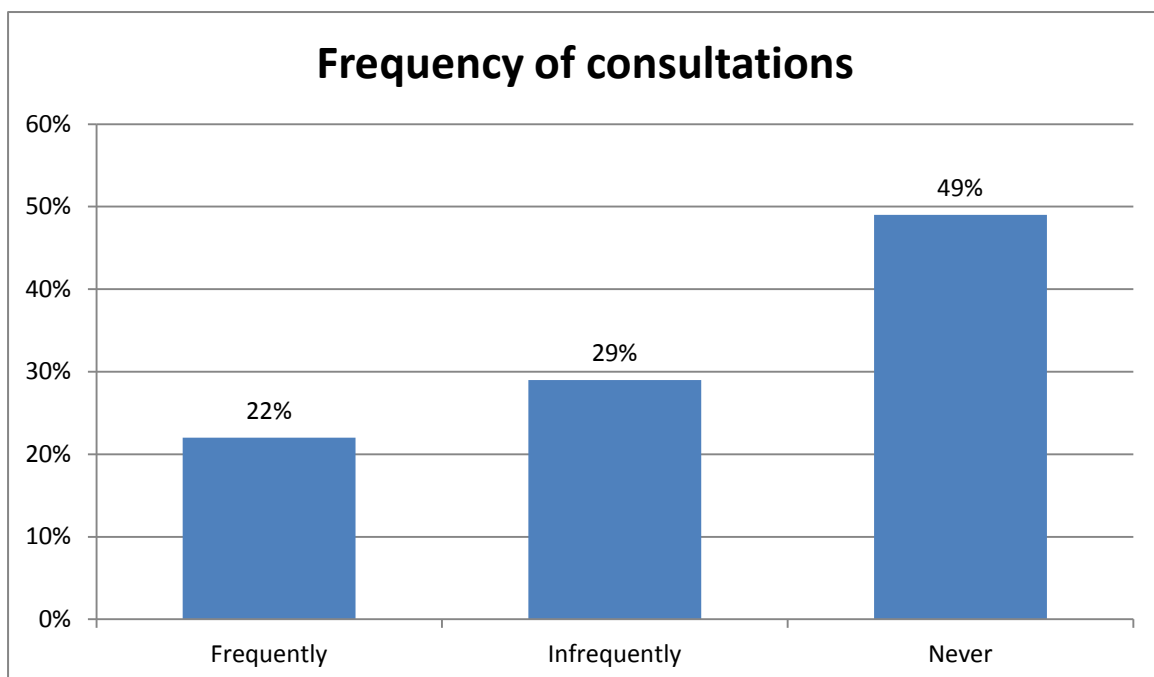
As a mechanism to bridge the existing distance between EAP practitioners and employees in the study area, six (6%) of non-commissioned officers suggested that EAP practitioners visit their police station during the parades. Six percent (6%) of the respondents stated that the EAP is sufficient to deal with the employees' problems and 6% of the respondents, indicated that the EAP needs to be improved. Six percent (6%) of the respondents, response was that, the employees must be in a position to speak freely to EAP practitioners. Six percent (6%) indicated that training on the ethical guidelines must be given to EAP practitioners. The last response was from 6% who stated that the chaplains must visit the employees who are off sick.

4.2.1.6 Frequency of consultations of EAS

The research explored the frequency with which non-commissioned officers consulted EAS, because non-commissioned officers conduct operational duties. The nature of work that they perform is much different to the work performed by other employee groups since it exposes them to dangerous incidents. They are often

targets of the thieves and run the risk of losing their lives whilst on duty. It is therefore justifiable to expect that the frequency with which they consult EAS practitioners will be much higher than the frequency of consultations by other groups of employees in the study area. The frequency of the consultations is also indicative as to whether employees conduct follow-up consultations or present new problems to EAP practitioners. Diagram 4.6 illustrates non-commissioners frequency of consultation of EAS.

Diagram 4.6



As depicted in Diagram 4.6, the majority of non-commissioned officers (49%) have never consulted the EAS and twenty nine percent (29%) of them recorded that they usually do not consult EAS. Another twenty two percent (22%) of non-commissioned officers indicated that they consulted the EAP quite frequently.

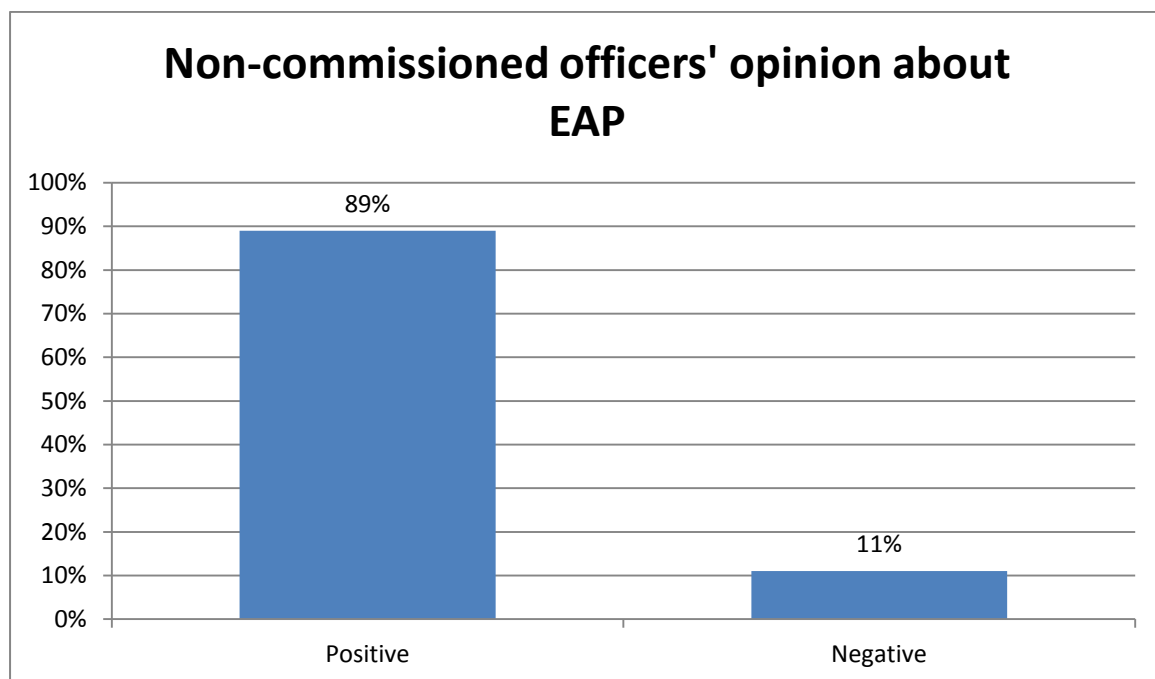
This question focuses on action whether the non-commissioned officers act on the knowledge they possess about the existence and the purpose of the EAP, whether they consult EAP practitioners. The majority of respondents do not consult, which contradicts the expectations that many would since the majority claimed to know of the functioning of the EAP. It would be interesting to find out why those that consult

infrequently do not make regular use of the services, and to take that up in reviewing the programme. That 22% consult EAS frequently points to a need to make the consultation of EAP practitioners more main stream, as the numbers in this study suggest that most do not consult it.

4.2.1.7 Non-commissioned officers' opinion about EAP

It was necessary to get the respondents' opinion of the EAP. There are non-commissioned officers who have not had any experience of the EAP and therefore their opinions are important to give indication whether the EAP is seen by non-commissioned officers as a positive or negative service.

Diagram 4.7



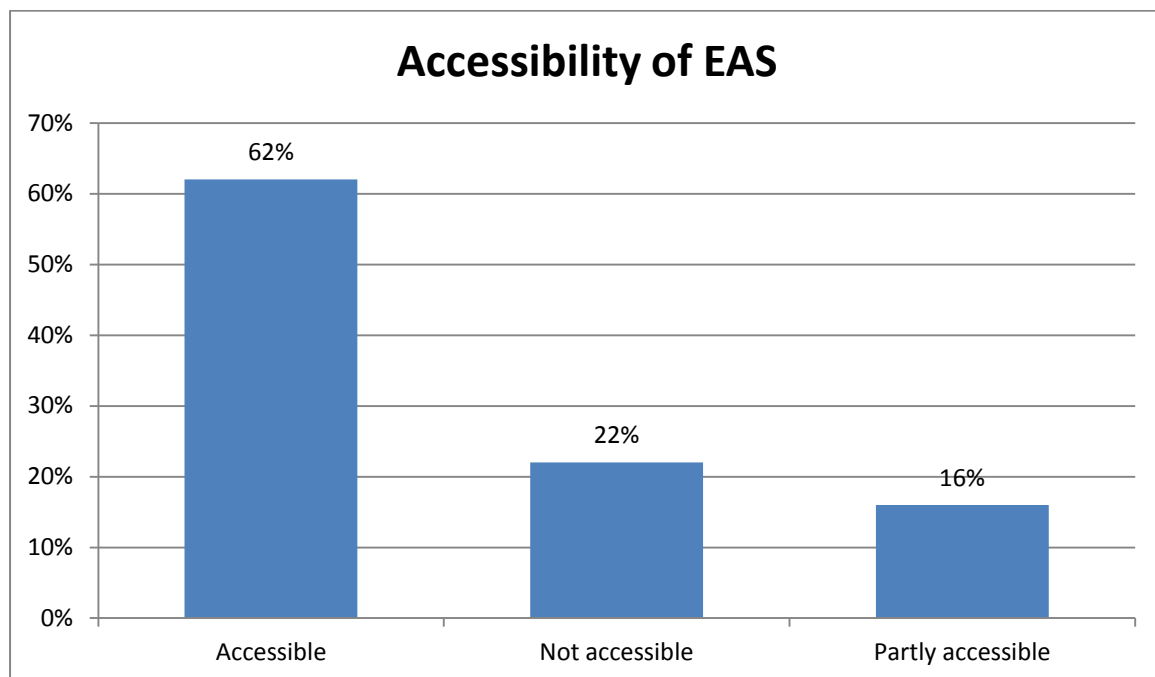
Eighty nine percent (89%), of the respondents felt that the EAP is good and helpful and that employees had to be given more information about it. These respondents also reported that they were happy about the services that are provided through the programme. Eleven percent (11%) of non-commissioned officers reported that the contents of the consultations must be kept a secret and the employees must be

consulted with before their managers are informed of the contents of their consultations.

4.2.1.8 Accessibility of EAS

One of the assertions made by Campbell & Langford (1995:82) in chapter 2 was that EAP be located in a situation that allows for easy and confidential access by the employees. It therefore became necessary to gather non-commissioned officers' opinions regarding the accessibility of the EAS to them. The reason underlying this is that it will not serve any purpose if the EAS are not being effectively utilised due to restricted access.

Diagram 4.8



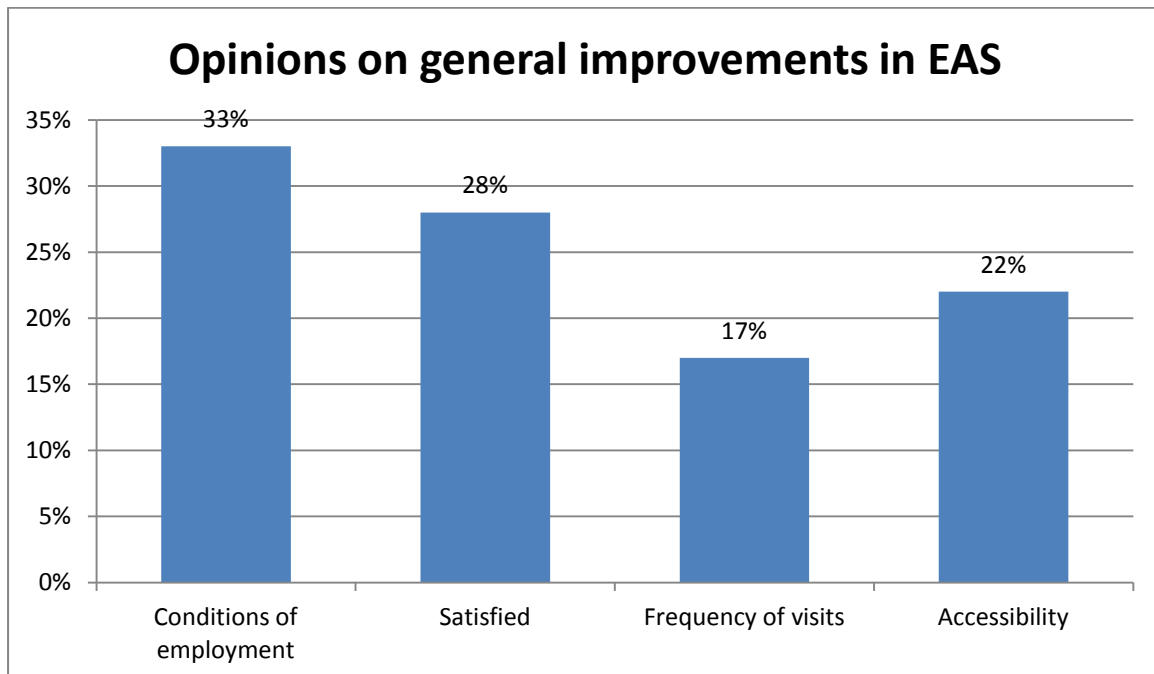
Sixty two percent (62%), of the respondents, indicated that the EAS are accessible to them. Twenty two percent (22%) of respondents felt that the EAS are not accessible, mainly due to the fact that their offices are located at Protea Glen (part of Soweto Township a few kilometers from the location of Moroka Police Station). Sixteen percent (16%) of the respondents stated the EAP practitioners are accessible, but not at all times and expressed the need for the EAP practitioners to be provided in-house, to ensure that they are easily accessible to all employees.

It is noteworthy that the majority of respondents felt that they were satisfied with the access they have to EAP, regardless of the fact that they are housed away from Moroka Police Station. Providing in-house EAS would serve to deal with a number of shortcomings in the current system of provision, as identified in the previous discussions. It would afford managers an opportunity to consolidate the provision of EAP.

4.2.1.9 General improvements in EAS

The reason underlying gathering information about non-commissioned officers' opinions on general improvement that they see as required for EAS is that as they might hold differing opinions to managers since they often are not consulted when major decisions are made. It was found that managers do not consult with lower level employees, especially in protection services where the military ranking structures are utilised.

Diagram 4.9



Thirty three percent (33%) of the respondents indicated that the employees must be informed under which circumstances the EAP can be consulted whilst twenty eight

percent (28%) stated that they see no need for improvement of the current EAS. Seventeen percent (17%) felt that EAP practitioners must visit the study area frequently. Twenty two percent (22%) of non-commissioned officers indicated that more EAP practitioners must be employed and that their offices be located on site (in-house) to make the programme accessible to most employees. The findings of the interviews held with EAP practitioners are discussed in the subsequent section.

4.2.2 FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS WITH EAP PRACTITIONERS

As explained in chapters 1 and 3, a total of 7 EAP practitioners were interviewed. EAP practitioners' scope of responsibility is focused on administering EAS in the entire cluster, which consists of Moroka, Jabulani, Lenasia, Lenasia South, Naledi, and Dobsonville Police Stations. The reason why EAP practitioners were interviewed is because the core responsibility to implement the EAP lies with them. Since their scope of responsibility is to administer EAS, their opinions become even more authoritative and insightful. The EAP comprises of EAS such as colleague sensitivity, stress management, suicide prevention, HIV & AIDS counselling, disability management and weekly prayer sessions and devotions which are often administered to employees and their immediate families.

4.2.2.1 Circumstances under which EAS are provided

It became important to gather information about the circumstances under which the EAP practitioners administer EAS to the employees of Moroka Cluster. This is because EAS provides a solution to sometimes sensitive personal problems (for example counselling for HIV/Aids). The environment within which EAS are discharged needs to be conducive. The circumstances under which the services are administered have impact over whether employees would consult the EAP or not. If the circumstances are not perceived to be conducive by employees, they will not make use of them, thus defeating the purpose of their existence.

The most concern raised by EAP practitioners was insufficient EAP practitioners to cater for the growing needs of the wider cluster of police stations. Their workload according to them is heavy. As noted in chapter 3 (see Table 3.3), the EAP had a staff complement of seven EAP practitioners during the period at which the

interviews were conducted. Respondents concluded by stating that the personnel of EAS are coping under these circumstances, despite heavy workload they have to deal with on a daily basis.

4.2.2.2 Challenges confronting EAP

Despite gathering data about the circumstances under which EAS are provided, the study also determined challenges that EAP practitioners are faced with. The major reason underlying finding out the nature of challenges that EAP practitioners experience is to inform future EAP strategies about the nature and complexity of the challenges with a view of developing appropriate interventions to resolve them. Four main challenges that are explained in subsequent sections were identified by all EAP practitioners (100%) as requiring considerable attention. EAP practitioners held a belief that such attention would represent a step towards improving the functioning of the EAP, not only in the study area, but in SAPS as a whole.

4.2.2.2.1 Discrepancies in occupational ranks

The respondents stated that the ranking structure of the SAPS has its own share of problems that affect EAP practitioners negatively. EAP practitioners, though they are professionals, are appointed at lower levels and when they have to consult employees whose ranks are higher than theirs, they do not feel comfortable to ask questions that are personal or sensitive in nature.

4.2.2.2.2 The use of marked vehicles

In terms of various instructions of the SAPS, EAP practitioners make use of marked police vehicles whilst they are on duty. The majority of them felt that by utilising marked vehicles it exposes them to a number of challenges one of which is when members of the community stop them on the road for assistance, they are unable to provide the required assistance. EAP practitioners are not trained police officials and are therefore unable to assist with crime related problems. Following which they would be expected to inform the nearest police station of the incident.

4.2.2.2.3 Poor attendance of workshops

Despite the use of marked police vehicles by EAP practitioners, poor attendance of EAP workshops was raised as constituting a serious concern. Although the dates, venues and times of the workshops are communicated earlier to the employees in the cluster, employees often do not attend them. EAP practitioners also stated that some of the employees make consultation appointments with EAP practitioners, and they do not honour the appointment which according to them distorts the effectiveness of the programme.

4.2.2.2.4 Insufficient consultation rooms

Some of the challenges raised by EAP practitioners were about insufficient consultation rooms. As a result of insufficient consultation rooms, confidentiality of the consultation cannot be adhered to. The reason is that the EAP unit is located in the main building of the police station (Protea Glen) where it is easy to notice almost every person entering the building and the direction they take after entering, which unfortunately, was observed during the interviews as a condition most employees do not feel comfortable with as they do not want their colleagues to know that they have been consulting the EAP.

4.2.2.3 The marketing of EAS

As noted in the discussion in chapter 2, the marketing of EAS includes the methods of communicating the EAP, especially its benefits to employees. The reason for the inclusion of marketing as a research item is that for employees to be aware of EAS, it has to be promoted and marketed continuously, especially in the SAPS where there is constant workforce change resulting from, amongst other, massive promotions, transfers and relocations to other policing areas. Therefore, EAS must be strategically marketed to all the employees. If the services are not marketed, employees will not know about how the services benefit them.

All EAP practitioners (100%) were of the opinion that the EAS were marketed. EAP practitioners attend on and off duty parades and management meetings where they market their services. In these meetings, EAP practitioners inform supervisors and managers of available EAS so that the information can be cascaded to all the

employees. Despite participating in parades and management meetings, they also put up posters on notice boards advertising their services.

The respondents added that some of the employees are aware of the services, but they behave as if they do not know anything. The respondents stated that weekly programmes are held with the employees when the devotions are conducted, and workshops are also held for the employees. The respondents indicated that different workshops are held on psycho-social education to assist employees to cope in different situations.

4.2.2.4 Internal referrals by supervisors

Apart from employees voluntarily consulting EAP, supervisors play a critical role in the EAP. All the EAP practitioners interviewed (100%) confirmed having been in a consultation with employees who were referred by their supervisors. Supervisors identify employees whom according to their judgements require professional assistance, after which they refer them to consult EAS. From the consultations that are initiated by supervisors, EAP practitioners are expected to compile a progress report on the assistance and support that has been rendered as well as the progress the employee is making. Thus there is a procedure in place that guides the provision of EAS to employees that are referred by their supervisors.

4.2.2.5 The impact of EAS on employee performance

This item gathered EAP practitioners' opinions about the impact of EAS on employees' performance. The widely held belief is that EAS, just like any other service, have to add value and make a difference in the overall performance of individual employees. Therefore the study enquired on the nature of impact EAS has on employees work performance. One hundred percent (100%) of the EAP practitioners stated that the EAP has a positive impact on the performance of the employees.

4.2.2.6 General opinions of employees towards EAS

Because EAP practitioners administer EAS to all occupational categories of employees, it became pertinent to enquire from them what they thought were the

opinions the employees held about EAS. The majority of EAP practitioners (75%) felt that since they (EAP practitioners) form part of management, employees do not trust them. According to them, employees are of the opinion that their consultations are not kept confidential, hence the hesitation to consult EAS. EAP practitioners further stated that the employees are of the opinion that whatever is discussed during consultation is communicated to supervisors during management meetings. The employees are also of the opinion that they are judged on the contents of the consultations. According to EAP practitioners, there are employees who are of the opinion that EAS is beneficial while others are of the opinion that of EAS is waste of time.

4.2.2.7 Employees' understanding of the EAS

It also became important to enquire from EAP practitioners, whether the employees understand EAS. A broader understanding of EAS, as noted by Grobler, Warnich, Carrel, Elbert & Hatfield (2002:452) (2002:452), ensures a better image and greater use by employees. The general feeling amongst all (100%) EAP practitioners that were interviewed were that, not all the employees understand EAS. EAP practitioners also noted that the majority of the employees hold the mostly inaccurate view that EAS assists employees who needs to be transferred from one policing area to another and that EAP is administered to community members, aspects which are not necessarily within their scope of responsibility.

4.2.3 COMMISSIONED OFFICERS' QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

As noted in chapter 1, commissioned officers in the ranking structure of the SAPS are managers, and their opinions on the provision of EAS were sought using questionnaires. The major reason for using questionnaires as an data gathering tool for commissioned officers is that in most instances they are often not personally available to be interviewed. Another reason underlying their being targeted as respondents in this study is that in comparison to non-commissioned officers, they perform management functions and would therefore be able to give management specific opinions. Fifty six percent (56%) were male whilst the remaining 44% of them were female commissioned officers. The findings from the questionnaire

administered to commissioned officers are discussed in subsequent sections of the chapter.

4.2.3.1 Commissioned officers' understanding of EAP

The reason underlying the gathering of data on commissioned officers understanding of EAP is that they play an important role in making it effective. As supervisors and managers they play a crucial role in identifying employee performance gaps, after which they possibly are referred to consult the EAP. Therefore, the ability to identify and refer subordinates that encounter problems to the EAP depend on commissioned officers' level of understanding of the EAP. One hundred percent (100%) of the respondents indicated that they understood what EAP was. Commissioned officers reported that the EAP was there to assist the employees experiencing problems at work or at home and how these affect their work performance.

4.2.3.2 The functions of the EAP

The basic contention underlying gathering information about commissioned officers understanding of the functions of EAP is that they are the ones who must identify and refer their employees to consult the EAP. Therefore, in order to do this effectively, they require some basic knowledge of the functions, services and interventions that are made available by the EAP. Eighty three percent (83%) of the respondents indicated that they know the functions of the EAP, and some of them gave an indication of what functions of the EAP are. The responses were that the EAP was institutionalised to assist the SAPS employees with counselling, or illness that affect their work performance. Eleven percent (11%) had little knowledge of the functions of the EAP. Surprisingly and in contrast to their understanding of EAP, one commissioned officer (6%) reported not to be familiar with the functions of EAP.

4.2.3.3 Implementation of EAP

Because commissioned officers play an important role of referring their subordinates to the EAP, this means that without this role, the implementation of EAP would be ineffective. The implementation of EAS is dependent on commissioned officers' understanding of how it functions, its services and knowledge of its interventions and

whether, according to their opinions, its implementation is effective. Sixty two percent (62%) of the respondents indicated that the EAP is not implemented effectively in the study area, whilst thirty three percent (33%) felt that it is not implemented effectively.

4.2.3.4 General experience of EAP

The general experience of commissioned officers with regard to the functioning of EAP is important. This item was administered to the commissioned officers because their experience is different to that of the non-commissioned officers and EAP practitioners. Fifty five percent (55%) of the respondents indicated that the EAP benefited employees in many ways, for example supporting immediate family members of deceased employees and boosting employees' morale. Twenty eight percent (28%) indicated that the employees do not want to make use of EAS because of their lack of trust. The respondents indicated that there are employees who are doubtful of using EAS because of them having no confidence in it. Commissioned officers also stated that the EAP was not appropriately marketed amongst all employees in the cluster. They further added that EAS provided through the EAP are not very helpful and have little or no impact on the wellbeing of employees. Lastly, it was stated that EAP practitioners are located away from where a bulk of employees are located, a fact that renders EAS inaccessible. Seventeen percent (17%) of the respondents stated that they were not aware of how the EAP was functioning.

4.2.3.5 Satisfaction with EAS

Because commissioned officers often refer employees that report directly to them to consult EAP, under normal circumstances they would receive feedback from EAP practitioners about the progress and the speed through which they are recovering. Since they are supervisors and managers, commissioned officers are in daily contact with employees, and can at times observe the impact that EAS have over employees. Therefore it became important to determine their satisfaction with EAS. Apart from getting feedback provided by EAP practitioners, commissioned officers are also able to enquire directly from subordinates about the impact the EAS have over their performance.

Fifty six percent (56%) of the respondents stated that they are satisfied with the EAS. Forty four percent (44%) stated that they are not satisfied.

4.2.3.6 Suggestions on how to improve EAP

For the purpose of this research it was necessary to get the ideas of how to improve the EAP from commissioned officers. Commissioned officers are in a position to give ideas of how to improve the EAP from a management perspective. The study solicited suggestions on how they thought the EAP can be improved. Eighty nine percent (89%) of commissioned officers were of the opinion that a few changes, which are explained below, could be introduced to improve the EAP.

Commissioned officers suggested that social workers conduct workshops to train employees about the circumstances under which the EAP can be consulted. According to commissioned officers, EAP practitioners must continuously interact with the employees, so that their moral and wellbeing is improved. They identified the need to ensure that communication between EAP practitioners and employees as frequent as possible. There was also an indication that EAP practitioners must not be appointed within SAPS' ranking structure, so that they can function independently and not be suppressed by the higher ranking employees (for example, commissioned officers). Each police station must have its own EAP located on the station premises, so that the problems can be immediately identified and the necessary assistance given. EAP practitioners must attend parades at police stations at which they will be located to that they can familiarise themselves with the needs of employees in these stations.

EAP practitioners are to give continuous feedback to the managers (commissioned officers), if referrals were made. More EAP practitioners that are qualified in specific fields of specialisation of the EAP must be employed, and they must work on shift basis, so that they can provide EAS to as many employees as possible.

Commissioned officers also indicated that EAP practitioners must get to know the employees and a better working relationship can be formed, which will improve trust. There must be comprehensive feedback and workshops in which employees are

informed of the purpose, functions and importance of the EAP. Employees do not have to wait for their supervisors to refer them to the EAP. EAP practitioners must be attached to each station, so that employees will have immediate access to EAS. Eleven percent (11%) of the respondents indicated that they are satisfied with the EAP and no changes must be made.

4.2.3.7 Frequency of consultation of EAS

Gathering information about the frequency of commissioned officers consultations with the EAP was considered important in this study. The frequency of consultations can be used as a benchmark towards future developments, particularly regarding workload matters for EAP practitioners and increased access for users. Sixty seven percent (67%) of the respondents indicated that they never consulted the EAS, while 33% of the respondents consulted the EAS regularly.

4.2.3.8 Circumstances under which referrals are made

This research item intended to gather information on whether the commissioned officers are aware of the circumstances under which referrals must be made to the EAS. It will serve no purpose for the SAPS to offer EAS, in which commissioned officers are expected to play a critical role, if they do not have any idea as to the circumstances under which they should make referrals. It is important that supervisors understand the EAP functions, programmes, as well as the nature of common problems for which they can refer subordinates. Eighty eight percent (88%) of the respondents reported that they are aware of when referrals can be made to the EAS, while 12% of the respondents stated that they do not know.

4.2.3.9 Referral of employees to EAS

This specific question was asked to determine if the supervisors are making referrals to EAS or not. Commissioned officers' understanding of the functions and awareness of the circumstances under which referrals must be made is not relevant if the subordinates are not referred to the EAS. Seventy eight percent (78%) of the respondents indicated that they do refer employees to EAS. Only 22% did not refer the employees to use EAS.

4.2.3.10 Impact of referrals on employees

Despite gathering information about whether commissioned officers refer their subordinates to consult EAP, the study enquired about the impact such referrals have on subordinates, whether it was positive or negative in nature. In other words the benefits or negative impact those employees who previously had been referred have been able to reap. Amongst the obvious benefits of the EAP is increased in productivity, reduced workplace absenteeism, employee turnover and accidents. These benefits however are difficult to measure since little information is available on the success rate of EAPs. Referring employees to the EAS will not have any impact if there are no changes in the performance of the duties by the subordinates. The referrals must have some impact on the performance of the employees. Sixty eight percent (68%) of the commissioned officers indicated that the employees' performance improved since they have consulted the EAS. It was also indicated that there are changes, but because there are no follow ups, these subordinates relapse. Another response was that employees' performance improved in a while, for example for three months and thereafter it dropped again. Twenty two percent (22%) of the respondents indicated that the subordinates' performance showed no difference after they have consulted with the EAS. Ten percent (10%) of the respondents did not answer this question.

5.2.3.11 Strengths and weaknesses of the EAP

Because of their role in the implementation of EAP and experiences in the SAPS, and their involvement in developing strategies, commissioned officers are better positioned to respond to questions relating to the strengths and weakness associated with the EAP. Therefore this study enquired about the strengths and weaknesses as observed by commissioned officers. The respondents indicated that the strengths of the EAP are as follows:

The services provided by the EAP are available to the employees without any cost implications. The EAP assists the employee's moral well-being. EAP practitioners are professionals who are trained and have the relevant qualifications. The EAP offers confidentiality for all consultations. There are reports that are made available

after every consultation, which makes the process much easier to do follow-ups. EAP practitioners also ensure that the employee's problems are resolved.

The following are the weaknesses that were reported by the commissioned officers:

- The EAP practitioners do not have sufficient vehicles available to them to attend to all the employees who require their assistance. Because EAP practitioners only work during the day (office-hours), they are unable to consult with employees who are performing duties during nights-shifts.
- Some employees do not trust the EAP practitioners.
- The EAP practitioners often submit reports without making a complete observation of the employee.
- The offices of EAP practitioners are located away from the employees and this makes it inaccessible to other employees.
- Some of the EAP practitioners are not well acquainted with the culture of SAPS.

4.2.3.12 Feedback from EAP practitioners

As noted earlier in this chapter, the commissioned officers refer their subordinates to the EAS and it is important that the EAP practitioners give some feedback to them. As supervisors or managers, commissioned officers need to be informed as to whether there are planned follow-up consultations. A positive response was received from 50% of the respondents stating that they received feedback from the EAP practitioners. Thirty nine percent (39%) indicated that they did not receive any feedback from the EAP practitioners. Eleven percent (11%) of the commissioned officers did not answer this question.

4.2.3.13 Resistance by employees to consult EAS

The reason for enquiring about whether there was any resistance observed by commissioned officers is because, as noted in chapter 2, most new interventions are often received with or without some level of resistance. Employees often, for one or other reasons, resist EAP since they fear it will affect their career and promotion prospects and that colleagues and subordinates will find out about their personal problems. As noted by Leap & Carino (1990:558), if an employee feels that he or she may be noticed consulting EAS or that EAP practitioners will record personal material in his or her personal file, and worse yet, that those making employment decisions may consider such information, little progression can be expected. Supervisors and managers are better placed to observe situations in which employees resist making consultations with EAP practitioners.

Fifty five percent (55%) of the commissioned officers indicated that the employees do not display any form of resistance to consult EAP practitioners. Twenty eight percent (28%) of the respondents indicated that the employees showed resistance to consult EAS. Furthermore, seventeen percent (17%) of the respondents felt that there was some resistance by employees to consult EAS.

4.3 CONCLUSION

The main intention of the discussions in chapter 4 was to present the findings of the study. The sequence that was followed in presenting these findings was derived from the layout of both the interview schedules conducted with non-commissioned officers and EAP practitioners, as well as the questionnaire administered to a group of commissioned officers. Attempt through the presentation of these findings has been made to follow the sequence and flow of items that were introduced in chapter 3. The findings from the data collected through interviews (of both non-commissioned officers EAP practitioners were presented and the chapter presented the findings from the data collected through the questionnaire (administered to commissioned officers).

These findings are insightful of how the EAP functions in the study area, the major reason that informed the decision to undertake this study. The findings also are

sufficient to build an understanding of the challenges that are faced by the three groups of respondents that were targeted and can serve as a framework around which specific concluding remarks and recommendations can be made. In particular the findings can be used as a framework around which future improvements of the functioning the EAP can be made. Despite the focus of the conclusions and recommendations in Moroka Police Station as a study area, they can be used widely within the SAPS, since police stations often experience similar challenges. The next chapter presents concluding remarks and recommendations that are consistent with the findings presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The overall objective of this study is, as indicated in chapter 1, to gain insight into the functioning of the EAP in Moroka Police Station and to gather employee opinions about its effectiveness and to ascertain how the EAP can be improved. Firstly, the study outlined the fundamental theory of EAP as a framework around which all the discussions will unfold, secondly, it gather employee opinions about the functioning of EAP in Moroka Police Station, and thirdly, it analysed and discussed the findings that are will now become the basis for concluding remarks and recommendations in this chapter.

The discussions in chapters 1 to 4 are indicative of the overall objectives being achieved since chapters 2 provided the discussions of the fundamental theory of EAP and chapter 3 established how the EAP was institutionalised in the study area. Whilst gathering employee opinions about the functioning of the EAP in the study area, three main groups of respondents, i.e. non-commissioned officers, EAP practitioners and commissioned officers were selected, and the findings from the data gathered from these respondents were presented in chapter 4. The conclusions and recommendations that are explained in this chapter are seen in the context of guidelines of how the functioning of the EAP can be improved. In terms of structure, this chapter first provides concluding remarks, which are then followed by a discussion of specific recommendations.

5.2 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The findings that were presented in chapter 4 depicted that remarkable progress has been made in the implementation of EAP in the study area. The findings have shown that although certain challenges could be identified, there has been considerable progress that has been made, especially around creating an awareness of non-commissioned officers understanding of the EAP. The majority of non-commissioned officers' expressed positive opinions about progress relating to them.

However, there are a few interview items on which the findings raised important concerns for which immediate attention has to be sought. These concerns could be identified from non-commissioned officers' information about the functioning of the EAP, their general experiences of the EAP, the credibility and EAP practitioners' adherence to ethical guidelines, how frequent they consulted the EAP as well as the findings about the accessibility of the EAP to employees in the study area. These challenges, if not prudently attended to, might impact negatively on the overall basis that informed the decision to institutionalise the EAP in the study area.

As far as the findings of the interviews held with EAP practitioners are concerned, the picture is not as positive as in the case of the findings gathered from non-commissioned officers. The findings reveal a variety of concerns regarding conditions under which EAP practitioners discharge their duties, except responses regarding the marketing of the EAP and the referral system in which commissioned officers play a critical role. These are the only two interview items from which positive responses were gathered. In terms of the findings from the interviews held with EAP practitioners, numerous concerns could be identified. These concerns relate to the circumstances under which EAS are provided, challenges that confront EAP practitioners, EAP practitioners' opinions of how employees perceive EAS and employees understanding of the services that EAP practitioners provide to them.

Lastly, the findings of the research questionnaire administered to commissioned officers, as compared to both the findings gathered from non-commissioned officers and EAP practitioners, were much progressive, especially their understanding of the

EAP, how the EAP functions, their overall experience of the services provided through the EAP and their overall satisfaction with EAS. Because of the critical role they play in making the EAP effective, they were able to give input on how they thought it could be improved. It was also not surprising to find out that most of them had not frequently consulted the EAP, probably due to their managerial nature of work, which does not expose them to dangerous situations as non-commissioned officers are.

This input could also be confirmed by their knowledge of circumstances under which they refer their subordinates to the EAP, whether they themselves had in the past referred their subordinates to the EAP, the impact of the referrals on subordinates, the strengths and weaknesses associated with the EAP, whether they had previously had any feedback from EAP practitioners as well as an enquiry on whether they have ever experienced resistance from their subordinates to consult EAS. Although the findings were positive, there are still a few concerns that must be attended to. These concerns are about their knowledge of the functions of EAP, implementation of EAP, general experience of EAP, satisfaction with the EAP, feedback from EAP practitioners, and resistance by employees to consult EAP practitioners. Thus the picture that emerges here is that there is a relatively well known and less utilised system in place, and steps need to be taken to align these two disparate aspects of the system.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations that are presented in this part are derived from the findings that were discussed in chapter 3 and are resultant from the concluding remarks explained earlier in this chapter. The recommendations are specific to each of the three groups of respondents that were targeted, that is, recommendations for challenges expressed by the findings of the interviews with non-commissioned officers and EAP practitioners, as well as the findings of the research questionnaire administered to a group of commissioned officers.

5.3.1 NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS' CONCERNS

From the concluding remarks made in the previous section, it can be concluded that the findings of the interviews held with non-commissioned officers raised five major concerns that requires appropriate attention from the management of Moroka Police Station. The discussions in subsequent sections provide recommendations that could be helpful in overcoming the concerns.

5.3.1.1 Information about the functioning of the EAP

Although a large majority of non-commissioned officers (72%) mentioned that they are informed about the functioning of the EAP, a proportionate number reported that they were not informed of such functions. This means that not all communication efforts through official circulars, internal journal, communication by the employer and other methods of communication in chapter 5 are comprehensive to reach all operational employees (non-commissioned officers). This result could also indicate or suggest that they are newly appointed or even working on night shifts.

What this lack of information mean is that the employees would be at a disadvantaged side because if they could find themselves faced with a stressful conditions, mainly due to the nature of their duties, they might not be in a position to receive immediate assistance, simply because of their lack of information on the functioning of the EAP. This condition also carries serious implications for the SAPS since the problems explained in chapter 1 will persist and the SAPS will not be in a position to provide a satisfactory service to the community of Moroka.

It can therefore be recommended that awareness campaigns that also target newly appointed employees and those that work during night shifts be conducted. Amongst other major objectives of the awareness campaigns should be the imperative to inform employees about the functions of and benefits of EAS, especially the prevention, intervention and treatment services provided through the EAP.

5.3.1.2 General experiences of the EAP

Due to lack of information about the functioning of the EAP, it emerged from the findings that twenty eight percent (28%) of non-commissioned officers had not consulted the EAP and therefore they were unable to comment on their experience of EAP. Employees need not to be experiencing problems that have an obviously negative impact on their work performance.

Managers need to ensure that employees are informed about EAS. This has to be communicated through workshops and sessions usually conducted by EAP practitioners and must specifically target non-commissioned officers to counteract often dangerous situations and stressful conditions under which they perform their duties.

5.3.1.3 Credibility and adherence to ethical guidelines

The credibility and ethical guidelines to which EAP practitioners are required to adhere to were discussed in chapter 2. From the discussions it became evident that a credible EAP is the one in which all ethical guidelines are adhered to, and in which employees information is not disclosed to any other party without the consent of the employee him or herself. The ethical guidelines especially, confidentiality is a concern in all types of employee counselling interventions. There is a need to ensure that there is confidence in the programme and that all the matters discussed during consultations are not disclosed to the third party.

The second issue is whether participation in a counselling programme should be voluntary or mandatory. Whilst EAPs are beneficial to both employers and employees, participation of employees in EAPs should be voluntary. Employees should have the right to determine their lifestyle, and should not be forced to engage in behaviour change other than that relating to performance of their job. A credible EAP is one that reaches out to all employees, making employees feel morally well, resulting in the prevention of and reduction of personal problems that affect their work performance.

From the findings presented in chapter 4 and the conclusions arrived at earlier in this chapter, eighteen percent (18%) of non-commissioned officers expressed the need for reassurance of adherence to ethical guidelines by EAP practitioners, especially confidentiality. A further twelve percent (12%) expressed the need to improve relationships of trust between EAP practitioners and employees. From these findings, it could be recommended that EAP practitioners, as part of ensuring that they adhere to ethical guidelines, sign a confidentiality clause or sign a copy of the code of conduct that guides their behaviour.

It has to be ensured that the code explains penalties in cases where there are contraventions. It is also important that employees are informed of the code and the conditions under which EAP practitioners should perform their duties. This will help in assuring them of the confidence with which their consultation will be held and will ultimately improve the relationship of trust and the effectiveness of the EAP. Information to this effect has to be communicated widely in all police workplaces. EAP practitioners must also ensure that before consultations are conducted, employees are informed of the ethical guidelines to which EAP practitioners adhere to. Employees must give consent that they understand the ethical guidelines and thereafter, the consultation can be conducted. This entire process will require a buy-in and full support of the management of Moroka Police Station.

5.3.1.4 Frequency of consultations of the EAP

One way of determining the effectiveness of the EAP is through the frequency of consultations made by employees at lower ranks. From the findings presented in chapter 4, a proportionate number of non-commissioned officers (44%) indicated not having consulted the EAP. What makes this percentage significant is that non-commissioned officers, due to the nature of work they perform, should be consulting the EAP in large numbers, more so than any other employee groups in the study area. The findings paint a picture that reveals that the EAP is not utilised optimally and it can therefore be recommended that as in the case of ensuring that employees adhere to ethical guidelines, awareness programmes that target non-commissioned officers be conducted. Again, as in the case with the manner in which the EAP is communicated, suitable communication methods need to be used extensively to

ensure that non-commissioned officers get the information. They should also be encouraged to make consultations. Employees that had previously consulted the EAP can also be encouraged to advise their fellow colleagues of the benefits made available through the EAP.

5.3.1.5 Accessibility of the EAP to employees

Despite challenges accompanying the frequency with which non-commissioned officers consulted EAS, restricted access was identified as another challenge that confronts a proportionate number (38%) of non-commissioned officers. According to non-commissioned officers, since the EAP is shared by employees in a cluster of police stations and its office being located in Protea Glen, it often restricts access by non-commissioned officers. Because of the distance between the study area and the area (Protea Glen) at which the EAP offices are located, they now are required to, despite the severity of their condition, get an official vehicle, sometimes a taxi in order to consult the EAS.

To be able to overcome this challenge, it is recommended that the EAP office be located at the study area - Moroka Police Station. The location of the EAP office at Moroka Police Station will, as an in-house service, not only render EAS accessible to a largest majority of employees and therefore improve the frequency of non-commissioned officers consultation of EAS, but will familiarise EAP practitioners to specific workplace circumstances or conditions under which employees perform their duties, build relationships of trust between EAP practitioners and employees and reduce transportation costs between the two locations.

5.3.2 EAP PRACTITIONERS' CONCERNS

In terms of the concluding remarks explained earlier in this chapter, numerous concerns that EAP practitioners are confronted with could be identified. These concerns are about the circumstances under which EAS are provided, insufficient staff, levels of interactions, the use of marked vehicles, poor attendance of workshops, insufficient consultation rooms, employee opinions towards EAS and employee understanding of EAS. Recommendations regarding the challenges are explained in subsequent sections. It is important to note that some of the concerns

that were raised by EAP practitioners were initially not part of the interview items, but surfaced during the interviews. These items are about the findings on insufficient staff, levels of interaction, the use of marked vehicles, poor attendance of workshops and insufficient consultation rooms.

5.3.2.1. Insufficient staff

Even though this item did not form part of the interview items, it surfaced as a concern with which EAP practitioners were not pleased. The findings highlight a concern that the EAP is not sufficiently staffed, and that there is a shortage of EAP practitioners in all the specialisation fields of the EAP and since it provides services to a total of six police stations consisting of 1491 employees. This is an indication that the employees will not get assistance as and when they require it, meaning that they will have to make an appointment and wait. Some of the incidents that occur require immediate attention of the EAP practitioners. As mentioned in the previous paragraph the allocation of personnel to the EAP is done through the Resource Allocation Guide (RAG). Therefore it is recommended that the RAG be revised and the staff levels must be increased to pace up with the demands of all employees in the cluster.

EAP practitioners must also schedule their consultations so that they do not overload themselves. It is also recommended that in order to retain the EAP practitioners in the SAPS, their salary structure be market-related. This will help in reducing the rate at which they terminate their services with the SAPS. EAP practitioners are professionals in terms of their fields of specialisation and are in the SAPS regarded as scarce skill.

5.3.2.2 Interaction amongst different ranks

All the EAP practitioners (100%) indicated that they are uncomfortable in situations where they have to consult with employees appointed at higher ranks (senior managers). They probably do not feel comfortable to ask for clarification questions to gather as much information they would require to assist the managers, simply because of their ranks being lower than those of the managers. The risk associated

with this is that senior managers will end up in situations in which they are disadvantaged by not receiving the required service.

It is recommended that the levels of interaction of EAP practitioners be demilitarised. As noted in the previous discussion, these employees are professionals and they adhere to the code of ethics governing their respective fields of specialisation and by associating those to military ranks imply dual ranks. In this way, EAP practitioners will feel comfortable to conduct the consultations and will be able to gather as much information as they require in order to assist all employees attached to the different ranks in the SAPS.

5.3.2.3 The use of marked vehicles

The findings indicate that EAP practitioners utilise marked SAPS vehicles. The concern is that the community members, who require assistance from the police, stop the vehicles driven by the EAP practitioners. The EAP practitioner must then explain to the community member that they cannot assist because they are not trained to perform operational police duties and the community members do not understand this explanation and they get aggressive.

The negative implication of this is that the community will now have sufficient reasons to complain about a disservice and it could also result in a situation where the EAP practitioner could be attacked by the angry community members. The EAP practitioners do not carry a firearm and have not been trained to protect themselves. Therefore, to prevent unpleasant situations from developing, it is recommended that the EAP practitioners make use of unmarked vehicles. For the purpose of monitoring the use of vehicles, which is sometimes used as a basis for marking police vehicles; alternative ways would have to be explored. Monitoring police vehicles can either be done through fitting Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) system or alternative ways can be sought.

5.3.2.4 Poor attendance of workshops

From the findings presented in chapter 4, it could be gathered that EAP practitioners were not content with the attendance of the employees to the workshops they had arranged previously even though the nominated employees are informed well in advance of the workshops. Fruitless expenditure is incurred as a result of the poor attendance.

In view of this concern, it is therefore recommended that the nominated employees sign certificates that will make them financially responsible, if they do not attend, the money must be deducted directly from their salaries. In a situation where the nominated employee cannot attend due to some reason, then this employee must inform their managers so that a replacement can be made. This information must also be communicated to the workshop co-coordinator. It is also recommended that certificate of attendance is handed out to employees and that refreshments are served during the workshops. In this way, a different, more positive perception of EAP could be cultivated.

5.3.2.5 Insufficient consultation rooms

The findings from the interviews held with EAP practitioners indicate shortage of office space and that there are no rooms where consultations can be conducted. As indicated in chapter 2, confidentiality is one of the principles of EAP, therefore for the consultation to be confidential; the consultations must be conducted in consultation rooms specifically adapted to the needs of the nature of personal problems experienced by employees. Consulting with an employee in an office where there are sometimes other employees present is not ethical. Should this concern not be addressed, then the employees experiencing problems would be hesitant to consult the EAS, which would result in the objectives of EAP, as indicated in chapter 2, not being achieved.

5.3.2.6 Employees' opinions towards EAS

From the findings presented in chapter 4 it was found that the majority (75%) of the EAP practitioners felt that most employees do not trust them because they participate in the cluster management meetings. The concern is that the employees

feel that the contents of their consultations are communicated to their managers and as a result of this they are judged based on the contents of their consultations with the EAP practitioners. The negative implication is that, employees experiencing problems will not consult the EAP practitioners for assistance, which is again inconsistent with the goals for institutionalising the EAP.

It is therefore recommended that the ethical guidelines to which EAP practitioners are expected to adhere to whilst performing their duty should be made unambiguous, and widely understood. This should be done in such a way that it improves trust relationship to which both the parties commit to keeping information as confidential as it should be. The ethical guidelines can be communicated through media such as awareness campaigns, on notice boards and posters. The EAP practitioners must also ensure that at the start of each consultation, they again inform employees of these ethical guidelines and that employees give consent to that effect.

5.3.2.7 Employees' lack of understanding of EAS

The findings as presented in chapter 4 indicate that all the EAP practitioners (100%) expressed employee lack of understanding of EAS. This lack of understanding could be identified from employees' impression that EAP practitioners duties are confined to transfers and providing services to the community. As explained in chapters 1 and 2, EAP provides comprehensive and specialised services that cannot be confined to transfers alone, and they do not provide a service to communities, but to employees that are employed in the SAPS.

The implication of not having a proper understanding of EAS means that employees will not be able to utilise the EAP. Employees need to have an understanding of the services that are provided because they are performing operational duties, namely prevention of crime. These employees are often exposed to dangerous situations, as mentioned in chapter 1, and without counselling the trauma will have a negative effect on their ability to provide services satisfactorily. Therefore it is recommended that the services of the EAP be communicated to all employees on a fortnight basis during the awareness campaigns, information must also be put up on posters, and employees must be made aware of the services during on and off duty parades.

5.3.3 COMMISSIONED OFFICERS' CONCERNS

Although the findings from the research questionnaire administered to a group of commissioned officers were positive, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, there are still concerns that must be attended to. These concerns are highlighted and recommendations that are specific to each concern are put forth.

5.3.3.1. The functions of the EAP

The findings indicate that the majority (94%) of commissioned officers are aware of the functions of the EAP. Although their knowledge of the EAP is presenting a positive picture about its implementation, a small percentage of six percent (6%), of them indicated that they are unaware of the functions. This might be a small figure, but it is a cause for concern because, they are managers who play a critical role in for example, referring employees to consult the EAP when the need arises. This lack of knowledge implies that employees whom they supervise might experience difficulty in accessing the required assistance when the need arise.

This is an indication, as explained in the findings of the interviews held with non-commissioned officers, that not all the communication methods used to communicate EAP are comprehensive to reach commissioned officers as well. It is also possible that these commissioned officers are newly appointed or even working on night shifts. It is therefore recommended that awareness campaigns be held with all commissioned officers as well as those who are newly promoted. The attendance to these awareness campaigns must be compulsory for all commissioned officers and from these campaigns, they must be given the responsibility to cascade the information they have received to lower ranking employees. The campaign also needs to target all groups of commissioned officers, and must accommodate those performing night duties. The EAP practitioners must also communicate the functions of the EAP during management meetings, ensuring that all commissioned officers are empowered with functional knowledge to discharge their referral roles effectively.

5.3.3.2. Implementation of EAP

According to the findings, sixty seven percent (67%) of commissioned officers were aware of the implementation of EAP in the study area and a proportionate number (33%) indicated that they were not aware of its implementation. This concern requires that, as recommended above, management meetings would play a critical role in communicating information that relates to the implementation of EAP and the concurrent roles that they, as commissioned officers play, in making it effective. This must be an ongoing process that is able to breach the information needs of a continuously changing workforce in the study area and cluster.

5.3.3.3 General experience of the EAP

Fifty five percent (55%) of commissioned officers felt that the EAP was beneficial since the EAP practitioners conducted themselves professionally whilst discharging their duties and as a result were satisfied with EAS. Two major concerns about commissioned officers' general experiences of the EAP could be identified. Firstly, twenty eight percent (28%) indicated that the employees do not want to consult the EAP because of their lack of trust in them. In terms of their experiences, the EAP practitioners are not helpful and have little or no impact on the wellbeing of the employees. Secondly, a further seventeen percent (17%) stated that they did not have any experience with the EAP.

To remedy to this problem, which was also identified as part of the concerns raised by non-commissioned officers regarding the credibility and adherence of EAP practitioners to ethical guidelines, it has to be emphasised that measures to ensure that EAP practitioners adhere to the ethical guidelines and that these guidelines are widely communicated to all employees. Despite the use of awareness campaigns and publication of information on notice boards and posters, EAP practitioners must also ensure that before consultations are conducted, employees are informed of the ethical guidelines. The code of conduct that guides the professional conduct of EAP practitioners has to be communicated pre consultation. The commissioned officers are not exposed to dangerous situations, as in the case of non-commissioned officers, because of the managerial nature of their work. However, they should be

encouraged to attend EAP preventative workshops as a way of setting an example for lower ranking employees. This could aid in the de-stigmatisation of the EAP.

5.3.3.4. Satisfaction with EAS

Fifty six percent (56%) of commissioned officers stated that they were satisfied with EAS. On the contrary, forty four percent (44%) of them felt that the EAP did not meet their needs and therefore they were not satisfied. This raises a concern because if there are commissioned officers who are not satisfied with the EAS, then they will not consult or make effective use of the programme and will therefore not refer lower ranking employees to consult it as well. This implies that the employees will be disadvantaged as they will not receive any assistance, mainly because of managers being dissatisfied with the EAS. This will have a negative impact on the performance of the employees, thus affecting service delivery in critical performance areas of the SAPS. This will result in the services of the EAP not being utilised as well, resulting in fruitless expenditure.

The services are paid for by the employer and have benefits for both the employer and employees in the study area. To overcome this concern, it can be recommended that EAP practitioners commission basic enquiry into the aspects of the EAP the commissioned officers are not satisfied with. The EAP practitioners can also undertake surveys, telephone calls and interview commissioned officers to ascertain the levels of satisfaction, and what aspects they are not satisfied with. This must be an on-going process to improve the overall effectiveness of the EAP. The management of Moroka Police Station can also place suggestion boxes at accessible points and all groups of employees must be encouraged to give their inputs of how EAS can be improved.

5.3.3.5. Suggestions on how to improve the EAP

Eleven percent (11%) of commissioned officers stated that they are satisfied with the EAP and no changes must be made. The majority of commissioned officers (89%), though they were satisfied with the implementation of EAP gave suggestions on how it can be improved. The suggestions are that EAP workshops target with lower ranking employees (for example non-commissioned officers), the EAP practitioners

must not be appointed to military ranks, the EAP must be an in-house service with offices located at Moroka Police Station and that the EAP practitioners must attend the on and off duty parades. It is important that these suggestions are raised during strategic meetings to determine their merits in improving the functioning and effectiveness of the EAP.

5.3.3.6 Frequency of consultations with EAP practitioners

The findings indicate that thirty three percent (33%) of commissioned officers consulted with the practitioners of the EAP regularly. The major concern, however, is that the majority, sixty seven percent (67%) of the commissioned officers did not consult with the EAP practitioners. This is possibly due to the managerial nature of their work, which does not expose them to dangerous situations as non-commissioned officers are, as mentioned in this chapter. Commissioned officers must display some commitment to the EAP, by attending the workshops presented by the EAP practitioners. The commissioned officers must be informed that they do not have to consult with the EAP practitioners only when they are experiencing some kind of problem that affects their work performance, they can also attend the workshops that are presented. The commissioned officers will also experience and gain more knowledge of the services presented through the EAP.

5.3.3.7 Feedback from EAP practitioners

According to the findings, a positive response was obtained from fifty percent (50%) of the commissioned officers, where they indicated that they received feedback from the EAP practitioners. The concern is that fifty percent of them did not receive any feedback from the EAP practitioners. It is important that the managers receive some feedback from the EAP practitioners, especially on the progress that has been made. Due to the confidentiality clause, the EAP practitioners do not have to inform the managers of the contents of the consultation, therefore it is recommended that the EAP practitioners inform the manager about for example, that an employee appeared for a consultation and that the necessary attention is being given and that follow up consultations will be arranged as well. The EAP practitioner can also inform the managers whether the employee can be posted to perform operation duties or not and whether an employee is in a position to carry a firearm or not. This will be a

motivation to the managers and they will not hesitate to refer their subordinates to EAP.

5.3.3.8 Employee resistance to consult the EAP

The majority, fifty five percent (55%) of commissioned officers stated that the employees do not display any form of resistance when they are referred to the EAP and seventeen percent (17%) of them stated that the employees displayed signs of resistance occasionally and twenty eight percent (28%) of them stated that the employees resisted when they were referred to consult EAP. The resistance displayed by the employees will result in a situation where the referred employee will not receive any assistance, putting them on a rather disadvantage side; the condition that carries serious implications for Moroka Police Station provide a satisfactory service to the community of Moroka.

In view of the above finding, it is recommended that the commissioned officers enquire on clarity as to why there is resistance to consult the EAP. The commissioned officers must also explain to their subordinates that the EAS are meant to assist them, the benefits they can reap from seeking assistance from the EAP and how the EAP can assist in improving the performance of their police station over the reduction of crime. Again, the suggestion boxes must be placed at accessible positions so that the employees can give their comments as to why they resist consulting EAP. There is obviously a need to conduct yet further research into the provision of EAS and how it functions in the policing and the public sector in general. This field of inquiry needs to be developed, thus contributing positively to an efficient (police) service delivery system.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR NON-
COMMISSIONED OFFICERS**

1. Tell me in your own words what you understand of the Employment Assistance Programme?

2. How was the EAP communicated to you?

3. Do you know what the functions of the EAP are?

4. What is your general experience of the EAP?

5. In your opinion, do you think the EAP is credibility and that EAP practitioners adhere to ethical guidelines.

6. How often do you consult Employee Assistance Services?

7. What is your opinion about the EAP?

8. In your own opinion, do you think EAS are accessible to you?

9. If you had the power to change anything in the programme, what would you change?

APPENDIX B

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EAP
PRACTITIONERS**

1. What are the circumstances in which EAS are provided?

2. What are the challenges encountered by practitioners in the EAP unit?

3. Do you market EAS within Moroka Police Station?

4. Do you think employees are aware of the EAP in Moroka Police Station?

5. Do you get referrals from the supervisors/ managers (commissioned officers)?

6. Do you think that the EAS has had an impact on the performance of the employees?

7. What do you think are the general opinions of employees towards EAS?

8. In your opinion, do they understand the functioning or functions of the EAP?

Thank you for your time and help with this research.

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMMISSIONED

OFFICERS

1. Explain in your own words what you understand about EMPLOYEE ASSISTANT PROGRAMME (EAP)?

2. Do you know what the functions of the EAP are?

3. How is the EAP implemented at your station?

4. What is your general experience or perception of EAP services?

5. Are you satisfied with the manner in which it is conducted?

6. What can be done differently to make the EAP more positive for you?

7. How often do you consult Employee Assistance Services (EAS)?

8. Have you attended any of the EAP sessions? If so, please provide a brief impression of the service.

9. Do you know under which circumstances you must make a referral to the EAS?

10. Have you referred any of your employees to the EAS?

11. How did the referral to the programme affect the employee?

12. Based on your experience, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the EAP?

13. Did you get feedback from the EAS component?

14. Was there resistance when you referred your employees to the EAS?

Thank you for your time and help in completing this questionnaire.

APPENDIX D

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH