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Personal and Work-Related Problems of Employees at the Social Security Commission in Namibia

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned hereby declare that the work of this thesis is my own original work and I have not previously submitted the same work to any other university for any degree.

Signature: …….. Date …….

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary society poses many challenges to the world of work. Everyday challenges can complicate the lives of employees as they are social beings and as such experience human problems; which can adversely affect work performance. This necessitates proactive measures on the part of employers to mitigate the impact. This study aimed to identify personal and work-related problems of employees at the Social Security Commission (SSC) in Namibia. An exploratory research design was used to identify, describe and explain the phenomenon, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative aspects. Two data collection methods were used: fifty two (52) completed questionnaires and seven (7) interviews conducted with executive management members were analyzed. Thematic content analysis was used for the qualitative data and statistical analysis was used for the quantitative data. The findings indicated the existence of personal and work-related problems experienced by the SSC workforce in Namibia. Respondents perceived these problems to impact on their wellbeing and job performance: **81%** (n=42) of respondents and all of the management team emphasized the need for an Employee Wellness Programme at the SSC workplace.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

According to Northen (1995, p.7) workplace issues cut across occupations, cultures, races and countries. Work-related problems vary from organization to organization depending on structures, cultures and transformations taking place within specific settings. Work has the potential to be inherently demanding and stressful. Chisholm et al, (2002, p.2) state that “modern workplaces have many employees feeling overwhelmed and every day feels like a fight to survive in a jungle-like environment. The rising deadline, high workloads, job requirements and increasing changes in management style can all be stressful”.

According to Chisholm, et.al, (2002, p.15) unclear job descriptions, poor communication and lack of feedback between employees, supervisors and management can also induce organizational stress, impacting on motivation and job performance. Unstable families and unsatisfactory personal relationships can become emotionally taxing, leaving employees emotionally drained at work. Consequently, the effect of low self image in terms of job performance, ill health, absenteeism, high staff turnover, use and abuse of alcohol and drugs, to mention but a few, can become apparent and can eventually weaken overall organizational performance. It is a known fact that not all employees can deal with, cope and manage challenges effectively. Thus, many employers throughout the globe are developing comprehensive workplace programmes to assist in minimizing negative impacts on their employees. For the purpose of the study, international research will be considered to gather information on how social services are offered within the workplace and what internal arrangements are made for the support of employees.

1.2 Statement of the Problem and Rationale of the Study

To contextualize the organizational function of the Social Security Commission, the researcher has observed the most subjective factors. The most challenging deliverable at the SSC is the “administration of funds”. The administration of funds involves the collection of contributions, registration of members (employers and employees), payments of benefits and investment of funds (Social Security Commission report, 2005). Besides, applicants/clients of SSC are members of society who are in dire need of immediate and quality services. This challenging expectation can be a source of organizational stress. The researcher singled out the Commission as it serves many clients throughout the country. The institution does not have a comprehensive Employee Wellness Programme.

The Social Security Commission of Namibia was the focus of this study and was selected purely because of its mandate “to professionally administer the funds for the provision of social security benefits to the Namibian workforce and their dependants”. This research aims at gaining new facts to understand the personal and work/organizational problems experienced by personnel at the SSC. Research data was used to profile the needs of employees and thereafter determine responsive activities to address the identified problems; this is as the Commission is planning to develop an Employee Wellness Programme. Overall, the research data will help in the development of the Employee Wellness Programme (EWP) with an aim to promote teamwork, foster better communication between employees and smooth internal processes - in order to provide quality services to the clients that the Commission is dedicated to serve. Equally important, the research data will contribute to the existing body of knowledge for the field of industrial social work in Namibia and simultaneously add meaning to social works' long interest in people as social beings who are connected with various groups, social networks, organizations and who live in social and natural environments (Northen, 1995, p.10).

The researcher assumes that proper and methodical intervention can bring about empowerment, embrace the significance that work has for individuals and strengthen the values of the Commission.

1.3 Anticipated Benefit of the Study

In quantitative and qualitative data, questions were formulated to identify employee's knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of personal and work-related problems and the subsequent impacts on wellbeing and job performance. The study identified and profiled experienced personal and work-related problems as it is anticipated that:

- The research data will help the management of Social Security Commission to understand what employees are exposed to, at both personal and organizational levels.
- The profiled problems will be used by the SSC to determine and design responsive programs to minimize impacts on employee's wellbeing and job performance.
- The research data will inform decisions in terms of promoting healthy lifestyles and wellbeing among SSC employees

1.4 Aim of the Study, Objectives and Research Questions

The overall aim of this research study was to identify employees' personal and work-related problems and how they perceive these problems to impact on their wellbeing and work performance. The following research questions guided the study:

- What are the common personal problems impacting wellbeing and job performance?
- What work-related problems impact on wellbeing and job performance?
- What is the perception of employees on personal and work-related problems impacting their wellbeing and job performance?

- What is the current practice at SSC workplaces established to help employees manage personal and work-related problems that have an impact on their wellbeing and job performance?

The questions above helped in achieving the three main objectives of the study:

- To identify personal and work-related problems of employees
- To elicit employees' perceptions of the impact of personal and work-related problems on job performance
- To explore how employees handle and manage personal and work-related problems

1.5 Brief Explanation of Research Design and Methodology

The research design used in this study was an exploratory-descriptive design which integrated both quantitative and qualitative characteristics. A questionnaire consisting of both quantitative and qualitative questions was sent to all employees of the Social Security Commission. The researcher received 52 completed questionnaires and all seven members of the executive management were interviewed. In-depth interviews were conducted with management to gain insight into personal and work-related problems as experienced by SSC employees and also to understand the impacts that these problems have on employee's job performance. Although the questionnaire was forwarded to all employees, executive members were requested to not complete a questionnaire.

The results of quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to be able to give a quantifiable description of personal and work-related problems, while qualitative data was analyzed using thematic content analysis.

1.6 Limitations of the Research Design and Methodology

Exploratory research was conducted to gain insight into an unknown phenomenon. In this context, identification of experienced personal and work-related difficulties at the SSC is a first of its kind. Significantly, the nature of the research problem is sensitive, and it was anticipated that research participants may get emotional as they reflect on traumatic/distressing personal experiences that might have contributed negatively to their wellbeing and job performance. However, no emotional breakdowns were recorded by Lifeline Namibia (a Counseling Organisation) with which arrangements were made to provide counseling debriefing services should employees need such services after completing the questionnaire.

The limitations noted included:

- Administering questionnaires through the intranet posed some problems as some respondents did not answer open questions, although it was emphasized that respondents should answer all the questions.
- Although respondents were asked to print out the questionnaire and place the completed questionnaire in the Wellness Survey Box, there were some respondents who forwarded completed questionnaires to the researcher via internet. This could have compromised the principle of anonymity, but luckily they forwarded them to a private email address where only the researcher had access. The other questionnaires were placed in a box and were forwarded to Windhoek by the Questionnaire Focal Person at all branches.
- In the qualitative research, the researcher used an interview schedule to keep track of questions during the in-depth individual interview.
- The number of employees across SSC branches are not equal, thus the researcher did not expect representation of branches with an equal number of respondents.

1.7 Definition of Key Concepts

Wellbeing - Erlbaum (2002), considers well-being holistically, integrating physical, cognitive and social-emotional dimensions and takes a developmental perspective across the life course.

Work – Fagin quoted in Paul (1996, p. 29) analytically states that "work" refers to all those activities which an individual is involved in on a regular basis and for which an individual receives direct financial reward.

Workplace – is a functional community in which individual have roles and relationship, (Akabas & Kurzman, 2005, p. 31).

Job performance – Wikipedia recognizes a definition by John P. Campbell (1990), who describes "job performance" as an individual variable. That is, **performance** is something a single person does. Moreover, Campbell defines performance as behavior.

Problem - Akabas and Kurzman (2005, p. 9) quoted Germain (1973) who uses the phrase "life model" to define problems, not as a reflections of pathological state but as consequences of interactions among elements of the ecosystems including other people, things, places, organizations, ideas, information and values. They are conceptualized as problems in living, not as a personality disturbance. The two authors indicated that in occupational social work, the "life model" focus on enhancing employee's strengths, modification of environment and maximizing the level of person - in-the environment.

Psychosocial – According to Westlander (1980), three concepts can be crystallized: one dealing with psychosocial factors that create causal conditions in the work environment, one concerning the effects on experiences and behaviors, and one that treats psychosocial factors as the effects of the interaction between the individual and the workplace (personal and work-related problems).

Stress – "stress is a response to an action, situation, or event that places a special demand on the individual" (Ivancevich &Matteson, 2002, p. 269).

Occupational Social Work - is a specialized field of social work practice which addresses the human and social needs of the work community, employer, trade union, job seeker and employee (Akabas & Kurzman, 2005).

Employee Wellness Programme - Employee Wellness Programme is a comprehensive programme responsible for administering the Employee Assistance Programme and other workplace programmes developed to enhance or improve the overall health and wellness of employees, for benefits of the organizational performance (*www1.pgcps.org/employeewellness/).*

Knowledge - is a total body of known facts or information and the understanding associated with a particular subject.

Attitude - is described as a feeling or mental position, especially with regard to experiences.

Perception - is an awareness of one's surroundings that is produced by the operation of the senses.

1.8 Overview of Research Report

The research report is divided into five chapters:

Chapter 1:

Chapter one introduces the nature of the investigation by giving brief reasons as to why studying a specific phenomenon is necessary, how the research will be conducted and who the research subjects will be. The overall aim and research questions are pinpointed to give weight to the rationale and benefit of the study. Key words are defined; the research design and methodology are explained; finally the overview of the research report is presented.

Chapter 2:

This chapter provides more information to understand the world of work, the significance of work in the lives of people and to bring to light personal and work related problems. The concept of wellbeing and job performance is also contextualized to be able to understand the impact of personal and work-related problems.

Chapter 3:

Possible organizational factors that can impact on wellbeing and job performance are discussed. Social Security Commission as a workplace is used as a case study to assess the need to develop a comprehensive Employee Wellness Programme (EWP).

Chapter 4:

This chapter emphasizes in detail procedures of data collection. The research design and methodology is explained and aspects of ethics, trustworthiness, sampling procedures, data analysis of the study are also explained.

Chapter 5:

The data collected through questionnaires and in-depth interviews was analyzed and discussed, with reference to the literature. The researcher combined quantitative and

qualitative data to validate meanings and emerged themes. The researcher made use of tables, figures and quotations from the participants to the research questions.

Chapter 6:

In this chapter the main findings are linked to the aims and objectives of the study, conclusions are discussed and recommendation for practice and future research are identified. The guideline for implementation of the Employee Wellness Programme is provided.

CHAPTER 2: WORK, WORKPLACE AND PERSONAL FACTORS

2.1 Introduction

Literature on the meaning of work strongly supports the understanding that having a job, or being able to work, carries significant meaning to employees. Schultz and Schultz (2006, p. 4) note that “securing a job can offer a sense of identity, status and defines employees in terms of who and what they are. Work provides opportunities to learn new skills and master new challenges. Ability to work can also bring positive social experiences; satisfying ones' need to belong to a group and providing the security that comes from being an accepted and valued member of a team”.

On the other hand, Schultz and Schultz (2006) went on to bring out that work can also be tedious, monotonous and even hazardous to ones' health. They said work environments pose physical dangers; can produce stress and anxieties leading to dissatisfaction that subsequently have negative impacts on a employee’s wellbeing and job performance. Consequently, this research aims to profile personal and work-related problems and how employees deal with the problems they experience.

This first part of the literature chapter firstly reviews the aspect of work and the meaning of work in the lives of people. Secondly, it looks at the three theoretical frames of reference and explains the three worlds employees inhabit (live, family work and community). Thirdly, the chapter briefly highlights the traditional perception of personal and work-related problems, making reference to the concepts of wellbeing and job performance. Fourthly, the personal factors that can impact on wellbeing and job performance are discussed; finally, the conclusion.

2.2 Understanding Work and Meaning of Work

Work is a human activity. Significantly, the literature on work notes that it does not often happen that we talk about human beings without making references to activities that they engage in on a daily basis. It is a given - a human being needs to do something for

survival and this begins from childhood and continues throughout adulthood. In the 1920s, a question was posed by a theologian, who was quoted by Tucker (1992) as he wrote his article about work (www.truthfactor.com). He asked “what would man do if they had nothing to do”? This question was asked in an attempt to understand the importance of work in the lives of people. In his response he said, “Answers vary from person to person but the bottom line is that work fulfils many functions in human lives”. He went on to say that “life without a purpose is meaningless and work gives man a reason for living”. Akabas and Kurzman (2005, p. 124) mentioned that when employers advertise work positions, human beings answer the call. They said human beings bring their expert knowledge, skills, abilities and experiences that are relevant to the particular job, and they also bring all the usual, individual personal issues and problems that are typical of the human condition. The authors went on to say that in many cases the result is a gap between the employer’s expectations and the employee’s needs as the employer’s interest is primarily in productivity while employees have dual needs.

In addition, in the context of Freud’s (1930) earlier observations, Johada (1998) is quoted by Akabas and Kurzman (2005, p. 23) stating: “whether one likes or hates one’s job, it structures time for the day, the week, the years: it broadens the social horizon beyond family and friends; it enforces participation in collective purposes; it defines one’s social status; it demands reality-oriented activities.” Perlman (1982) states that work defines a person's status, provides satisfaction and a sense of self-worth, is a milieu in which social interactions and friendships develop, and offers an activity around which to organize one's time. Furthermore, Akabas and Kurzman emphasized the importance of work by saying that in an economic system characterized by the free market in which goods and services are produced for profit and labour is performed for wages, able-bodied adults are expected “to work for living” or to be a member of a family unit where such work is performed. In addition, the two authors went on to say that work also provides the package of fringe benefits upon which all families depend. Today, some of the benefits are mandated by law such as medical aid, social security,

pension benefits, home subsidy and they can be generally far more expensive for individual workers to purchase on their own.

Contrary to the positive meaning of work, Ivangevich and Matteson (2002, p.7) bring to light the various forces at the workplace that impact on the wellbeing of employees, for example power, globalism, cultural diversity, rapid change, culture and employment contracts. The authors cautioned that resisting the reality of these forces will likely lead to unnecessary conflict, reduced managerial and non-managerial performance and lost opportunities. They further said in managerial terms that failing to cope and deal with these forces will likely result in job dissatisfaction, poor morale, reduced commitment, lower work quality, burnout, poor judgment, and a host of unhealthy consequences.

Again, it is well documented that to be outside the world of work sphere implies marginality, since a capitalist economic system depends upon the explicit exchange between worker and employer to generate its products and services, (Akabas & Kurzman, 2005). They further emphasized that if an individual is not in the world of work, fringe benefits are absent and denied; and the burden of paying costs are borne solely by employed individuals. A number of literature reviews noted by Akabas and Kurzman (2005, p. 24) listed the negative effects of unemployment on both mental and physical health: these include a reduction in self-esteem, high levels of anxiety, increases in substance abuse and depression. Lack of a daily routine often leads to feelings of boredom and purposelessness among the unemployed and in extended cases to feeling of animosity. To add to that, the centrality of work and non-work has been noted by practitioners, for example by clinical social workers and family therapists, and they are quoted by Akabas and Kurzman (2005, p. 24) stating that “in society, work has replaced religion and community as the main source of meaning, and with all the economic contradictions, it breeds enormous anxiety.”

2.3 The Theoretical Frame of Reference

All is not well in the world of work, nor in the outcomes that result from participating in that world. Bargal and Schmid (1992), quoted by Akabas and Kurzman (2005, p.126),

mentioned that “environments tend to change much more rapidly than organizations”. Their caution is important, as they said “performance gaps and inability to adjust to external change can threaten organizational activity and survival”. They thus mentioned the gap between our best intent in relation to human needs and our short fall in fulfilling this intent represents an ideal arena for contribution by occupational social work with its target between individual and organization; and its modus operandi in providing individual counseling, advocacy and an active social change agenda. With the understanding above, the three conceptual frameworks are considered important in understanding personal and work-related problems and how they impact on wellbeing and job performance.

2.3.1 Systems Theory

According to Wikipedia, systems view is a world-view that is based on the discipline of SYSTEM INQUIRY. Central to systems inquiry is the concept of SYSTEM. In the most general sense, system means a configuration of parts connected and joined together by a web of relationships. The primer group defines system as a family of relationships among the members acting as a whole. A system as a frame of reference is composed of regularly interacting or interrelating groups of activities. Simply, system theory looks at the exchange that take place among individual, collective and institutional organisms and their environments.

In addition, Greene (2008, p.168) stated that the principle of systems theory has been applied in social work practice to various forms of social organizations, including families, social groups, corporations and communities. He emphasized the inter-dependence and interaction among system components and enquired as to what makes social systems adaptive or maladaptive. He said the concept that “social systems” are not static, but instead are purposive, goal-directed and in constant states of interchange with their environments. Moreover, Bush (1983) cited by Greene (2008) said, system theory is highly suitable for working with diverse client populations because its focus is on the inter-relatedness of social phenomena. In this case interaction of employees at the workplace is considered and with the systems theory,

the interest is to see how systems influence each other, for example how personal or work-related problems impact on performance. Specifically, Norlin, Chess, Dale, & Smith (2002), quoted by Greene (2008), elaborated that behavior from a system perspective has come to be understood as “the product of the dynamic interaction and relationship ties among the people who form a system at the workplace.

2.3.2 The Person-In-Environment (Pie)

According to Greene (2008, p.69) “person-in-the environment does not lead to a diagnosis, as with the diagnostic and statically manual of mental disorder, but rather to the identification, description, and classification of problems”. He further stated that in the context of work, problems are not seen only as existing in an individual or in the environment, but rather in a matrix. With great emphasis, he further mentioned that the PIE system looks at the problems that emanate from the environment and affect the client’s social role functioning.

2.3.3 Ecological Perspective

In social work practice, applying an ecological approach can be best understood as looking at persons, families, cultures, communities and policies and to identify and intervene upon strengths and weaknesses in the transactional processes between these systems. The heart of ecological thinking is on the natural ecosystem (www.ecologicaltheory.tripd.com). By the use of analogies, concepts from natural systems are used to help understand human systems and environments. An ecological perspective encompasses the context in the broadest sense of the word, to include physical, social, cultural and historical aspects of context globalization, urbanization and large scale environmental change, as well as attributes and behaviors of persons within.

To contextualize on this theory, with regard to health and wellness, the ecological perspective draws attention to individual and environmental determinants of employee’s health and wellness. The perspective assumes that appropriate changes in the environment will lead to changes in individuals, but the support of individuals is required to implement environmental change in the organization. It can be taken for granted that

regardless of the method/setting, the practitioner's effort/ primary focus of intervention is to increase individual client, group, family, and organizational self-sufficiency. Based on working experience in this field, it is believed, that when employees are provided with required and necessary services, they are thereafter expected to perform to their best of their ability and contribute positively to the functioning and growth of the organization. However, if not, industrial policies and procedures will be followed to manage concerns.

The three approaches discussed above help greatly in understanding personal and work-related problems and how they impact on wellbeing and job performance. The person–in-environment theory helps with the identification, description and classification of problems experienced by individuals and organization as a whole. The system theory helps to look at problems that emanate from the environment and affect the employees. On the other hand, the ecological perspective defined the word "problem**",** where the arguments of this research concentrate. "Problem" is not a reflection of a pathological state, but a consequence of interactions among elements of the ecosystem, including other people, things, places, organizations, ideas, information, and values. "Problems" in this context are conceptualized as problems in living, but not as personality disturbance, thus practitioners focus on enhancing people's strengths and modifying the environment (Germain, 1973, quoted by Akabas & Kurzman, 2005). With the given understanding, Casey (2008) mentioned on internet blog that the workplace can help today's diverse families to better manage their work-family stress, which can lead to a triple win - better emotional wellbeing, stronger family relationships and enhanced work commitment. She suggested that workplace programs and policies can act as a buffer to reduce stress and improve emotional health outcomes, but with three important caveats:

1) Create a workplace culture where utilization of supportive family policies is encouraged and supported. It's not the existence of policies and programs that is important, but rather whether employees feel that they can use them without negative ramifications.

2) No one size fits all, one must match the needs of employees with the programs or policies - for example, it doesn't make sense to build an onsite childcare center if the majority of your employees are over 50 years old, or if they wouldn't bring their kids to work on the subway.

3) The role of the manager or supervisor is critical and is often the key ingredient. They must assess and determine, with their subordinates, what support is needed to create a work environment that helps employees meet both their business and personal needs.

2.4 The Three Worlds in Which We Employees Live

Akabas and Kurzman (2005, p. 13) observed that despite Parsonia theory, until recently, policy and practice tended to operate on the basis that work, family and community were separate worlds. "Separation of the occupational and family sectors of society" came to be considered essential to the smooth functioning each institution and thus to the integration of society as whole". They said the happiness in one, even if affected by the other, was considered external to it. This realization explains why the theory of the separation of the three worlds is a myth, and why it must be corrected.

In addition, Akabas and Kurzman (2005) went on to say that if we accept the idea that the *job* is only a source of *income*, the *family* is the only source of *affection* and the *community* is the arena for *recreation,* we buy into this false notion of "separate worlds". It is clear that the separation of worlds simply reinforces the traditional perception of personal and work-related problems. Thus, they cautioned against the belief that the behavior of work institution is only economic, the behavior of families is only supportive, and the behavior of communities is the only social, as this can never be true. In other words, the authors expressed it differently to say, we often "live" where we work and we frequently "work" where we live. They thus concluded that the worlds may best be viewed, not as congruent, or tangent, but rather as overlapping.

2.5 Traditional Perception of Personal and Work Related Problems

According to Barnes (2003, p. 163) before the first World War, the labour force was viewed as “hands” that provided the repetitive manual labour then required at most stages in the productive process. Because it was literally a pair of hands rather than a person to fill a job, Henry Ford’s complaint about the workforce is telling: ‘How come when I want a pair of hands I get a human being as well?’ In America, Akabas and Kurzman (2005, p. 125), noted over years that employers focused more on the skills that individuals bring to the world of work, that they often ask: 'how can this particular employee fill the demands of the job to maximize the outcome in relation to the work performed?' The authors interpreted the views of some employers that if their employee shows skill and the experimental match is good, the individual will perform with commitment and competence. They concluded that this faith on part of the employer all too often ignores the individuality of the job occupant, as it assumes that work and the rest of life are separate and divisible.

In contrast, employees ask “how can performance on this job contribute to my quality of life and general wellbeing and that of my family?” Akabas and Kurzman (2005) noted through years of experience that the implication of the identified difference in goals of employer and employee is significant. They therefore mentioned that the individual's aim for balance between work and family, income and leisure, and between self-determination and community acceptance, is determined by how they perform and commit to the job.

In Namibia, one example which demonstrates the traditional perception of personal and work-related problems was when employees worked on contracts for years before going back to their places of origin to see their families. Employees from the northern part of the Namibia used to work in the southern part of the country where they were contracted as railway workers. They used to work for one to two years before they given vacation leave. Employees were expected to perform their duties no matter what. It was up to the employers to relieve or dismisses employees. Similarly employers expected employees to separate personal problems from influencing their work performance. This

gives an impression that employees were only considered as means of contributing to production but the wholeness that drives performance and productivity was not considered.

According to Van Den Bergh, (2000, p. 50), employees in today's fast-paced world of work, continue to need policies and services that support an appropriate balance between work and non-work demands. These policies need to be established based on the needs of employees as there is today more demographic variety in the workplace, and more effort to attract, retain and develop a diverse work population. Social workers have a distinctive ability to care, coupled with a skill set that enables them to help individuals become personally effective. This is considered to be an indispensable capability as far as the workplace and organization are concerned. Social Worker's assessment and the use of systems approach to understand work had influenced remarkably the successfulness of Employee Assistance and Wellness Programme and has proved that the programme can certainly be a strategic mechanism for employers, (Akabas and Kurzman, 2005).

2.6 Employee's Wellbeing and Job Performance

It is important to understand the meaning of the two words within the context as they form a core of the investigation. How does organization define employee wellbeing? There is different information about the two concepts, however for the purpose of the study; consideration is given to the definition by Bridget (2007).

2.6.1 Employee Well-Being

In an attempt to define "wellbeing", Bridget (2007) mentioned various scenarios in the internet-based article, stating that many businesses think of wellbeing in terms of physical health, for example, providing healthy menus in a staff restaurant, health screening or private health insurance. While some think wellbeing is all about physical health: by helping employees manage stress or give up smoking, he however asked, what about the importance of psychological well-being or mental health in the work-place? Bridget supports the definition by the Chartered Institute of Personal

Development's (CIPD) that states that, “wellbeing is 'creating an environment to promote a state of contentment which allows an employee to *flourish and achieve their full potential* for the benefit of themselves and their organization'. On the other hand, Erlbaum (2002) mentioned that foundational strengths for wellbeing are required so that capacities that can be actively developed, supported, or learned. These foundational strengths, such as problem-solving, emotional regulation and physical safety, are the positive underpinnings of early child health and development and of ongoing wellbeing across the life course. Many variables, including genetics, biology, the environment and individual experience, contribute to the development of wellbeing.

In addition, to put research data to work, the CIDP pinpointed that research shows “psychological well-being *can* be enabled through developing traits like resilience, optimism and self-awareness in employees by focusing on strengths and through fostering meaning at work, for example, by building new organizational communities through volunteering programmes. Thus, Bridget concluded that “what is essential for employees to flourish is an organizational culture which actively and positively promotes it. He said it would be beneficial for organizations to view employee wellbeing in terms of an integrated model, which not only takes into account physical, psychological and spiritual well-being, but which places specific emphasis on developing the positives.

Again, Bridget (2007) mentioned that, an organization which really understands employee well-being should have a *culture which actively promotes mental, emotional and physical health day-to-day*, as well as a system which deals with mental, emotional and physical ill-health when that occurs. He said Employee Assistance Programmes alone are not good enough because it only provides counseling for employees once they start having problems. In conclusion, Bridget (2007) made reference to the research work conducted by Lyubomirsky, King and Diener (2005) which shows that employees with higher subjective well-being are more productive, creative, optimistic, resilient, better at selling and persuading and, of course, are more fun to be around. He mentioned that there are tons of good reasons to start thinking about an integrated

approach to employee well-being which promotes mental and emotional wellbeing alongside the physical.

2.6.2 Job Performance

Wikipedia brought to light that despite the confusion over how this term is defined, performance is an extremely important criterion that relates to organizational outcomes and success. Among the commonly accepted theories of job performance, one comes from the work of John P. Campbell (1990), who describes “job performance” as an individual variable. That is, performance is something a single person does. Moreover, Campbell (1990) defines performance as behavior, as it is done by the employee. He said this concept differentiates performance from outcomes. He also stated that outcomes are the result of an individual‘s performance but they are also the result of other influences. In other words, there are more factors that determine outcomes than just an employee’s behaviors and actions. Campbell (1990) allows for exceptions when defining performance as behavior. For instance, he clarifies that performance does not have to be a directly observable action of an individual. It can also consist of mental productions such as answers or decisions.

To contextualize, this research acknowledges that employees bring their concerns and disorder into the workplace. It is obvious that of any employee’s population there will be percentages of those who have personal problems serious enough to affect job performance e.g. alcohol and drugs usage, emotional problems and family problems. According to Kemp (2005, p. 169), “troubled employees have the worst absenteeism and turnover rates, have high grievances rates, high incidents and use their usual sick leave benefits three times more. Untreated problems result in a productivity loss”. In contrast, there are work factors that can hamper an individual’s job performance, such as organizational culture, which he feels is a trigger to many work-related problems.

At the same time, Kemp (2005) views organizational culture to be made up of many elements, including formal rules and procedures, informal rules of behavior, rituals, tasks, jargon, dress norms and stories people tell about what goes on in the organization. He further mentioned that employers create and control many conditions that can create or alleviate stress and other problems that affect health in the workplace and thus it becomes management's role to create a culture that values employees. He suggested formal and informal systems need to be developed to support the culture and values and an environment needs to be established to reinforce value and support the underlying systems that boost performance.

2.6.3 Wellbeing in the Workplace and its Relation to Business Outcomes

According to James, Harter, Frank, Schmidt, Corey and Keyes (2003, p.1) employee performance and quality of life are hindered by strains (too much challenge) or boredom (too little challenge). They said when demand exceeds or falls below the resources, individuals experience undesirable states (e.g., stress or boredom) that can hinder the quality and quantity of performance, as well as their wellbeing. They quoted research work of Edwards, Caplan and Van Harrioson, (1998) who concluded from a stress perspective that a healthy workforce means the absence of strain or boredom.

Moreover, from the wellbeing perspective, James et al (2003) argued that the presence of positive emotional states and positive appraisals of employees and their relationships within the workplace, accentuates employee performance and quality of life. They went on to say that when the environment provides, and employees seek out, interesting, meaningful and challenging tasks, individuals in these situations are likely to have what they called “manageable difficulties” and what Csikszentmihalyi (1997) described as an “optimal state”. They further elaborated that when demands match, or slightly exceed resources, individuals experience a positive emotional state (e.g. pleasure, joy, energy) and they perceive themselves as growing, engaged and productive. They concluded that from the wellbeing perspective, a healthy workforce means the presence of positive feelings in the employees that should result in happier and more productive employees.

For further exploration, the Social Security Commission used a case study to investigate personal and work-related problems and its impact on wellbeing job performances.

2.7 Personal Factors

Employees are social beings and the following (personality and lifestyle, HIV and AIDS, stress and depression) are some of the personal factors that, if experienced and not addressed, may negatively impact on wellbeing and job performance of employees at the workplace. These factors are considered the most pressing issues impacting on health and wellbeing of employees and warrant further exploration.

2.7.1 Personality and Lifestyles

Carver and Scheier (2000) gave a brief definition of personality to say “personality is made up of the characteristic patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviors that make a person unique”. Personality arises from within the individual and remains fairly consistent throughout life. They further mentioned that “personality is the supreme realization of the innate idiosyncrasy of a living being. It is an act of high courage flung in the face of life, the absolute affirmation of all that constitutes the individual, the most successful adaptation to the universal condition of existence coupled with the greatest possible freedom for self-determination.”

Almost every day we describe and assess the personalities of the people around us. Whether we realize it or not, these daily musings on how and why people behave as they do are similar to what personality psychologists do. To understand personality and behavior of employees, Carver and Scheier (2000) gave four components that explain the fundamental characteristics of personality:

- Consistency - There is generally a recognizable order and regularity to behaviors. Essentially, people act in the same ways, or similar ways, in a variety of situations.
- Psychological and physiological - Personality is a psychological construct, but research suggests that it is also influenced by biological processes and needs.

- Impact behaviors and actions - Personality does not just influence how we move and respond in our environment; it also *causes* us to act in certain ways.
- Multiple expressions - Personality is displayed in more than just behavior. It can also be seen in our thoughts, feelings, close relationships and other social interactions.

In addition, personalities influence the way people in general live their life and this culminates in lifestyles. According to Wikipedia, the term “lifestyle” was originally coined by Austrian psychologist Alfred Adler in 1929 and the current broader sense of the word dates from 1961. Spaargaren and VanVliet (2000) view lifestyle from a sociology point of view to mean, a lifestyle is the way a person lives. They further mentioned that a lifestyle is a characteristic bundle of behaviors that makes sense to both others and oneself in a given time and place, including social relations, consumption, entertainment and dress. The behaviors and practices within lifestyles are a mixture of habits, conventional ways of doing things and reasoned actions. A lifestyle typically also reflects an individual's attitudes, values or worldview. Therefore, a lifestyle is a means of forging a sense of self and creates cultural symbols that resonate with personal identity. It is concluded that not all aspects of a lifestyle are entirely voluntaristic. Surrounding social and technical systems can constrain the lifestyle choices available to individuals and the symbols she/he is able to project to others and the self.

2.7.2 HIV/AIDS

The Occupational Social Work HIV prevention stipulates that an effective HIV workplace programme requires comprehensive micro, meso and macro-level intervention. Gresak and Dorkin (2009, p. 409) offered a framework for HIV with a four quadrants: Firstly, Individual Level of Intervention assumes that risk behaviors are due to individual, psychological needs or deficits e.g. awareness raising and exploration with individuals on the role of culture. Secondly, Social Intervention assumes that risk behaviors are affected by norms, values and beliefs which are socially constructed e.g. stigma mitigation through positive messages. Thirdly, Intermediate Structural Level Interventions target conditions outside the control of single individual e.g. setting up

local testing and treatment centers; and finally, Macro Level Structural Intervention targets conditions which shape the nature of a society e.g. poverty alleviation and developing policies.

In addition, the Namibia Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS (NABCOA) (2009) stated the complexity of the disease requires a holistic, multi-disciplinary approach to address the epidemic. NABCOA supports the fight to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS programme development and link workplaces to available HIV/AIDS resources, such as access to treatment for low-income groups. NABCOA urges organizations to develop a comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS in the workplace and that they should employ stigma reduction activities at all levels; and operate in the best interest of employees infected and affected. It is further stated that top management commitment, full employee participation and development of an inclusive HIV/AIDS Policy to serve as a guideline for managing HIV/AIDS at the workplace, are all imperative for achieving programme success. With an effective HIV programme, the overall result for the organizations should show an increased knowledge employees have on HIV/AIDS-related issues; greater acceptance of those infected with HIV, resulting in reduced stigma and a reduced number of new infections and greater utilization of company programme resources. The impact of HIV/AIDS on the company will also be minimized.

2.7.3 Depression

The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2010) defined “depression” as “a common mental disorder that presents with depressed mood, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, low energy and poor concentration”. These problems can become chronic or recurrent and lead to substantial impairments in an individual's ability to take care of his or her everyday responsibilities. At its worst, depression can lead to suicide, a tragic fatality associated with the loss of about 850 000 thousand lives every year.

In addition, a recent study that surveyed human resource managers conducted on 24 May 2008 showed that eighty percent of human resource generalists recognize

depression as a large problem at work. Individually, symptoms of depression include suicidal thoughts, sleeping much more or less than usual, appetite changes as well as mood and behavior changes. Physical pains that are resistant to treatment are one symptom of depression. An overwhelming feeling of hopelessness is another. At the workplace, outward signs of decreased productivity, changes in work habits, problems with memory or decision-making, difficulty concentrating and decreased reliability. Nel.et al. (2004, p. 296) stated that 'depression is a common disorder that can wreak havoc with the health and productivity of employees and families'. Depression is a result of unsolved problems and can manifest itself in physical and organizational troubles. They suggested that a depression screening programme is an effective and inexpensive way to identify some of the most emotionally distressed employees.

For the business or organization to thrive, employers and human resource managers need to act to minimize the catastrophic effects in the workplace. The study revealed that the key to overcoming the problem is knowledge and immediate actions needed to take place, such as motivational training or changing work hours to minimize the destructive effects of the disease. It is cautioned that every employee is different and wide range of option should be provided; for example, coaching, leadership retreats and wellness programs are viable options to help those executives suffering from mood disorders. In all instances, supervisor's understanding and support in seeking treatment is crucial.

It is cautioned that the envisaged decreased motivation and lackluster performance among depressed employees should not incite a supervisor's disciplinary action; this will simply give the depression another reason to thrive. Instead, encourage and mentor such individuals. In extreme cases, directing the employee toward counseling programs is necessary. While the impact of clinical depression and other mood disorders can have cascading negative repercussions in the business world, proper training and effective corporate responses to the situation will save a company untold amounts of money in lost profits. In all cases, it is important to maintain compassion and keep the

best interests of the company in mind, while attempting to help employees resume their status as a functional employee.

2.7.4 Stress

The International Labour Organisation explained that stress occurs in a wide range of work circumstances but is often made worse when employees feel they have little support from supervisors and colleagues, or they have little control over work or how they can cope with its demands and pressures. The International Labour Organization emphasized that work stress is recognized world-wide as a major challenge to worker's health and the healthiness of their organization (ILO 1986:1992). In addition, Nel et.al (2006, p. 291) say that personal factors also influence stress. Type A personalities, who feel driven to always be on time and meet deadlines, often place themselves under the greater stress than do other.

Matteson (2002, p. 266) elaborated that stress mean different things to different people. He said, from a laypersons' perspective, *stress* can be described as feeling tense, anxious, or worried. Scientifically, these feelings are all manifestations of stress experience, a complex, programmed response to perceived threat that can have both positive and negative results. The term "stress" it has been defined in literally hundreds of ways. Virtually all of the definitions can be placed into one of the two categories, stress can be defined as either a *stimulus* or a *response*. In a stimulus definition, stress is seen partially as a response to stimulus, called a stressor. A stressor is a potentially harmful or threatening external event or situation.

Most research on stress has it that much of the stress experienced by employees originates from home and work organization and together the different forms affect employee's behavior and performance. In addition, researchers at the National Institute of Mental Health in America, as quoted by Akabas and Kurzman (2005, p. 24), studied anxiety and depression associated with three of life's most important adults roles: being a worker, spouse and parent. In their study they uncovered ten "life strains" linked to these roles and concluded that by far the greatest number of "life strains" were

associated with work and occupation. Matteson (2002, p. 267) listed physical problems associated with stress to include high blood pressure (hypertension), ulcers, colitis, heart disease, arthritis, skin disease, allergies, headaches, neck and lower back pain and cancer. In addition, Matteson mentioned that stress in the workplace is also costly to employers, as reflected in lower productivity, reduced motivation and increased errors and accidents. High stress is related to increases in turnover intentions and counter-productive behaviors such as theft and drug and alcohol abuse. Job stress contributes to spiraling health care costs/medical expenses.

2.8 Conclusion

Work, or its absence, is inevitably a central issue in the lives of the client's that occupational social workers serve. Work plays a significant role in the lives of adults. In the past, employees were only understood as employees at the workplace but not in their totality as a whole person, thus were expected to perform their duties despite what was happening to them after normal working hours. This traditional way of looking at employees is phasing out as the world of work has become more demanding and society is more challenged than ever by many social problems. Nowadays, life has become expensive and human beings are expected to earn an income, to be able to maintain themselves and feed their family. Most of the employees at a given workplace are parents or spouses and as human beings they can experience personal problems outside work that can interfere with their work performance. The next chapter will address organizational factors that may impact negatively upon the employee.

CHAPTER 3: ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS, EAP AND EWP

3.1 Introduction

The nature of work and the workplace environment has changed greatly and necessitates the initiation and implementation of work-based programmes. This chapter explains briefly some of the organizational factors that may impact on an employee's wellbeing and job performance. The Social Security Commission as a workplace is used as a case study to assess the need to develop a comprehensive Employee Wellness Programme. The development of an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is discussed before the concise differences between EAP and Employee Wellness Programmes (EWP) are explained.

3.2 Organizational Factors

As mentioned earlier that this research aims at identifying personal and work-related problems impacting on employees wellbeing and performance. It is noted that there are quite a number of factors/dynamics that play a role in a working environment and can influence how employees function or perform their duties at the workplace. Some of these factors are as follows:

3.2.1 The Organizational Climate

Organizational climate proves difficult to define as many other have defined it differently. According to Isaksen and Ekvall (2007, p. 105), organizational climate is a recurring pattern of attitudes, feelings and behaviors that characterize life in an organization. Organizational climate is important due to its potential to influence different organizational and psychological processes. Communication, problem solving, decision-making, learning and motivation can all be affected by the organizational climate. This in turn might have an impact on the effectiveness and productivity of the organization as well as the work environment and employee wellbeing in the work place, they concluded.

In addition, Manning (2004, p.114) attempted to simplify the definition by saying that “organizational climate is the weather system that determines how people feel at work”. He further said that, organizational climate is determined by two factors. One, hygiene factors, i.e. factors that are considered to be the normal expectations of employees, covering working conditions, pay, job titles, benefits, application of organizational policies and procedures, etc. These are important and the organization has to get them right or they will be constant irritants to employees. Two, context factors are the strategic directions of the organization, including support, trust, respect, communication, and so on. The context factors drive organizational performance. When employees feel that these factors are absent or weak, underperformance and dysfunctional behavior are to be expected.

3.2.2 Organizational Culture

A culture is defined “as a shared pattern of meanings that acts as a template in constructing reality, (Barnes 2003, p. 234). He further stated that culture is the arrangement of meaning; it shapes every aspect of organizational life. Attitudes to customers, work practices, communication, flexibility, learning and innovation are just some of the key factors that find expressions through an organizational culture. According to Guest, quoted in the Human Capital Management (2007, p. 80), corporate culture is created on three levels: through perceptions, through the basic values held by staff members and through the subsequent behavior. He further said, power is at times abused to make emotional decisions and to allow certain behavior to thrive and that in turn forms a certain culture. In addition, Beach (2007, p.168) stated, some organizational cultures are bad for the organization and its employees and thus need to be changed. The effects of a bad culture are mentioned by Matteson (2002, p.272), when he said “high levels of political behavior in organization can be a source of stress for many employees. Office politics are consistently cited as a primary stressor in organizations. Political activity, game playing and power struggles can create friction, heighten dysfunctional competition between individuals and groups and increase stress.

Many employees are likely to leave organizations because it becomes highly politicized and a stressful place to work".

Beach (2007) further stated "effort to change a bad culture can be accomplished slowly, as evolution; each with its own strengths and drawbacks". He warned that cultural change is stressful for everyone involved and it requires organizations to be particularly adroit to carry it through successfully. This includes knowing how to function politically with both employees and management. On the other hand, Guest, quoted in the Human Capital Management (2007, p. 80), mentions that a number of interventions can be employed in an effort to alter the culture of an organization. He stated that the focus should be on changing behavior and one has to start implementing new behavior, describe its purpose to employees and organization and the behaviors need to permeate into your system. He further mentioned that some behavior should be incentivized to bring about desirable change. The second technique he mentioned of is that training to instill new work methods.

3.2.3 Leadership

The aspect of leadership is fundamental as to how employees perform their duties. According to Manning (2004, p. 100) there are many definitions of what is leadership, but they all come down to one thing that "as a leader in any organization, your job is to get results through others. Make them shine, and they will make you shine". He made a comparison that says in nature, systems organize themselves while in human affairs; someone has to do the organizing. He further said the more complex the world becomes; the more organizing there is to do.

Manning (2004, p. 34) concluded, in organization, "someone has to provide direction. Someone has to inspire action, assign tasks, align efforts and encourage learning and the sharing of new knowledge. And someone has to ensure that new strengths are encouraged to build new competitive advantages or improve service provision". At the workplace there are employees who have different ideas and insight, one does not have

to lock them outside, but rather encourage participation to solicit ideas and acknowledge potential to build a better team.

Manning further said, certain decisions are for management to make, however other decisions are to be made by others and these will bring out empowerment – ideal in an ever changing environment. Good leadership skills are required when an organization is changing, as some employees might be enthusiastic, while some may be not. However, acknowledging transformation in an organization, one should not ignore the importance of influencing the whole team. In contrast, if that is not applied, divisions become apparent and employees forms cliques that are not good for the organization. In addition, Beach (2007, p. 168) suggested that to avoid division among employees, management should understand the culture of the organization, the units/departments, the beliefs and values that influence expectation regarding how employees should be treated, how they should treat each other, and so on.

3.2.4 Workforce Diversity

Diversity is viewed by Nelson and Quick (1997), quoted by Nel et.al (2006, p. 178), to encompass all forms of difference between individuals, including culture, gender, age, ability, religious affiliation, personality, economic class, social status, military attachment and sexual orientation". In addition, Nel et al (2004) went on to say that workforce diversity is a powerful force for change in organizations and change itself is a force to be reckoned with in companies. They emphasized the influence of cultural diversity on organizational behavior can be massive as culture can be an asset or a liability. It can be an asset when shared beliefs economize communications and facilitate decision making. As a result organizational efficiency is achieved. However, they cautioned that a strong culture can also be a liability when it is not appropriate to a specific organizational environment and its overall strategy.

In addition, Gummer (1998), quoted by Akabas and Kurzman (2005, p. 139), suggested true diversity is just not a matter of accepting that discrimination is bad and then seeking fairness by including differences, nor is it a matter of including varied populations and

leaving them, in their own niche, to take care of their own customers, markets or individuals seeking services. Rather, diversity is a matter of inclusiveness, of organizational learning and effectiveness, where we learn from each other and end up doing better because we understand more, consider more and are enriched by the differences among us. Carnochan & Austin (2002), quoted by Akabas and Kurzman (2005), stated that management should be directed at establishing an ongoing learning environment. This includes creating objectives that provide knowledge and information about the variations in cultures, help staff identify feelings about the different cultures and train for skills on how to interact with clients and co-workers who are of those other cultures.

3.2.5 Management

According to Wikipedia (2009), management in business and human organization activity is simply the act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals. Management comprises the formulation of corporate policy and the planning, organizing, staffing and leading, as well as directing, of an organization (a group of one or more people or entities) for the purpose of accomplishing a goal. Generally, the size of management can range from one person in a small firm to hundreds of managers in multi-national companies. In a large organization the board of directors formulates the policy, which is implemented by the chief executive officer (CEO).

In addition, Beach (2007, p. 1) commented on management issues by first stating that management problems involving employees stem from conflicting expectations or from failures on the part of either the employees or managers to meet the other's expectations. Secondly, good employee management is not solely about efficiency and productivity. He says every manager's job also includes a responsibility to work with individuals employees to establish mutual expectations about their respective responsibilities and how they each should behave towards the other in order to create an atmosphere that both enhances performances and builds commitment to the organization.

3.2.6 Organizational Structure

The structure of an organization may be defined as the sum total of the way in which its labour is divided into specified tasks and the degree of coordination achieved between tasks (Nel et al, 2006, p. 20). They further said structure also has an important impact on human resources. Ideally, organizational structure should enhance human resources management service delivery and managerial and supervisor empowerment along all “sharp edges” of all business operations. A bureaucratic structure that is inflexible will not allow such service delivery. However, flatter organizations are more common today to promote initiative and use of employee’s potentials. The latter includes an employee wellness programme. In addition, Nel et al (2006, p. 66) stated that structure does not only refer to organizational charts, positional titles and job titles. It also includes formal communication, group relationships and authority networks.

3.2.7 Communication

According to Schuler (1998, p. 137) “communication methods and channels used in organizations usually determine the effectiveness of communication between the various groups, such as between supervisors and subordinates, employee groups and the employer”. He said effective communication at all levels in an organization is therefore essential. In the employment relations context the means of communication, such as telephones, memos or even personally delivered messages, is not the most important factor. What is important is not what is said, but also how it is said. Schuler (1998) explained that communication in an organization is indispensable as it can increase the effectiveness of employees in carrying out their daily tasks. He recommended that effective communication should be a top priority as it results in higher productivity and greater co-operation in an organization.

Schuler explains that employees can give of their best only if they understand exactly what they have to do, why they have to do it and to what extent they are achieving their targets. If communication is not systematic, employees who are affected by change will not understand the reason for these changes and they will resist them. He put an emphasis on the employment relation policy that provides means to specify the

relationship between employer and employees and structure for communication. If communication is well taken care of, the organization can gain several advantages through effective employer to employee downward communication:

- Commitment to the job is improved as the provision of information helps to build trust and motivate employees. Trust and motivation improve the commitment of employees towards achieving organizational goals.
- Grapevine distortion is reduced – which is inevitable in informal communication. Regular and formal communication serves to reduce such distortion since workers come to expect an official version instead of giving credence to rumors.
- Feedback is elicited: formal communication usually elicits a response from the receiver. This response provides valuable information and feedback to the sender, which enable them to assess the opinions and reactions of the interested parties.
- The status of supervision is improved – to possess and impart information confers status. If management wants its supervisors to enjoy status in the eyes of employees, one way to achieve this is to make supervisors the bearers of management information to employees.
- Employees are involved in change – it is human nature to resist change. Advance communication of a proposed or pending change allows employees time to evaluate it and prepare for it. They are then more likely to co-operate with the proposed changes.
- The disciplinary system is more effective – employees accept the authority of management and see the disciplinary procedure as a means used by management to eliminate unacceptable behavior in the organization.
- The management of organizational and human resource should evolve a definite policy as to what should or should not be communicated to employees and at what times.

3.2.8 Training and Development

Training is defined by De Cenzo & Robbins (1994), quoted by Nel et.al. (2006, p. 426), as a learning experience, in that it is a relatively permanent change in an individual that will improve his or her ability to perform on the job. Its purpose, in the work situation, is to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future needs of the organization. It is believed that training brings about behavior changes required to meet management's goals for the organization.

Schuler (1998, p. 245) viewed development to be a broad, ongoing, multi-faceted set of activities aimed to bring someone or an organization up to another threshold of performance, often to perform some job or new role in the future. It is noted by Nel et al, (2006, p. 468) that the dynamics of the contemporary work environment demands formal training and development programmes, and the workplace should be understood to be a nurturing environment, marked by the culture of learning. They suggested that an organization needs to have a training and development policy which should be viewed as the managerial attitude. It can be seen as the perception of the importance of the human resources potential, to enhance company goal achievements by means of investment in the training and development efforts of the organization. They recommended that an organization needs to base its training and development policy on an integration of job content training, as well as management skills and leadership training in - accordance with the various career levels. Observed benefits of training and development include:

- Increase job satisfaction and morale among employees
- Increase employee motivation, efficiencies in processes resulting in financial gain
- Increase capacity to adopt new technologies and methods
- Increase innovation in strategies and products and reduce employee turnover
- Enhance company image, e.g., conducting ethics training (not a good reason for ethics training).

3.2.9 Health and Safety

Dessler (1997), quoted by Nel. et al (2006 p. 298), stated that some jobs in themselves are inherently dangerous; overloaded work schedule, night shifts and a psychological climate of hostility caused by dissatisfaction among employees, tend to increase employee's susceptibility to ill health and work accidents. He further said that at certain workplaces there can be unsafe conditions. He added that certain personal characteristics also serve as a basis for unsafe behavior, such as a tendency to take risks and develop undesirable attitudes. Implementing programs activities to reduce unsafe conditions and acts are an employer's first line of defence. Dessler (1997) suggests it will lower health costs and help avoid unnecessary accidents and problems at the workplace. He also strengthened the notion of having intervention at the workplace when he stated that it is good if employers use ergonomic principles to design jobs in such a way that physical hazards are removed or reduced.

3.2.10 Organizational Change

The environment of the workplace is clearly in a state of flux, related in many ways to the chaotic internal and external environmental conditions experienced by the world of work (Akabas & Kurzman, 2005, p. 161). They further said it is the unknown and the unexpected that most employees and organizations tend to avoid. In addition, Schuler (1998, p. 612) mentioned that many changes are made without advance warning, thus changes in organizations are often stressful because they usually involve something important and are accompanied by uncertainty. He further mentioned that although rumors often circulate that a change is coming, the exact nature of the change is left to speculation. Employees at the workplace become concerned about whether the change will affect them, perhaps by displacing them or by causing them to be transferred. The result is that the uncertainty surrounding a change yet to come cause many employees to suffer from stress. In addition, Schuler said companies have been finding that down-sizing is a legitimate reason why many employees are stressed.

3.3 Some Effects of Organizational Problems

3.3.1 Organizational Stress

Organizational stress is defined by Schuler (1998, p. 611) as a condition of uncertainty and anxiety resulting from workplace conditions. He said the four common stressors for many employees include the following **four S's:** supervisors, salary, security and safety. Petty work rules and relentless pressure for more production are major stressors that employees associate with supervisors. Both deny the employee's need to control the work situation and to be recognised and accepted. Salary is a stressor when it is perceived as being distributed unfairly. Schuler further explained that employees experience stress when they are not sure whether they will have their jobs next month, next week or even the next day. For many employees, lack of job security is even more stressful than holding jobs that are generally unsafe. At least the employees know the job risks, whereas the lack of job security creates a continued state of uncertainty.

In addition, the effect of stress is noted to differ among people as experienced events occurring in their lives vary. When something happens, Schultz and Schultz (2006) stated that people become anxious, tense and fearful because stress involves physiological and psychological responses. They said dramatic physiological changes occur during stress as adrenaline released from the adrenal glands speeds up all bodily functions. Blood pressures rises, heart rate increases and extra sugar is released into the bloodstream. The increased blood circulation brings additional energy to the brain and muscles, making the person stronger and more alert to cope with the threat. It is noted that a stressful situation mobilizes and directs one's energy, boosting it beyond its normal level. It is concluded that behaviour response to stress may vary by gender, however the physiological changes induced by stress are experienced by both male and female. It is cautioned that when physical health has declined, resistance has been lowered and bodily energy is then reduced. As a result motivation and job performance are bound to suffer.

A question is posed as to what makes a difference? Why are employees not affected in the same ways? According to Schultz and Schultz (2006, p. 200) “the difference seems to lie in the level of job satisfaction controllers get from their work. Those who report being satisfied with their jobs suffer fewer harmful effects of stress. Those who are very dissatisfied with their jobs show many more stress-related effects. Besides, not all stress is considered harmful. Challenges related to stress can be motivating and positively related to job satisfaction. Hindrance related to stress is associated with frustration and low job satisfaction. High job satisfaction contributes to health and longevity. It is recommended that the best practice with regard to stress management is to prevent stress happening or, where employees are already experiencing stress, to prevent it from causing serious damage to their health, or to the health of their organization (WHO, 2003).

3.3.2 Absenteeism

According to the Wikipedia (2009) “frequent absence from the workplace may be indicative of poor morale. Certain employers implemented absence policies which make a distinction between absences for genuine illness and absence for inappropriate reasons; this is to better manage absenteeism. Employers often excuse absenteeism caused by medical reasons if the worker supplies a doctor's note or other form of documentation. It is observed that some employees choose not to show up for work and do not call in advance, which businesses may find to be unprofessional and inconsiderate. Nelson & Quick (2008) quoted by the free encyclopedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Absenteeism) brought to light that employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs are absent more frequently. They went on to say that the type of dissatisfaction that most often leads employees to miss work is dissatisfaction with the work itself, especially when the work environment is considered to be stressful. Absenteeism put a strain on those who do turn up to work, as they end up completing the tasks of others and the absenteeism cycle continues.

3.3.3 Trust

According to Manning (2004, p. 104) trust holds things together and it oils the wheels of progress in the organization. He further elaborated that in a high-trust organization, you can focus on your work without having to watch your back. Communication is open and honest. In contrast, in low-trust organizations, you can never be sure that what you hear is true, or that you have got the whole story. Politic is rife, you have to decipher every utterance and action, and “get things in writing”. When trust is missing due to various reasons at the workplace, things quickly come apart. Based on that, Manning mentioned “trust is both fragile and fleeting; it can be destroyed far more quickly and easily than you can create it”. He went on to say, the risk that it will evaporate is one of the gravest threats any organization faces, thus he suggested that the only way to build trust is to act in trustworthy way and consistently over time.

3.4 Social Security Commission as a “Workplace”

The SSC is a social entity, it administers public funds and its clients are mostly those in dire need of immediate and quality services because of the different experiences that lead to them claiming from the fund. The SSC developed a Policy on Employee Assistance Programme in 2002, with a primary objective to, “sustain morale and productivity and to retain the services of valued employees of the Commission” (SSC Policy and Procedure Manual, 2002). This attempt of the SSC was to address the emotional and psychological needs of its employees, nevertheless seven years down the line, it was observed that the policy was not implemented and it employees experienced personal and work-related problems. Thus, an Occupational Social Work student engaged in this research project, to identify the specific experienced problems. The research data will be used to develop a comprehensive Wellness Programme as there seems to be a need to create a supportive and favorable working environment. This will be done through the need assessment, which is defined by Robert and Kusy (1995, p. 177) as a systematic exploration of the way things are and the way they should be. A need assessment in this context promotes employee participation as their programme is being developed.

Historically, social agencies seem to be so involved with the needs of clients and demands for accountability, whether publicly or privately funded, that they tend to "get on with work" while forgetting, or even ignoring, the importance of their own employees in the process (Akabas & Kurzman, 2005, p. 195). They further emphasized the need to "create a supportive work environment in agencies delivering social services, not just because of the importance of gaining commitment from the labour force as the single prime factor of production necessary to achieve outcomes goals, but to ensure the credibility of the potential contribution to work of the employees". The authors attributed these to the workplace as it is known to be an ideal location for early detection of employees with an "unhealthy lifestyle" as these issues may place individual's physical and mental health at risk and constrain their ability to meet job requirements.

3.4.1 Vision of the Social Security Commission

The Social Security Commission aspires to be a "household name in Namibia" through administering the funds for the provision of Social Security Benefits to the Namibian workforce and their dependents. Five main strategic goals with specific departmental objectives have been set to serve as guiding tools in administering public funds:



Figure 1: SSC Strategic Objectives 2008-2009

The provision of social security services had increased since its inception to offer financial assistance to it beneficiaries. Just like other social security services in the other part of the world, the SSC provides cash benefits in the event its member's earning power being permanently ceased or interrupted due to ill health, or by any other event, and provides compensation in case of death.

3.4.2 Nature of Work at Social Security Commission

The role and function of the Commission is stipulated in Part IV of the state-owned Enterprises Governance Act, Act No. 2 of 2006 and the Social Security Act, Act No. 34 of 1994, Part II. Management and staff are expected to observe their ethical obligations to the highest standards in dealing with all its stakeholders, customers, investors and the community. The Social Security Commission is known to be committed to principles of integrity and accountability. Commissioners conduct business in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. The Namibian Daily Newspaper (29 January 2009) reported that SSC has worked tremendously well in 2008 as:

- The Social Security Commission has paid out more than N$73 million in benefits to its members since the beginning of the 2008/09 Financial Year in March until December 2008. The Maternity leave, Sick leave and Death benefit Fund, MSD, paid out more than N$60 million alone, compared to N$30, 5 million the previous year, while the Employees' Compensation Fund, ECF, paid out N$12, 8 million compared to just over N$13, 2 million the previous year.
- Maternity leave beneficiaries received the biggest chunk amounting to just over N$41 million – an increase of 138% as compared to the N$17, 5 million paid for maternity leave benefits during the same period in 2007. This sharp increase in maternity leave benefit payments can be attributed to the adjustment of MSD benefits last year. At the beginning of March 2008, the Commission adjusted its MSD benefits, with qualifying maternity leave beneficiaries receiving 100% of their earnings up to N$6,000.00, compared to N$2,400.00 per month for maternity leave benefits previously.
- The amount paid for sick leave benefits under the MSD Fund almost doubled at N$7, 8 million last year, compared to about N$4 million in 2007. Death benefits amounted to N$5,2 million - an increase of about 17% in the money paid out, which translates roughly into just over 1500 deaths reported to the Commission for the period 1 March to 31 December 2008. Medical expenses for employment related injuries or injuries on duty, amounted to about N$6, 6 million, while an

amount of just over N$2, 7 million was paid as compensation to members who sustained serious employment-related injuries. Similarly, the Accident Pension Fund paid out more than N$3, 4 million to beneficiaries of members who sustained fatal work-related injuries.

- Despite these millions paid out to beneficiaries during the reporting period, the Commission has also been faced with the challenge of a growing list of names of beneficiaries, who submitted claims but failed to collect their monies. These monies have now accumulated to more than N$1, 3 million as at 31 December 2008. This is despite concerted efforts by the Commission to reach the potential beneficiaries, which includes amongst other means, by availing the list at some Regional Councils and trade union offices, as well as publishing the names in the local print media, while the names were also announced on most radio stations countrywide.
- Meanwhile, the SSC has also printed and dispatched more than 140-thousand social security cards since the resumption of the card-printing project in October 2007. The design of the new cards has been enhanced and several features have been added for easier administration and distribution.
- The SSC is urging government employees, especially those from the Ministries of Education as well as Safety and Security, to visit the nearest Social Security Commission office in Walvis Bay, Keetmanshoop, Oshakati and Windhoek to collect their cards, by presenting their identification cards or passports. Employers whose employees did not receive their cards as yet are also urged to request the social security cards for their employees, while an administrative levy of N$10.00 will be charged for all lost, stolen or damaged social security cards.

3.5 The Historical Development of EAP and EWP

Govender and Terblanche (2009, p. 394) mentioned that EAPs as they exist today are a result of decades of evolution. This evolution has been influenced by the history and

dynamics of the organizations which house them and the occupational groups that have taken responsibility for human service needs. In addition, Marion Borcherds (2009), the Director of the Wellness Department at Gauteng in South Africa stated that Employee Wellness Programmes have been present in South African organization for more than a decade and have grown exponentially. It was maintained that the presence of EWPs in the South African environment is nothing new, the nature, scope and focus of such programmes has evolved substantially over time – primarily in response to changing in conditions within society, the legislative environment, the workplace and more recently, the healthcare industry. Unlike, EAPs, the term EWP emerged with varieties as it encompasses a range of programs – different not only in approaches to, and breath of, services offered but also in their organizational placement, structure and operation.

3.5.1 Development of Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) in the World

According to Bell (2003, p.45), in the early nineteenth century, the unionization of the labour force in the United States and the growing impact of organized strikes on commerce coincided with some companies providing various forms of assistance to their employees. Assistance included, for example, the provision of subsidized housing, safe working conditions, pension schemes, medical care and educational and recreational facilities. In addition, in 1917 forms of employee's assistance continued to offer varies assistance to employees who have work performance problems that resulted from some type of personal problem, stated the EAP website.

Most EAPs began in the 1930s to 1940s to address employer concerns over alcoholism among white-collar workers. It is further revealed that gradually EAP programs evolved and began treating mental, emotional and financial problems, and other problems caused by alcohol and drug use. Furthermore, it was also reported that a commitment to the program was solidified in 1983 when New York State formed the Statewide Employee Assistance Program to oversee the growth of this initiative. While extensive work on employee assistance programmes was explored in New York, the concept spread to other continents, including Africa. The literature will now look at the employee

assistance program in Southern Africa, specifically in South Africa and Namibia respectively.

3.5.2 Employee Assistance Programme in South Africa

According to Maiden (1992, p.15), Employee Assistance Programmes emerged in South Africa in the early 1980s. Gerber (1995, p.31) stated that EAPs were initiated in the private sectors of South Africa in the 1980's and originally focused on alcoholism and substance abuse. In government departments, EAPs began functioning around the 1990s and fell under human resource departments, just as in the private sectors. EAPs in South Africa and other countries expanded from initial clinical concerns to a more holistic perspective that included both clinical services to individual employees and organizational services to groups of employees and organization as a whole. A clinical focus of earlier EAPs on the problem of individuals is reflected in the two definitions of EAPs. The first definition is of the South African Chapter of Employee Assistance Professional Association (EAP –SA 1999:4), which defines EAP as:

- A work-site based programme designed to assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employees impaired by personal concerns including, but not limited to, health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional stress or other personal concerns which may adversely affect employee job performance.

The second definition is by Berman et al. (1991) quoted by Bell (2003, p.14), who view EAPs as a programme that:

- Provides confidential services to assess employee's personal problems, linking the employee to the most appropriate resources to solve the problem, and facilitating the transition of employee back to their job.

Both definitions aim for change and adaptation and hence the focus of EAPs remained on the individual employee. However, in more recent years, a review on development of EAP in South Africa conducted by Harper (1999), quoted in Bell (2003, p. 23) found that in addition to addressing employees personal problems, many EAPs were also assisting

employees in coping with the work environment and proactively addressing the issues of the day. It is recommended that taking in consideration personal and organization problems at the workplace, the industrial social worker or other practitioner should see the importance of implementing strategic intervention based at three levels:

- The micro level: The provision of counseling or clinical services to individuals who are experiencing problems (personal or organizational).
- The meso level: Provision of educational, preventative and therapeutic services to a group of employees at the workplace who are experiencing common problems, or who want to understand their roles within the process of helping others at the workplace.
- The macro level: Targets the organization as whole and this involves the development and launching of policy that will impact the functioning of the whole organization.

According to Bell (2003, p. 76), the modern view of progressive employers is that their human capital is the most valuable investment any company can make and this depends on provisions made by the employers, e.g. condition of services and the types of management and leadership style. Langley (1999), also quoted by Bell, emphasizes that EAPs can be viewed as the “maintenance division for human machinery” and that it is often “more cost effective to repair rather than discard faulty assets”. She further states that most employees need only minor repair. Only small percentages become liabilities. Liabilities can be disposed of and assets retained. Constructive confrontation, checks and modification through correction action, which an EAP does, enhances productivity and organizational efficiency. Bell (2003) concluded that the workplace has become an increasingly attractive and effective location for the delivery of programmes that offer clinical and practical forms of assistance to employees.

Govender and Terblanche (2009, p. 394) stressed that in South Africa the last two decades of EAP development have been strongly influenced by: transformation issues of the changing political climate; increased focus on managing the impact of diseases, especially HIV and AIDS; occupational Health and Safety; and organizational

development and other issues outside of the traditional focus on psychosocial issues of the troubled employees. The two authors recommended in their study that the employment sector, including organized labour and business management forums, needs to promote the concept of EAPs to their membership, facilitate the implementation and support the development of EAPs within member organizations. They further stated that organized labour needs to play a more significant role - not just initiating, but also advocating for, designing, supporting, managing and administering employee assistance. Given the adversarial relationship between employers and organized labour, this may result in the higher utilization of such programmes, because employees generally trust their union more than their employer.

3.5.3 Employee Wellness Programme in South Africa

It was noted that EAPs only looked at the provision of individual counseling and not incorporating general promotion of health and wellness, this gap resulted in the development of Wellness Concept. Erasmus, Swanepol, Schenk, Van der Westheizen and Wessels (2005, p. 399) brought to the fore that for one reason or the other, employees may find themselves unable to strike a balance and healthy lifestyles. They mentioned that it is easy to note that many attributes leading to the imbalance not only negatively affects the employee's personal life but also performance of employee in the organization. They further argue that not all absenteeism cases are related to poor physical health, some are also attitudinal. Attitudinal cases affected by human resources management activities and practices and a host of other factors can also however be related to the sociological, psychological or mental well-being of a person, thus see Wellness Programme as a best solution to workplace issues.

With regard to the concepts of Wellness, Mademe mentioned in the State of the Public Report prepared in 2008 that there is no universally accepted definition of wellness, however many scholars and academic agreed to the theoretical description of wellness as a dynamic process of becoming aware of and making conscious choice towards a more balanced and healthy lifestyle. It was further elaborated that, when the concept of wellness wringles into people's ears it is only limited to physical wellness. Thus,

stressing the point that, Wellness exists in several dimensions and the most notable dimensions include; social wellness, physical wellness, emotional wellness, financial wellness, career wellness, intellectual wellness, environmental wellness and spiritual wellness. The dimension of Wellness programme encompasses different aspects that not necessary the once covered in EAPs. Mademe indicated his support for Wellness programme as he quoted the work of Matlala (1999) who states that, failure by organizations to adopt employee wellness into their culture will inevitably lead to the escalation of sickness and the deterioration of organizational performance.

In addition, Bratton and Gold (2007, p. 503) defines workplace wellness as any voluntary health improving programmed and activity, instigated by the employer to effect changes in behaviors of employees. They emphasized that this is mainly the reason why, wellness is viewed by many as a multi-dimensional state of being where individuals become aware of and make choices towards a more a successful existence by having a more balanced and healthy lifestyle, physical, mentally and spiritually. Example of wellness programs include: a smoke free workplace, employer sponsored sports, discounted gym facilities, health examinations offered to employees, health fairs hosted on premises, wellness newsletter, weight lose incentives, blood pressure testing, energized-based therapy seminars and employee assistance programs (EAP).

Looking the mentioned activities, it appears as that the dimension of looking at individual in relation to their working environment is left out and that what, the Occupational Social Work strives towards. This dimension strengthens the assessment of how to address individuals and at the same time consider organizational issues to foster a favorable working environment and recommend work enhancement programs. This understanding promotes the essences of generating knowledge through research to inform intervention and policies at the workplace.

Criticism on EAPs was brought to light by Bates and Thompson (2007) in their journal articles as they presented their findings to have found that, in recent years there has

been an increasing emphasis on employee welfare or, as it is being referred to with increasing frequency, "workplace well-being." They made it clear that, traditional approaches to such issues have tended to be either medicalized (via occupational health interventions) or individualized (for example, through employee assistance programs—EAPs). They proposed for a broader approach based on the problem-solving perspective of occupational social work. They argued that such a broader approach offers a sounder foundation for tackling workplace problems and promoting well-being in general and for addressing the challenges of loss, grief, and trauma in the workplace in particular.

The research is in supports of a broader approach because ensuring the work environment is conducive is sort of risk mitigation to possible economic, legal, psychological and moral consideration. Bratton and Gold (2007, p. 484) pointed out that, firstly, the economic consideration entails direct and indirect cost resulting from lost of production due to accident or illness and overtime payments necessary to make up for lost for production, retaining employees and medical aid. Secondly, placed an emphasis on legal consideration and this ais basically entangle with the individual rights and the negotiation of collective agreements between unions and management. Thirdly, a healthy organization can have a strong positive effect on the psychological contracts to strengthen employee commitment, motivation and loyalty. Fourthly, the moral consideration that speaks to the fact that healthy and wellness issues have implication for corporate responsibility and managerial ethics. All these show how Employee Wellness Programme is taking a holistic approach to wellness of employees.

3.5.4 Employee Assistance and Wellness Programmes in Namibia

The concept of an Employee Assistance and Wellness Programme is a relatively new in Namibia. Some private companies began to develop and implement Employee Assistance Programmes towards the end of 1990s. Just like in many other countries, the EAP concept was established and implemented with a primary focus of helping the “troubled employees” who are plagued by alcohol and substance use and abuse. It is also noted that changes in terms of focus, scope and structures of these programmes

varies depending on the understanding of the concepts. Different organizations developed employee's programmes to mainly mitigate the impacts of HIV/AIDS, obesity, exercise and nutritional programs at the workplace. In many Namibia workplaces, EAPs and EWPs tend to take on different forms in different organizations as they are broadly used to; deal with the HIV/AIDS pandemics and general safety of employees.

To be specific, the Social Security Commission, the EAP policy was drafted to mitigate the impacts of personal problems e.g. use of substance (alcohol and drugs) on job performance. The SSC EAP Policy of May 2002 highlighted its main objective as being to "assist employees whose personal problems adversely affect their job performance" through providing comprehensive counseling services.

3.5.5 EAP and EWP at the Workplace

Over time, employers began to realize the "troubled" employees caused financial liabilities due to absenteeism, accidents, damage to equipment, lowered productivity and excessive use of medical or disability benefits. This recognition created the milieu for the development of occupational mental health which focused initially on alcoholism, but as other personal and emotional problems were identified other problems were also included (Bell, 2003: p12). According to the Employee Assistance Programme Association, EAPs address team and individual performance and wellbeing in the workplace. EAPs include a mechanism for providing counseling and other forms of assistance**,** advice and information to employees on a systematic and uniform basis, and to recognized standards. EAPs have strategic interventions designed to produce organizational benefit - quantifiable outcome measurement - through a systems-lead approach and through human asset management.

On the other hand, EWP is viewed by many authors as a comprehensive programme developed to enhance or improve the overall health and wellness of employees for benefits of the organizational performance. In other words, EWP services are focused on the promotion or maintenance of good health, rather than the correction of poor health. Provisions of these programmes are supported by Akabas and Kurzman (2005,

p. 92) through an analysis that claims that while some observers envisioned employee's programme as a management tool to enhance employees, others conceptualized these programs as a new employees benefit to meet management needs, by preserving precious human and fiscal resources. There is great truth in the latter notion, as it can be seen in the definition of EWP - that EWPs are comprehensive, free and confidential workplace entitlements that are voluntarily sponsored by employers or trade unions or both. In-house (internal) and contract (external) EWPs respond to the human services needs of workers and their families and to the corresponding agendas of the work organizations. Compared to EAPs initial agenda, one sees the tremendous growth in the programme and its operations as it is accepted that EAPs offer less services, compared to EWPs. However, to a large extent, business should invest in the Employee Wellness Programme because it can address a host of additional problems, unlike EAPs.

According to Donovan (1984), quoted by Akabas and Kurzman (2005), "the provision of mental health and alcoholism treatment seems to contain overall health care costs because of significant reductions to the subsequent utilization of medical care". This comparison is made by Foote and Winslow (1978), who mentioned that alcohol abusers, anxious and depressed workers and those coping with situational stress make disproportionate use of EAPs, along with those who smoke, those who are overweight, who have low self esteem and who have performance problems. They thus suggested that many of these costs may be contained by EAPs programme through education, prevention and early interventions. Besides, the idea that education take place at the workplace is strengthen by Eichner 1973, quoted by Akabas and Kurzman (2005, p. 160,) as he said "the *workplace is, after all, the tertiary educational institution*, following school and family and thus employers should mitigate the impacts of personal and work-related problems among employees". It is therefore suggested that business should invest in the comprehensive Employee Wellness Programme because it looks at both employees and the organization as its clients.

All in all, the benefits of employee's programme at the workplace are known to be enormous. Schuler (1998, p. 602) mentioned that if organizations can reduce the rate and severity of occupational accidents, disease, and work-related stress levels and improve the quality of work life for their employees, the following benefits may then be apparent:

- More productivity due to fewer lost workdays
- Increased efficiency from a more committed workforce that enhances the image of the organization.
- Reduced medical and insurance costs
- Greater flexibility and adaptability in the workforce as a result of increased participation and an increased sense of ownership.

Literature on benefits of EWP indicated that there is significant evidence demonstrating the advantages of corporate wellness programmes and the long-term savings to the employer when employees are given an opportunity to take a personal interest in their own health and an active role in corporate wellness program activities.

3.5.6 Factors towards the Development of Employee Programmes

Businesses and organizations have various reasons why they are interested in investing money in the workplace programmes, be it EAPs, EWPs and other human services programs at the workplace. It is generally known that many reasons are manifested from the needs of employees at a specific work setting and organizational needs. Mogorosi's findings on reasons to establish such programmes are important as there are many organizations wishing to establish some kind of workplace-based services for their employees. Mogorosi (2009, p. 345) stated that usually the majority of work organizations establish programmes for practical reasons, including the expectation that such programmes will produce the intended results, whatever those may be. The United States's Bureau of National Affairs Report – known as the BNA Report (1987), as quoted by Mogorosi (2009), includes in its discussion the costs and benefits of such programmes - generally "employers do not establish EAPs for altruistic reasons. They

want to know quantitatively that the money they spend on EAPs will yield some tangible benefits to their firms in terms of reduced costs."

There are numerous reasons as to why EAPs are initiated and these reasons are discussed by different authors and researchers as they listed by Mogorosi (2009), such as: Akabas & Kurzman (1982), Myers (1984), BNA Report (1987), Balgopal & Patchner (1988), Smith (1988), Balgopal (1989),Roman (1990), Sonnenstuhl & Trice (1990), Du Plessis (1991), Kurzman (1993), Josias (2005) and Pace (2006). These reasons are tabulated as follows:

Table 1: Rationale for Employee Assistance Programme

- Contribute to efforts to humanize the workplace
- Meeting the needs of changing work environment
- Meeting the needs of changing workforce
- Helping to improve employee work performance
- Containing and reducing organizational costs, in relation to attending to employee challenges and problems, such as acclimatization, absenteeism, discrimination and substance abuse.
- Meeting employees health and general wellbeing needs
- Helping to maintain and increase employee work commitment and loyalty
- Helping organizations with evaluation and feedback about the reaction of employees on variety of issues
- Improving general management vs employee relations
- Meeting legal and social responsibilities of organization

With the Namibian perspective, the elimination of unnecessary costs due to losses in human resources (skills and productive capability) is vital - employers realize that there is a finite pool of skilled workers. There is an increasing demand for well-educated workers with sound verbal, writing and computational skills. The creation of a safe and favorable working environment is valued, and a desire to help employees who are

viewed as organisational assets, are some of the reasons most organizations set up work-based programmes.

3.5.7 Advantages and Disadvantages of Internal and External EAPs

Some organizations have problems deciding on the forms of support they wish to provide to employees and the type of strategy to use (internal or external services). Different authors have different views: Spitzer and Favorini (1993), quoted in Akabas and Kurzman (2005), mentioned that “the external EAPs support is in a better position than is the internal EAPs, to provide a broad range of comprehensive services, such as twenty-four hour emergency coverage; wellness programmes; consultation on regulations for a drug-free workplace; resources for dependent care; and, increasingly, managed mental health care”. Studies also indicate that external programmes show a significantly higher rate of employee self-referral and an increased client perception of confidentiality (Straussner, 1988; Hartwell et al, 1996; & Blair 1987). In contrast, Harlow’s (1987) study and Straussner’s research (1988), referred to by Akabas & Kurzman (2005, p. 121), found that internal EAPs had three times more referrals from supervisors than the external programs, greater accessibility to potentials clients, higher employee visibility, better outreach and services to substance abusing workers, and greater utilization by employees who were people of color. It is also noted that because they are on-site, internal programs can provide “rapid feedback to the organization when systematic difficulties develop” and in-house managers develop an ability to “sense the environment”.

Literature on EAPs and EWPs brought to light that there are some external providers who acknowledge that “the in-house programs create mechanisms through which intervention can be made quickly and appropriately at the point of breakdown in the employee’s performance. The professional counselor, since he/she has available knowledge of, and contact with, the industrial community and its unique character, is able to facilitate a solution that is immediate and meaningful to the employee. This allows the professionals located within the organization a clear advantage over the practitioner in the community agency who is isolated from the employee’s work

environment and lacks familiarity with the milieu, management and groups with whom the employee must interact". Straussner's research found that only in-house programs saw advocacy as one of EAP responsibilities.

3.6 Conclusion

At the workplace it is acknowledged that employees interact constantly with each other and the environment that they work in. On many occasions it has been observed that employees, as human beings, may take their human problems to the world of work and they take work-related problems home to their families. With that understanding, employers has realized that in order to foster high performance and productivity among employees, they need special programmes and activities at the workplace to help employees manage and cope with personal problems, as well as problems induced by the work environment. Thus, Employee Wellness Programme at the workplace should be understood and viewed as a return on investment for employees and the employers.

CHAPTER 4: DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The research methodology chapter comprehensively describes the research process and procedures. Within the context of design and methodology, this chapter explains the following: sampling for the purpose of collecting data and gathering information; research tools, limitations, procedures and pilot study for enhancing quality data; as well as data analysis and ethical concerns for meaningful interpretations and the protection of rights among Social Security Commission employees.

4.2 Research Design

Looking at the available literature on research design we see the there are a number of variations regarding the definition of the term “research design”. Authors Rubin and Babbie (2001) acknowledge that the two main elements which add meaning to the process of conducting research and are typically linked to the definition, cause confusion. Rubin and Babbie (2001), quoted by De Vos et.al (2006:132), explained this confusion when they stated that “research design” basically has two connotations. One connotation refers to alternative logical arrangements from which one or more can be selected, for example experimental research designs, correlation research designs, and others in the category. The second connotation deals with the act of designing the study in the broadest sense. This, they said, refers to all the decisions we make in planning the study – decisions not only about the overall type or design to use, but also about sampling, sources and procedures for collecting data, measurement issues and data analysis plans. In addition, other researchers and authors like Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) also draw a clear distinction by using the term “research design” for the first connotation referred to by Rubin and Babbie (2001) above, and the term “plan” or “programme” for the second connotation.

By virtue of the nature of this research, a hybrid of qualitative and quantitative design was employed to enrich the study with in-depth explanations of the research problem and which concurrently provide a quantifiable description of personal and work-related problems. Most importantly, perspectives from quantitative and qualitative research designs were used; firstly to describe the types of problems experienced by employees and secondly, to explore new ways of helping employees to better cope and manage the negative impacts of their experiences, so as enhance their overall wellbeing and job performance. This assessment of personal and work-related problems within the Social Security Commission is the first of its kind as:

- It is a new interest at the SSC workplace
- The subject of study is as yet unstudied at the SSC
- Research data and information is required to develop a comprehensive Employee Wellness Programme for SSC employees

The assessment of personal and work-related problems among employees of the Social Security Commission in Namibia was done through a survey utilizing a quantitative-descriptive design. A descriptive research design was used to obtain answers that described the experienced problems. On the other hand, the qualitative-exploratory design was employed through interviews, which were conducted to gain in-depth information from the SSC executive management team - as it is known that to implement a sound EWP at the workplace, the implementer needs the buy-in from management, which can only come if they are involved from the beginning. Engaging management in the discussion was done with two reasons in mind: one, to evaluate management's understanding of the concept of EWP and its benefits to employees and the SSC as whole; two, to obtain information on the impacts of problems observed by management, based on the assumption that they will know the impact and its effect on wellbeing and job performance, therefore they will have good reason to commit financially and otherwise.

4.3 Research Methodology

The research methodology section answers the question of how the data was collected and analyzed. Two methods of data collection were used as this was a triangulated research project: namely questionnaires and interviews. A questionnaire was forwarded to all employees at all branches of SSC and individual interviews were conducted with the executive management at the administration office. Statistical data analysis was used to analyze obtained data from the questionnaire and thematic content analysis was used to analyze information from the interviews. The chosen data collection methods were preferred as they enriched the study with descriptive information on the problems experienced; and helped to determine the strategic actions planned or envisaged to remedy the situation, ultimately creating a favorable working environment.

4.3.1 Sampling

The researcher used the 52 completed questionnaires for empirical work, including male and female, who worked at different departments and representing different branches. On the other hand, all seven executive management members were interviewed, no sampling was used. The strategy in this investigation was to select units that are judged to be representative and informative to the topic under investigation.

Purposive non-probability sampling was used for selecting participants for the interviews. Singleton et al., (1988), quoted by De Vos et al (2006: P 202), stated that this type of sample is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population. The purposive non-probability sampling was used to ensure that all branches were represented to enable the researcher to identify, describe and profile the different problems experienced right across the SSC, while management members were selected in order to begin stimulating their thinking, interests, and gain the support needed to implement EWP at the workplace. Management members were all in charge of departments and they were requested to share in-depth information on

the types of personal and work-related problems their subordinates were exposed to. They were also asked to highlight the perceived impacts and share their opinions on how the SSC can better manage such impacts. In addition, gaining management's support and commitment in the development of an Employee Wellness Programme at the SSC workplace is desired, as their support could help to foster effectiveness and successfulness of the programme.

4.3.2 Research Tools

Research tools are types of data collection tools, chosen in the process of collecting data and gathering information from survey participants. Two research tools were used: a questionnaire distributed to general employees, and interview schedules were made for executive management. Questionnaires were forwarded via intranet to all employees of the SSC.

4.3.3 Validity and Reliability

Strategies were developed and used to promote validity and reliability of the research:

- In this social research, it is required that the two measuring tools used must be objective and valid. Validity represents how variables measure what they are intended to measure and assess whether they add value to the description made in the study. In addition, reliability represents how reproducible the measures are when re-tested; and represents the stability or consistency of the measurement. In the same vein, it is also required that the qualitative research data must reflect the reality of the experience of participants to promote trustworthiness of data.
- The use of multiple research methods to study a phenomenon promotes validity and reliability as these methods both correlate the description of problems experienced by SSC employees.
- The quantitative research tool focused on the eligible population considered for the survey. Therefore, to administer the questionnaire, the sample size had to ensure that it included employees at all SSC branches. Importantly, this was fundamental in the process of measuring the aspect of reliability, as all SSC

workplaces are considered for the study. Thus research data will not be reliable if all branches are not represented.

- Individual interviews conducted with SSC management team members were recorded for better analysis and interpretation of information. The recording is a low inference descriptor which enhances interpretive validity that strives to ensure that the participants' viewpoints, thoughts, intentions and experiences are accurately understood and reported. The recording enables the researcher to listen carefully to what is said and draw out vital clues about the impacts of experienced personal and work-related problems at the workplace; and also list shared ideas about what should to be done to mitigate such impacts.
- Practically, this research is valid as a means to implement sound EWP and other related programs at this particular workplace. Moreover, this research will hopefully provide reliable guidelines for implementing an EWP or other work-related programs.

4.3.4 Trustworthiness of the Qualitative Study

Trustworthiness of research data was enhanced through the following aspects:

- Triangulation research tools used to collect data and emerged themes correlated, as personal and work-related problems highlighted by the respondents through the questionnaires were equally pinpointed during the interviews with management.
- To add meaning to the obtained research data, literature information was used to support, agree and dispute information.

4.4 Research Procedures

It is well understood that the study was concerned with the assessment of personal and work-related problems and their impact on wellbeing and job performance among SSC employees. In quantitative and qualitative design, different procedures were used and they are discussed as follows:

Quantitative – The process of collecting data was made through administering questionnaires. The sample size for a survey was calculated from the total population to determine how large a sample size would be needed from a given population in order to achieve findings with an acceptable degree of accuracy. Knowing that the SSC has 242 employees, it was calculated that 55 employees needed to complete the questionnaires, meaning one quarter of the population would be represented.

Qualitative - The process of collecting information was typically to start with a broad overview, then to narrow it down to the area of interest. A discussion guide was prepared to ensure all the pertinent points were covered and that spontaneous opinion could be gathered regarding why the research was taking place, before it began. The interview questions were exploratory in nature and open-ended. Participants were asked to respond to set questions and the interviewer probed and explored their responses to identify and define management's perceptions, opinions and feelings about employee's personal and work-related problems. In terms of practical procedures, firstly, a formal communication from the Public Relation Officer was sent out to all employees informing them about the upcoming Employee Wellness Survey. Thereafter, different steps were required to collect the quantitative data and gather qualitative information, as the table below demonstrates:

Table 2: Quantitative and Qualitative Procedures

Quantitative procedures	Qualitative procedures
⌗ Selected Questionnaire Focal Persons (QFP) at all branches ⌗ Provided QFP with information on the expected roles during the research week ⌗ QFP organized the Employee Wellness Survey Questionnaire box, marked it and placed it at the	⌗ Accessed email address of management members and their secretaries ⌗ Scheduled interview date and time ⌗ Forwarded Information sheet and Consent Forms ⌗ Collected signed Consent Forms ⌗ The researcher conducts individual

reception areas at all branches ⌗ Forwarded the questionnaire to SSC employees ⌗ Employees completed the questionnaire manually or electronically and dropped them on the Employee Wellness Survey Box placed in front of the reception area ⌗ End of the week, QFP removed the completed questionnaires and mailed them to the researcher.	interview with management members

Secondly, after the survey is conducted, the researcher thanked all participants for have taken part in the Wellness Survey, and the Questionnaire Focal Persons for co-coordinating the process and mailing the questionnaires to the researcher.

4.4.1 Pilot Study

De Vos et al (2006, p. 207) quoted Singleton et.al. (1988) emphasized that a pilot testing measuring instrument involves “trying it out on a small number of persons having characteristics similar to those of the target group of the respondents”. For the quantitative tool (questionnaire), the researcher performed a pilot study to develop, adapt, or check the feasibility of questions and to determine the reliability of the measures. Four employees, a combination of male and female were selected for the pilot study. Piloting of the qualitative tool (interview) was done with one Human Resource Manager. The pilot study helped the researcher fine-tune the study for the main enquiry and determine whether the methodology, sampling, instruments and analysis was adequate and appropriate” (Bless & Higson-Smith (2000), quoted by De Vos et.al, 2006).

The semi-structured interview for qualitative information consisted of (13) thirteen questions and these questions were piloted with one manager from the Human

Resource Department. The Human Resource department does not have a General Manager; instead two senior managers have been alternating in acting at the position, thus one will take part in the pilot study and one will be part of the final interview. The researcher informed the participants in the pilot study that they needed to be as frank as possible because their input would be considered to improve the effectiveness of the study. Employees who took part in the pre-test were informed that they would not form part of the final research.

4.4.2 Data Analysis

The analysis of research data and information was done by the researcher. For quantitative data, descriptive statistical analyses were used to summarize and describe the data. Data was organized manually before being analyzed on the computer. Data was then presented through the use of tables, graphs, pie charts, etc. In addition, detailed interpretation and conclusions were provided to give meaning to the presented data.

For the qualitative information, the information was tape recorded for better analysis and participants signed consent forms to allow for the interview to be recorded. Gathered information was listened to and analyzed in order to search for common themes and patterns essential to understanding the impact on performance of employees at the workplace. Thematic content analysis through coding was used to draw conclusions on the emerging themes.

4.5 Limitation

A formal communication was forwarded to all employees at SSC to alert them to the upcoming Employee Wellness Survey. This prepared them well in advance as all instructions and explanations were provided on the significance of the survey. The sample of 55 respondents out of the total population was expected to complete the

questionnaire and analysis and interpretation of quantitative data was made out of that sample. Seven (7) management members were interviewed.

- Employees are often reluctant to complete online questionnaires and the researcher was informed that SSC employees do not often participate in surveys. Due to the identified reluctance, the researcher and the Corporate Communication Department send out a communication to inform all employees about the upcoming Employee Wellness Survey.
- Exploratory research is very sensitive in nature and it could happen that some employees may become emotional as they relate to their own experiences of personal and work-related problems, thus arrangements were put in place for referrals to a Counseling Organisation for a debriefing session.
- For qualitative data gathering, there was no anonymity as interviewees gave consent to tape recording; recording compromised the principle of anonymity. Six interviewees gave consent and only one member of the executive objected to the recording. Her objection was respected and the researcher had to take notes.
- The SSC has five branches, with the main administration office in Windhoek. It is noted that each branch does not have the same number of employees – some have fewer employees compared to others and this may cause variation in terms of getting the same number of employees across branches. Thus there was flexibility in terms of quantity and gender of employees from respective branches in completing the questionnaires. This flexibility is permitted to ensure that all branches are represented despite lack of uniformity.
- In the analysis of data, there is an ever-present danger of misinterpretation, given the absence of the researcher at the time of (the respondents) completing the questionnaire. This was expected/ experienced mostly because there were open-ended questions. The analysis of quantitative and qualitative data was therefore done through a vigorous process to ensure that the research data was interpreted correctly. Statistical analysis was used to analyze quantitative data;

and data was presented in forms of percentages and an interpretation was given.

- It is acknowledged that using codes in qualitative data can be practically challenging, thus the codes with their definitions are written down to sure that they are applied consistently throughout the process of analyzing qualitative data. As the idea is to develop themes and to work out how they relate to each other, categories of understanding, aspects, causes, results and associates are identified.
- In verifying and enhancing validity and reliability of this research, the data was drawn from one specific organization (SSC). This process might not be applicable, relevant and accurate for usage in other organizations.

4.6 Ethical Concerns

The understanding that human beings are the subject in social research requires the researcher to be cautious regarding the set ethical standards which guide the data collection and information gathering process. The following research ethics were considered during the investigation to ensure that research data and information were not obtained at the expense of respondents.

4.6.1 Voluntary and Informed Consent – a formal communication was sent out to all employees to inform them of the upcoming survey and that everybody was eligible to complete the questionnaire, but on a voluntary basis. Management members were requested to complete an Informed Consent Form in order to be interviewed and to agree to recording of the interview.

4.6.2 Coercion or Force – the information sheet informed employees that it remained their right to withdraw from the research process if need be and no one would force them to complete the questionnaire or interview.

4.6.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality - survey respondents and interviewees are often asked to give open, honest personal responses about sensitive issues, concerns, perceptions and opinions on a variety of issues. Anonymity and confidentiality will be

highlighted on the information sheet and the questionnaire instructions. This would inform and reassure respondents that information will be treated with confidentiality; research data will be fully protected and only be used for the purpose of this research; and the participant's identity would not be revealed.

4.6.4 Since the subjects of the research are human beings and it is likely that they may need counselling after completing the questionnaire, arrangements were made for debriefing with Lifeline/Childline Namibia (a free Counselling Organisation). The contact details of a professional counsellor were provided on the Information Sheet.

4.7 Conclusion

A hybrid of *quantitative* and *qualitative research* design was considered for this investigation to enrich the study with a quantifiable description of the experienced personal and work-related problems; and in-depth information on the impact of such problems on the general wellbeing of employees and their job performance. The entire population was used for this research as low participation rate on surveys was previously reported. Thematic content data analysis and statistical analysis were used to assess the obtained data. This research has some limitations as has been outlined in this chapter. Finally, procedures were put in place to ensure that respondents were not subjected to pain, harm or force and that their information would be kept confidential.

CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents research data as analyzed and interpreted. The research data that was obtained was presented through graphs, tables and verbatim quotations. Findings are divided into four main themes. In the first place, the report provides demographic information of research respondents and thereafter the general knowledge regarding health and wellness. Afterwards, the report profiles personal and work-related problems as perceived to impact wellbeing and job performance. The respondent's knowledge of these problems and their attitudes and perceptions towards their experienced problems were articulated throughout the report.

5.2 Demographic Information

Demographic information provides background characteristics of employees including their sex, age, race, education, etc. These sets of collective attributes were useful in describing problems experienced, to provide the basis for understanding the needs of SSC employees and the organisation as a whole. In the quantitative data, a questionnaire contained ten (10) demographic questions to provide information required in making analyses and draw conclusions between sex, age, educational level and divisions. In qualitative data consideration was given to sex and age because the objective was to gather information on the observed impact of personal and work-related problems of employees on wellbeing and job performance, and to get management's view of EWP and future plans of action while drawing conclusions, without making comparisons between the two groups.

5.2.1 Sex and Age

Most of the respondents were women, as indicated by **71%** (n=37)**,** male respondents account for **25%** (n=13) and **4%** (n=2) did not indicate their gender. The profile of the interviewee is shown on the table below:

Table 3: Profile of interviewee

Position	Gender	Age Category	Years started at SSC
Manager: Corporate Finance	F	36 - 40	2006
CEO	M	41 - 46	2007
GM: IT	M	41 - 46	2007
Chief Internal Audit	M	41 - 46	1996
GM: Operation	M	47 - 51	1996
Acting GM: Human Resource	F	41 - 46	1996
Corporate Legal Advisor	F	41- 46	1998

It is reported that the SSC has a total number of 237 employees, of which 157 are women and 79 are men. This figure reflects the ever-increasing number of women entering the labour market, as women are choosing work in addition to managing their families. It is known that the Namibian population has a higher ratio of women compared to men. According to the Namibian Census Indicators (2001), the Namibian population size was at that stage 1830 330, of which women numbered 942 572 and men numbered 887 721.

The age of respondents varied considerably, **33%** (n=17) of the respondents were aged between 26-30 years, followed by **31%** (n=16) aged between 36 - 40 years. Thirdly, **23%** (n=12) was made up by respondents between ages of 31 - 35 years and **8%** (n=4) of respondents were aged between 41 - 46 years. The fifth age category of 47 - 51 years was not represented, the sixth category of 52 years and above accounted for **6%** (n=3) of the research group. These figures show that the two age categories that were most represented were 26 - 30 and 36 - 40 years. The researcher is of the opinion that these age categories are most represented because employees are at the prime of their life. Most of the respondents were between 26 – 30 years and it is likely that they had recently entered the labour market. Typical of this age group is that it has new ideas, more creativity and is enthusiastic about work. This may be ideal for growth and development in an institution.

5.2.2 Marital Status and Race

Less than half of respondents, as indicated by **57%** (n=30) of the respondents, were married**,** while **33%** (n=17) were single, **6%** (n=3) were divorced, **4%** (n=2) were widowers. None of the respondents were cohabiting.

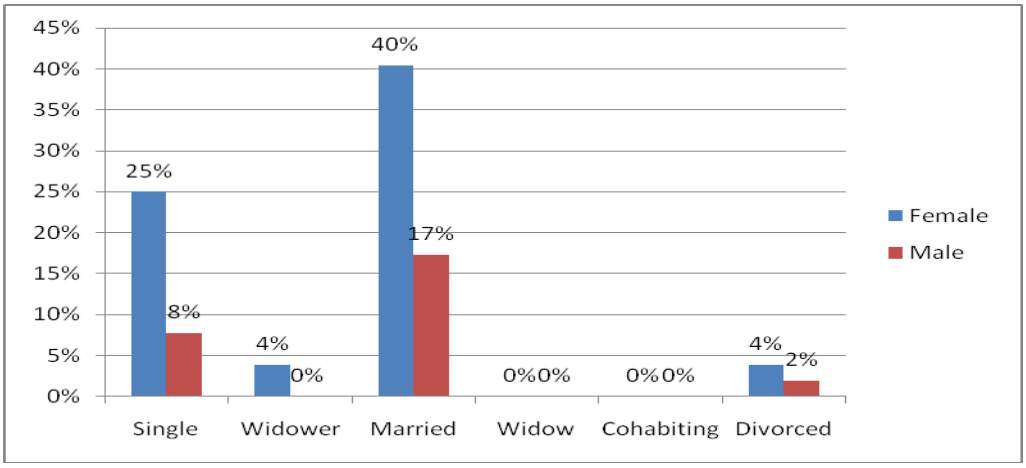


Figure 2: Marital Status of Respondents (N=52)

Most of the respondents who took part in the survey were married and some were single. With regard to such status, Akabas & Kurzman (2005) stated that most life strains are associated with three adult roles e.g. that of employee, parent and spouse. Thus, it might be vital that SSC bears that in mind and ensures that provisions are in place when problems associated with said roles emerge. Human Resource policies should consider issues related to the above crucial roles.

With regard to *race*, **86%** (n=45) of the respondents were black, **6%** (n=3) were white and **8%** (n=4) did not indicate their race. Respondents were only given two options to choose from because the Namibian Affirmative Action (Employment) Act (Act No.29, 1998) states that the Namibian population is only made up of two categories of race and

that is black or white. The non-indicated percent could be made up of employees who felt they were not part of the given race or just did not want to identify their race.

5.2.3 Educational Level and Professional Development

The highest number of respondents were Diploma holders as indicated by **38%** (n=20), **23%** (n=12**)** had grade 12 certificate, **19%** (n=10) were College graduates, **10%** (n=5) were University graduates with 1st Honors Degree, **4%** (n=2) were Masters Degree holders, **4%** (n=2) had less than grade 12 and none had a PHD. Two percent (n=1) did not answer the question. The grade 12 and less grade 12 combined makes up 27 % of respondents who seem to not have the desired level of qualifications, which was confirmed by two management members who stated that:

"Most of the employees here are grade 12 holders if not standard 8 holders of that time because most of them came from Ministry of Labour, and some are only improving their grades now to enable them to further their studies at a higher institute of learning".

*"We need to look at bringing employees up to an academic standard because somebody who is semi-literate**,** you cannot tell them do not gossip as that person is not exposed to greater things and as they say "small things amuse small minds" - in the end you sit with that problem."*

The SSC needs to implement what Nel et.al (2006) suggest, i.e. that "organisations need to have a training and development policy which should be viewed as the managerial attitude or perception of the importance of the human resources potential". The SSC needs to base its training and development policy on an integration of job content training, as well as management skills and leadership training, in accordance with the various career levels, the aim of which is to make the workplace a nurturing environment marked by the culture of learning (Nel et al, 2006).

With regard to *professional development*, it is evident from the graph below that **48%** (n=25) of the respondents were not furthering their studies, **35%** (n=18) were furthering their education and **17%** (n=9) did not answer the question

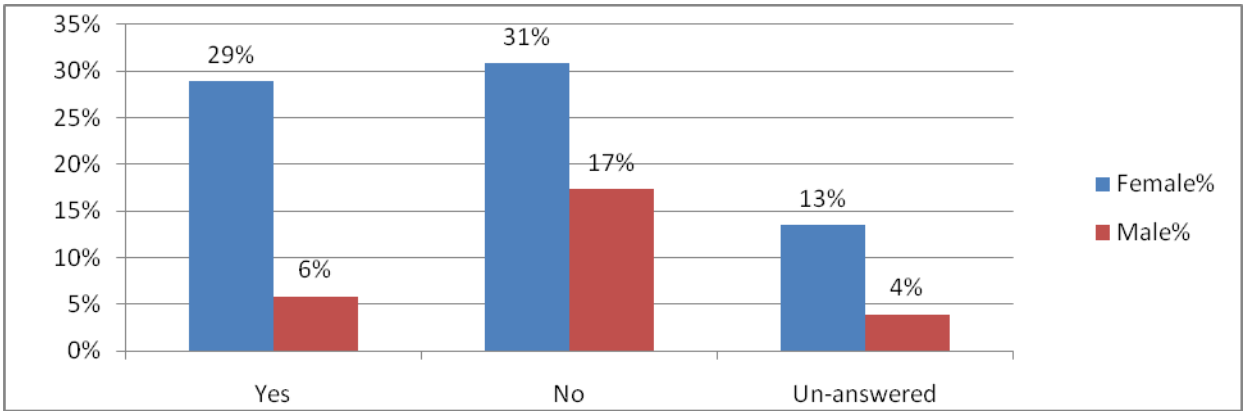


Figure 3: Furthering Education (N=52)

Almost half **48%** (n=25) of the respondents indicated that they were not furthering the education**,** plus **17%** (n=9) of respondents who did not answer the question, which could mean that more than two third of respondents were not furthering their studies. As a justification, one respondent complained:

"SSC as an employer is not helping us enough to further studies as the SSC only gives loans that need to be paid back and I cannot afford it".

It is clear from this comment that some SSC employees do not plan on furthering their education due to the costs involved as study loans offered by the SSC are viewed as unaffordable. The researcher is of the opinion that nowadays; it is beneficial that employees further their studies to enable them to be competitive in the global labour market. However, not everyone has the same conviction, even though it is also known that obtaining a higher qualification can be advantageous as it enables employees to do their job more efficiently.

The researcher recommends that the SSC training and development policy should be reviewed to redress the level of qualifications among employees and to further make study loans more affordable. Moreover, the institution should also devise ways of motivating employees to further their studies, e.g. through competence-based remunerations. In the end, this may increase efficiency, innovation and capacity to

adapt to new technology and methods. Eichner (1973), quoted by Akabas & Kurzman (2005), believed that the workplace *is, after all, the tertiary educational institution*, following school and family, thus, employers should make effort to invest in their employees.

5.2.4 Positions and Branch Representation

Respondents worked at different positions at SSC: **35%** (n=18) were administrators, **33%** (n=17) indicated that they fell under other positions that were not provided in given categories, **18%** (n=9) were supervisors, **10%** (N=5) were middle managers **4%** (n=2) general workers and **2%** (n=1) represented senior management.

The representation of branches: almost one third of the respondents as indicated by **29%** (n=15) were stationed in Windhoek, **16%** (n=8) Rundu, **14%** (n=7) Oshakati, **14%** (n=7) Walvis Bay, **12%** (n=6) Keetmanshoop, **8%** (n=4) Luderitz, **4%** (n=2) Otjiwarongo, **4%** (n=2) Katima Mulilo and **2%** (n=1) Grootfortein respectively. Looking at the figures, it is clear that all branches were represented including the three Satellite Offices - Luderitz, Grootfontein and Katima Mulilo. Windhoek, being the head office (setting up rules, planning, making decisions and at the same time serving clients), had more respondents who took part in the survey compared to others and this is mainly because Windhoek alone has about 154 out of 237 employees. While discussing representation, it is important to understand that this study was not aiming to analyse and compare employees wellbeing and performance of branches, thus it was not a priority to get an equal number of representation across branches.

5.2.5 Department and Period Worked

Division mostly represented by: Operations **59%** (n=31), Finance **25%** (n=13), Human Resource **6%** (n=3), Administration **4%** (n=2), Customer Care **4%** (n=2) and Information Technology **2%** (n=1). On the SSC organizational structure, the Operations Division carrys out the core business functions through processing claims and payments. Again,

it is reported that all branch offices were placed under the Operation Division, this justifies the **59%** (n=31) of the respondents who represented the Operation Division in the Wellness Survey.

With regard to the *period worked* at Social Security Commission, **46%** (n=24) of respondents worked for less than three years and **33%** (n=17) worked for **4-6** years. In addition, **14%** (n=7) of respondents worked for more than 10 -12 years, and **6%** (n=3) worked for 7 - 9 years. No women worked for 13 years and above, just **2%** (n=1) of men had worked at SSC for that time. It is evident that the majority of employees who took part in the survey were those who have worked for less than three years and less than six years. This could be due to the level of sensitivity towards the organizational norms which could be high among those who worked for less than six years. This perception was echoed by one management member who said:

"For employees who just joined, they have seen what makes and break the company and they always feel there is room for change as they have a lot of new ideas, however they are not welcomed and not appreciated and it is frustrating".

5.3 General Health and Wellness

5.3.1 Identified Diseases

Most of the respondents as indicated by **27%** (n=15) ticked showed that they did not suffer from any of the diseases that were listed. This could mean that respondents were not treated or took medication for the listed diseases. However, since almost one third is a large number, the researcher suspected that respondents feared the breach of confidentiality or it could be that they were healthy. The principle of confidentiality at SSC workplace was highlighted as a concern during the interview with executive management:

"There are staff members with personal problems and with due respect employees do not want to discuss their Issues with HR for different reasons such as keeping clients information confidential".

"If you look at the caring perspective, you will appreciate even one employee who go and seek assistance, however the aspect of trust and confidentiality is sticky, may be because of the background we coming from".

In addition, it is indicated that **15%** (n=8) of the respondents were treated for High Blood Pressure, **13%** (n=7) indicated stress related illness, **12%** (n=7) did not answer the question, **11%** (n=6) asthma, **7%** (n=4) depression, **6%** (n=3) cholesterol while stroke, HIV, TB, Diabetes and low blood pressure all accounted **2%** (n=1) each. The National Institute of Mental Health in America as quoted by Akabas & Kurzman (2005), brought to light that anxiety and depression experienced by employees were associated with three of life's most important adult's roles: being a worker, spouse and parent.

With **15%** and **13%** who were treated for high blood pressure and stress related problems, **7%** for depression, it appears that more than one third of respondents could have been treated with conditions associated such roles. Schultz and Schultz (2006) stated that, people become anxious, tense and fearful because stress involves physiological and psychological responses and findings above validates the presences of strains at the workplace. In relation to the treated conditions, management members acknowledged the impacts of stress at the workplace through the following remarks:

"Some employees take sick leaves and there is work to be done and you cannot fill the positions. Employees in that section have to distribute work and these put strains on others as it loads their work. Employees are overworked and experience fatigue and obviously it will have an impact on unit performance and productivity of others".

"This applies to both male and female, there a lot of employees have drinking problems. Health wise there are unreported HIV/AIDS case, thus your workplace is not an island, we operate in a global system and any social and economic issues impact employees".

Expression above could mean respondents were stressed as Matteson (2002) listed physical problems associated with stress to include high blood pressure (hypertension), ulcers colitis, heart disease, headaches, depression, neck and lower back pain and cancer. He also mentioned that high stress is related to increases in turnover intentions and counterproductive behaviors such as theft and drug and alcohol abuse and as a

result motivation and job performance are bound to suffer. With such effect of stress it is known that employers cannot usually protect employees from stress arising from outside work but they can protect them from stress arises through work. It is known that the best practice with regard to stress management are to prevent stress happening or, where employees are already experiencing stress, to prevent it from causing serious damage to their health or to the healthiness of their organization (WHO, 2003).

5.3.2 Aspects of Physical Health

Schultz and Schultz (2006) concluded that behavior response to stress may vary by gender, however the physiological changes induced by stress are experienced by both male and female. They gave an explanation on the psychosomatic disorder as they say disorders are not imaginary; they involve a specific tissue and organ damage, although their origin lies in psychological and emotional factors, they have a definite physical impact on the body. Physical health is bound to decline, resistance lowers, and bodily energy reduces. SSC respondents ranked issues related to their physical health as follows. To understand and interpret physical aspects below, look at the horizontal rows in relation to the vertical columns and see which aspect has high number of respondents. On the table **M** represents men and **F** represents women respondents.

Table 4: Respondents Views on Physical Health (N=52)

		Always		Sometimes		Never		Unanswered		Total
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	I take my health serious	**9**	**26**	**1**	**9**	**2**	**3**	**2**	**-**	**52**
2	I am worried about my physical health	**4**	**8**	**5**	**21**	**4**	**3**	**1**	**7**	**52**
3	I get enough sleep	**8**	**12**	**2**	20	**2**	**2**	**2**	**4**	**52**
4	I wake up feeling refreshed after a night rest	**5**	**8**	**4**	**24**	**3**	**6**	**2**	**-**	**52**
5	I wake up exhausted and not feeling like going to work	**2**	**3**	**7**	**23**	**1**	**12**	**4**	**-**	**52**
6	I wake up enthusiastic but get discouraged when I get to	**1**	**3**	**4**	**21**	**4**	**12**	**5**	**2**	**52**
7	I eat a healthy diet	**4**	**11**	**5**	**21**	**4**	**4**	**1**	**2**	**52**
8	I notice physical signs that I may not be healthy	**2**	**4**	**3**	**17**	**2**	**13**	**7**	**4**	**52**
9	I maintain a healthy exercise	**2**	**5**	**8**	**18**	**1**	**4**	**3**	**11**	**52**
10	I do different things to raise my energy levels	**3**	**8**	**10**	**24**		**1**	**1**	**5**	**52**

Aspect number **1, 3, 4, 7, 9** and **10** on the table, it appears that respondents had good habit of taking care of their physical health and attempt to do different things to raise their energy levels required for work. Looking at aspect number **2** and **8,** it is also noted that some employees were worried about their health, and thus recommended that a physical activity particularly exercising and regular check up should be promoted among employees of SSC. It is also recommended that SSC employees should utilize their (NHP) Medical Aid Benefits e.g. gym and visit their doctors regularly. In addition, aspect **5** brings out that sometimes employees were exhausted and that discouraged them from going to work. This finding was supported by one executive member during the interview as it was mentioned that:

"Four employees just decides to AWL (Absent Without Leave) without notifying anyone. I know employees in that specific section are over worked. I concluded that these employees are stressed, and they wake up one morning and do not feel like reporting to work".

The aspect of absent without leave (AWL) validates what Nelson & Quick (2008) mentioned that absenteeism put drain on those who turns up to work as they ends up completing tasks of others and the absenteeism cycle continues. With reference to aspect number **6**, it could mean that there is a need to create a favorable working environment because almost half of the sample (n=24) indicated that they *were enthusiastic about their work but the moment they enter the workplace,* they get discouraged. The researcher is of the opinion that the organizational culture at SSC may not be thriving, and management needs to influence change. The following were expressed by management members that demonstrated that the organizational culture is problematic:

"The issue of new ideas is not forth coming, employee feel if they come up with ideas, they have to drive it and if it fails, they made to feel as failure. This is all over the organization as management experiences it as well; there much resistance to change and new ideas, board needs to change this culture, SSC is not a learning organization".

"Decision making is paralyzed than ever before, critical vacancies at management take long to be filled and employees are acting, this is not good for business operation".

"Communication is a problem, specifically between departments on a high level and low level; there are no formal processes on communication within the Commission".

"We use the board to sanction or rubberstamp management practices so that we go back and say it is the board that said and employees are faced with management that they do not trust and for them it is a challenge to work with us and supervisors".

Kemp (2005) views organizational culture to be made up of many elements, including formal rules and procedures, informal rules of behaviour, rituals, tasks, jargon, dress norms and stories people tell about what goes on in the organization. Looking at the comment given above, it appears that SSC organizational culture is not thriving, hence the problems experienced at the workplace. This can be possible as Kemp (2005) made it clear that, there are work factors that can hamper individual's job performance

and organizational culture is one main element which he feel triggers too many work related problems. Thus, he made it clear that employers create and control many conditions that can create or alleviate stress and other problems that affect health in the workplace and it becomes management role to create a culture that values employees.

5.3.3 Factors that Upsets/ Stress Employees

Almost half of the respondents as indicated by **40%** (n=21) were mostly upsets or stressed by both personal and work-related problems, while **21%** (n=11) of the respondents indicated personal problems and **19%** (n=10) indicated work-related problems. Another **19%** (n=10) of the respondent indicated that they are not experiencing either personal or work-related problems. The figure showed that women are the mostly stressed/upset compared to men.

The **40%** (n=21) of respondents who indicated that they experience both personal and work related problems added credit to the literature that says “employee are social being and as such they experience problems when they interact with other people and with the environment they work in. This is elaborated in the system theory and person-in-the environment approach. In comparison, twenty one percent **21%** (n=11) indicated personal problems and nineteen **19%** (n=10) identified work-related problems. These findings validated what Akabas and Kurzman mentioned about the three life’s important adult’s roles and it could be that the problems experienced were associated with such roles**.** Interviews with executive management confirmed the existence of personal and work related problems at SSC workplaces as they quoted:

“In my small division I heard and noticed employees who are experiencing problems, which some are personal but then they extend to the offices. Yes, personal and work problems are here”.

“A lot of them, the number is just increasing, at SSC there are constant change and always impacting on employees and there no programme to help”.

“Yes, they are here and not limited to particular area or level of seniority in the institutions. I have attended to employees who came to me directly to seek help”.

The provided responses by management members acknowledged that, employees bring their concerns and disorder into the workplace as it was mentioned by Kemp (2005). Kemp also mentioned that, in any employee's population there will be percentages of those who have personal problems severe enough to affect job performance e.g. alcohol and drugs, emotional problems and family problems. Again, six managers noticed that restructuring is a main concern for many employees:

"In terms of the restructuring exercise employees are not sure where they going career wise and it affect most of the people, although at times they experience social evil, economic hardship and they want more salaries for work done".

Over again, the impact of organizational change e.g. restructuring was confirmed by Schuler (1998) as he mentioned that many changes are made without advance warning, thus changes in organizations are often stressful because they usually involve something important and are accompanied by uncertainty. Employees at the workplace become concerned about whether the change will affect them, perhaps by displacing them or transfer. In contrast, it is possible that the **19%** (n=10) of respondents who indicated that the question is not applicable, it could be that they did not understand the question or they do not get upset/stressed. Once more, respondents were asked to identify specific problems what upsets/stress them and they are presented below.

Table 5: Specific Personal and Work Related Problems by Experienced (N=52)

Personal	**Female%**	**(n)**	**Male%**	**(n)**
Misunderstanding with spouse	3%	6	1%	2
Personal illness	1%	1	1%	1
Death/illness in the family	3%	6	0%	0
Lack of Family support	5%	9	2%	3
Lack of self motivation	1%	2	0%	0
Financial problems	**7%**	14	**3%**	6
Separated from family due to work	1%	2	0%	0
Work related				
Relationship with immediate colleagues	8%	16	2%	3
Supervision/management	**14%**	28	**7%**	13
Deadline pressure	2%	3	1%	2
Lack of transparency/honesty	**11%**	21	**3%**	5
Conflict due to diverse staff population	3%	5	1%	2
Slow decision making process	**9%**	17	**3%**	5
Bad work habits /ethics (organizational	**9%**	18	**4%**	7
Role conflict/ no clear job description	0%		0%	

In addition to the problems identified above, respondents also specified other problems such as poor skill commitment, lack of career growth, Ignorance, Lack of financial resources, No recognition, lack of motivation, low salary, work is not challenging and lack of team work.

At a personal level, SSC employees experienced financial problems as indicated by **10%** (n=20) of respondents. This was confirmed by a management member who stated:

"On the face of it without doing an analysis, it seems that SSC staffs got great problems in managing their finances, it is a common thing you hear at management. It seems staffs are incompetent to manage their finances and as a result they are debt written".

In addition to financial problems experienced could be results of what is expressed by a management member that:

"It is perceived that we pay high salaries but it is not so, I feel we are real prejudicing our employees in the sense we applying a payment and grading system that firstly, there is nobody internally who is well trained and well vested with the system".

The researcher held the view that the financial problems experienced necessitates the financial management solutions which could be a component of EWP to help employees budget and live within their earnings as the economic global crisis continues to dictate the global market prices.

At the organizational level, respondents indicated poor supervision and management with **21%** (n=41), Lack of transparency **14%** (n=26) and bad work habits/ethics **13%** (n=25) and slow decision making with **12%** (n=22) as main challenges that they experienced daily. Interviews with management confirmed the identified factors:

"I have supervisors not living up to the expectation, either the way they operate or amount of knowledge they have. They are insecure and they present no room for empowerment. It is very difficult to dealing with such supervisors as there are colleagues with brilliant ideas but because of their supervisors who are a leader in terms of progress, they muffle any good ideas from the department".

"A division was supposed to be outsourced and there was no transparency however at the end it showed that there was a secret report and this process eroded trust.

"Some staffs are star performers and some are liabilities to the organization. Where we are failing as management is to recognize and reward performance".

Findings above further demonstrate the presences of personal and work related problems. The problems appeared to have originated from home and work organization.

5.3. 4 Occurrences of Personal and Work Related Challenges

It came out that **54%** (n=28) of the respondents experienced personal and work related problems seldom, **29%** (n=15) indicated often and only **10%** (n=5) of female respondents indicated that they experience challenges very often, and **8%** (n=4) indicated that they never experience any challenges. As in life, it is accepted that it's normal to experience certain degree of discomfort and it appears that majorities of employees at SSC experience personal and work related challenges seldom, however this seems to impacts on employees wellbeing and job performance .

5.3.5 Typical Reaction to Personal and Work Related Challenges

Almost half of the respondent, as indicated by **46%** (n=24), reported to work but they could not work effectively as their concentration lowered, **14%** (n=8) indicated that they report to work but did not real pay attention, and **8%** (n=4) stayed away from work without leave, another **8%** (n=4) put in sick leave and **2%** (n=1) informs their immediate supervisor. On dissimilarities, only **23%** (n=12) of employees indicated that they were productive at times when experienced problems. These gave weight to what is known to be the negative impact of personal and work-related problems, the reduction in productivity and performance as employees are not completing their tasks. Some management members confirmed the negative impact of personal and work related problems as they expressed that:

"Productivity suffers as a result because sometimes they engage in anti-social behavior such as gossiping, loafing, neglecting their work and sometimes come to work under the influence of substance".

"You see when employees coming to work, walking in 15, 30 minutes or an hour or two hours late and a person leaving little bit too early. I heard employees complaining that if someone can come at 10h00 why not me. Again those issues they disrupt performance and productivity in the team and promote unethical behaviors.

"In the past 12 months and longer to 2002, SSC employees were challenged with the uncertain reorganizational process. This impacted on productivity as employees were not sure on parameters and details of the process".

Percentages above and remarks by management confirmed the negative impact on job performance. Again, there is correlation between presented data and remarks by management on impacted posed by personal and work related problems. The lowered concentration among employees could be managed through the provision of EWP service. The researcher echoes that SSC need to create a culture that enhances work ethics.

5.3.6 Perceived Effects of Typical Reaction

Findings on the reaction of respondents does not seem to help them much solve or manage experienced challenges/problems as **70%** (n=36) indicated not always, **18%**

(n=10) indicated never, **6%** (n=3) indicated always and another **6%** (n=3) did not answer the question. This feedback brings to light that; employee's attempt to solve and manage experienced challenges was mostly not successful as only six percents indicated that the way they react helped them solve and manage their problems, always. The researcher is of the opinion that the findings above necessitates the provision of Counseling services to help employees brainstorm solutions to solve, manage and cope with experienced personal and work related problems. Counseling services may empower them to think divergently about their problems and to solicit solutions. Overall, a supportive working environment is required to enhance growth within individuals and SSC as a whole.

5.3.7 Knowledge of Employees on Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) Policy

SSC developed an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) policy developed in 2002, however, most **90%** (n=47) indicated that they did not know or aware of the EAP Policy, **6%** (n=3) did not answer the question, and **4%** (n=2) indicated that they are aware of the policy. The **4%** (n=2) of respondents who aware of the policy are part of the Human Resource. Respondents substantiated their response as to why they are not aware of the EAP policy. Almost half of the sample as reflected by **51%** (n=27) had not substantiated their choices, while **29%** (n=15) indicated that they never heard of the policy and **14%** (n=7) indicated that they were not aware. Moreover, **4%** (n=2) indicated that they did not know anything about the policy and **2%** (n=1) indicated that the policy was not operational.

Figures above show that the policy is not known. It could be interpreted that the EAP policy was not introduced to employees, being it those who had been there before or those who joined SSC after. The researcher gives two recommendations, one, all new policies should be introduced to employees at all levels, and all new employees who join the institution should be inducted to all policies and procedures available at the workplace**.** Two, implementation of policies should take place for the best interest of employees and organization and the current EAP policy need to be revised and changed to a comprehensive Employee Wellness Programme Policy.

5.3.8 Perception of Respondents on Management Reaction

Perception of **24%** (n=12) of the respondents because they did not answer the question. However, **10%** (n=5) indicated that management discuss their problems with Human Resource but they take too long to respond. In addition, **6%** (n=3) stated that they did not have an idea. Management reaction at times when employees experienced problems seemed not to have been favored as **60%** (n=32) indicated that nothing is done to help employees because *there are no professionals and management mostly ignores employees as employees are not considered as important assess and their problems are not taken serious*. The irresponsiveness of management was confirmed by management members who at the time of the interview expressed the need to react promptly to employees problems:

"There are host of things that need to be done, which currently not happening, to move from current structure to the new one, there need to be a team in HR that manages issues, staff assurance, motivate, couch and mentor them through the process".

"At SSC we are not responsive to change, it takes us to long to respond and if we respond it would be not in the best way that you could have responded".

"Currently the only forum where management meets is at management meetings that often get postponed and they need to be continuous because you cannot manage the organization on ad hoc".

The respondents reported that SSC management does not react to their problems and comments by management members highlighted the observation made by respondents. To a large extend respondents seemed to had expectation from their employers when experienced difficulties. ILO (1992) explained that organizational stress often made worse when employees feel they have little support from supervisors and colleagues or they have little control over work. There seems to be a need for management to acknowledge and treat employee's problems with some degree of sensitivity and empathy. This may be demonstrated through implementation of EWP which will serve as an organizational resource to mitigate impacts posed by personal and work related

problems and be in line with Kemp (2005) suggestion “the development formal and informal systems to reinforce value and support the systems that boost performances”. Kemp uttered that employers create and control many conditions that can create or alleviate stress and other problems that affect health in the workplace and, thus it becomes management role to create a culture that values employees and thus.

5.3.9 The Need to Develop an Employee Wellness Programme (EWP)

SSC employees see the need of EWP at workplaces as it was indicated by **81%** (n=42), **17%** (n=9) did not answer the question and **2%** (n=1) indicated that there is no need for the programme since it will be done wrongly because there is no capacity at SSC. Among the **81%** (n=42) who indicated that there is a need for EWP at the workplace, they motivated their answers with the following reasons:

“SSC has become a stressful working environment and EWP will lower arguments and improve productivity”.

“EWP will oversee the health and happiness of employees, we need someone who can listen and educate us and EWP is important for organizational development”.

In addition, executive management highlight the need the programme as follow:

“SSC needs it like150% and need it like 10 years ago, it is an area that has been solely lacking in the way that we manage this organization. For SSC EWP is long overdue”.

“In an environment like this, I would have appreciated if EWP could be in place already as employees are stressed despite informing them that your job is not laid off.

“Yes, there is a need, there is a need for us to create an environment where employees can also air their problems and know that they can be assisted”.

It is evident that SSC employees and their management see the need to design and implement EWP to ensure that employees receive assistance through a formal programme. The establishment of a EWP demonstrates a culture of care and will eventual promote employees wellbeing. Bridget (2007) mentioned that organization which really understand employee well-being have a culture which actively promotes

mental, emotional and physical health day-to-day, as well as a system which deals with mental, emotional and physical ill-health when that occurs. So, since SSC is a public institution responsible for disbursement of money after life changing events, its employees could need sound and effective programs that help them to be healthy and fit enough to administer public funds professionally.

5.3.10 Future Utilisation of the Wellness Office

Stress was indicated to be a major problem that will make employee approach the Wellness Office as it is indicated by **14%** (n= 20), followed by living positive with HIV accounting for **11%** (n= 17)**,** harassment with **11%** (n=16), conflict with colleagues **11%** (n=16) and organizational structural issues **10%** (n=14). Other problems identified were deaths in families **8%** (n=12), depression **10%** (n=14) and substance abuse, dependence **5%** (n=7), cancer **5%** (n=7), diversity issues **4%** (n=5) and unexpressed opinion accounts to **3%** (n=4). To be specific on HIV/AIDS cases at SSC, the researcher recommends for the HIV workplace policy which shall provide a framework to mitigate impacts of HIV on employees and an organization as a whole and providing guidance on managing HIV/AIDS in the workplace. Again, SSC employees seemed ready to utilize EWP services once operational. Based on the researcher experience on the field, utilization of Wellness services may be tricky, as it is known that although Wellness Programme are the choice of many organizations, employee's utilization remains a challenge, despite increasing range of incentives.

Furthermore, **44%** (n=23) of the respondents identified factors that may hamper the provision of Wellness Services at SSC, **48%** (n=25) did not express their opinion and **8%** (n=4) indicated that they did not have any idea. Those who answered the question identified

"Confidentiality, employee resistance, manpower and acceptance as some employees do not believe that indeed employees who seek help will be assisted as they deserve and be treated accordingly without being judged".

The *general negative attitude towards the employer* was also identified as one of the factors to hamper the provision of Wellness services. In addition, three management members added the following:

"In house we do not have a capacity to drive that programme and all credibility is compromised. I would say that we need to institute a Wellness Center that is run by external professionals that is the only way to lift up the credibility and the trust of employees in such a system".

"You will appreciate even one employee seek assistance, however the aspect of trust and confidentiality is sticky, may be because of the background we coming from".

"We all want HR to take decision, but HR do not have power, there are budgetary concerns or policies, and they need permission from the CEO or the Board. We real need to give the programme wide power to go for interest of employees which will know have a turn up for the employer later. At the moment HR staffs are not trusted and whoever implements EWP need to breakdown the stigma that HR cannot be trusted".

Analyzing the given factors that may hamper the provision of EWP service, it appeared that the culture and climate of SSC is not at its best as there are shared perception of how SSC operates. The shared perception seemed to be influential as half of respondents indicated **50%** (n=26) that they were generally happy employees**, 18%** (n=9) indicated that they were frustrated, **16%** (n=8) were disappointed, **8%** (n=4) did not answer the question, **6%** (n=3) were disgruntled and **4%** (N=2) indicated that the question is not applicable. Throughout the report, some respondents including management members expressed dissatisfaction with the way things are done, thus SSC management needs to rejuvenate a culture that values employees and systems that promote responsiveness and efficiency as employees seem to have no trust in its management.

In addition, Guest quoted in the Human Capital Management (2007, p. 80), explained how corporate culture can be created: through perceptions, through the basic values held by staff members and through the subsequent behavior. He said interventions can be employed in an effort to alter the culture and the focus should be on changing behavior by starting implementing new behavior and describe its purpose. He stated that some behavior should be incentivized to bring about desirable change and training should be offered to instill new methods.

5.3.11 Understanding of Employee Wellness Programme

The understanding of EWP among SSC employees varies as **36%** (n=19) indicated that the EWP is a programme to help employees cope with personal and work related problems. It was also indicated that the benefit of the programme at the workplace will be to improve productivity and help employees have solutions to their problems. Respondents also indicated that functioning EWP symbolize that the employer care about the wellbeing of employees and this minimize chronic illness and absenteeism. In addition, management demonstrated their understanding of the EWP:

"A programme that mainly focus on the wellness of employees on the job but probably it can be extended outside the job because as our life does not just stop when we are at work but continues, just to ensure that employees are taken care of, mental or physically".

"It is a strategy from the employer, put there to ensure that there is mechanism in place to assist you to do your job to the outmost capacity. If I have a problem be it personal, health, family and psychological, my employer would have programs to help me and employees will know that they have a caring employer".

However, **33%** (n=17) of the respondents indicated that they do not know what EWP does and its benefit while **31%** (n=16) of respondents did not express their opinion. The researcher recommends that awareness raising should be prioritized to educate employees on the benefits of the programme**.** However, it should be noted that EWP interventions should not end in awareness phase because by loading employees with

information on illnesses and health, their attitudes and behavior might not necessary change.

Overall, the researcher observed that almost one third of respondents and management members understood what EWP is and its benefits to employees and employer. The given comments and definition provided is in sync with the definition from literature the "Employee Wellness Programme is a comprehensive programme responsible for administering Employee Assistance Programme and other workplace programme developed to enhance overall health and wellness of employees for benefits of the organizational performance". Akabas & Kurzman (2005) made it clear that EWP is a management tool to enhance employees, a new employee's benefit to meet management needs by preserving precious human and fiscal resources. The researcher noted that EWP needs management support, degree of power to influence change and it is for all employees, then it can add value to business operation. Based on the understanding of how SSC operates in relation to programs activities, three management members warned that:

"To make EWP a success first establishes what employees want by finding the gaps in the current system. Then design something that all employees identify with rather than implementing management ideas. The programme should not be developed by management for everybody else, but should be developed by everybody else and should own it. Otherwise, you will waste money and time and some people will be nasty and say just look at what they have brought up".

"The programme need to have power, if there is a general problem experienced, then the programme need to make recommendation and that management must be committed to take action rather than just talking, to make it a failure".

5.4 Personal and Work Related Factors

5.4.1 Willingness to Speak to Someone

Almost the whole sample as indicated by **90%** (n=47) indicated that they were willing to speak to someone when faced with challenges/problem. This implies that employees understand the importance of speaking to someone at difficult times. The willingness to speak to someone was also mentioned during interview by two management members as they said:

"You sometimes see an employee talking to their colleagues and, you realize the person has been there for 30 to 40 minutes and it is not lunch time and they are not talking work related issues. The other one is off course when some people tell you explicitly that I am going through this and that, and there are situation when employees tell".

"I have attended to some employees who came to me directly to indicate their problems".

Speaking to someone is a highly recommended exercise as it helps employees gain insight into their problems and limit chances that they become overwhelmed by their own experiences. Only **6%** (n=3) of respondents who indicated that they will not speak to someone and **4%** (n=2) who did not express their opinion. The ninety percents who indicated their willingness to speak to someone when faced with challenges /problems further identified their preferences as shown on the table below.

Table 6: Respondents Identified Who They Spoke to When had Problems (N=52)

List of Categories	**Female**	**(n)**	**Male**	**(n)**
Colleague/Supervisor/Manager	11.8%	8	7.4%	5
Social Worker/Psychologist/ Religious leader	23.5%	16	5.9%	4
Spouse/other family members/ Friends	30.9%	21	13.2%	9
Prefer not to speak to anyone at all	1.5%	1	1.5%	1
Other specify….God	4.4%	3	0%	0
Total	**72.1%**	**49**	**27.9**	**19**

A large number of respondents preferred to speak spouse/other family members and friends; while professionals was identified secondly, followed by colleagues/ supervisor category as it appears on the table above. This could be attributed to the trust employees had in family members and friend and the possibility of them keeping their information confidential. Other reason could also be that, respondents preferred family members because these are the people who will be there for them at all times throughout life unlike managers who only available at work and for as long as one is within the same workplace.

Secondly, professional services which generally offered by professional specially trained to talk to people with different problems. Respondents might have preferred to speak to professionals when experiencing problems that need professional ideas for example HIV. Thirdly, speaking to colleagues, supervisors, and managers comes third as some employees might be uncomfortable sharing their personal problems with people they work with. On the other hand, only a small number of employees who preferred not to speak to anyone and other preferred to present problems to the almighty God (this indicates that a spiritual service is also needed at the workplace to accommodate those who believe in God).

The large percentages of employees who preferred to speak to someone, impose that once EWP is implemented the programme should continue emphasizing the importance of speaking to a trusted person whenever problems arises.

Table 7: Relational Aspects in the Work Environment (N=52). Please note that on the table **M** represent men and **F** represent women respondents.

	True		**False**		**Unanswered**	
	M	**F**	**M**	**F**	**M**	**F**
I have friends amongst those people with whom I work	4	8	**9**	**27**	1	3
I feel free to approach management at any time	2	20	**1**	**14**	1	3
I feel people I work with are committed to working	**6**	**20**	6	15	2	3
I feel my colleagues in our department are	6	10	**6**	**17**	2	11
Employees at SSC are willing to go the extra mile	**9**	**9**	3	14	2	15

The indication of true or false brings out the most important aspects that had to some extended been also mentioned by management members. That, one, majority SSC employees as indicated in the table above feels committed to working as a team and they were willing to go an extra mile when needed. However looking at the table it also appeared that some employees did not find the two statements true and their perception was supported by two management members who said;

"It goes back also to reward, when somebody come to the office, they expect reward, and you can see of people they are doing work but they do it for sake of doing it and there is no passion of their job. When you ask them to go an extra mile they will not deliver and when you ask more, they will be able to tell you that I am not happy".

"The problem at SSC is that employees cannot identify themselves with teams or institutions. Some employees were frustrated as they did not feel valued; they did not see how they fit into the puzzle of SSC and felt that their contribution is overlooked

Two, it is also noted that majority of employees do not feel free to approach management anytime they experienced problems. This was also noticed by two executive management members as they expressed that:

“Here employees confuse respect with fear, because here people cannot make jokes with management and there is something like them and us”.

“Management needs to create an environment where employees trust and feel comfortable and confident to approach them as at the moment it is not the case, there is a thing of US and THEM. Management had divorced themselves from employees although we suppose to be the team”.

Three, there are some respondents who felt that their colleagues in their departments are not motivated and do not support each other. The problem of motivation had been also mentioned by an executive member when she said:

“I real do not want to divide employees because at the end we need to be together but at least we need to reward performance because some employees get de-motivated as there were comments like no matter how hard we work our effort are not never recognized”.

Throughout the study, recognition and reward of performance has been mentioned that it is not done, this calls for management to re-look and reshape the culture and channels of communication and design policies and procedures that enhance.

5.4.2 General Attitude

Positive attitude towards life issues is needed for survival; it prepares human being with problems solving techniques and in this context it can help employees not to feel as victims of situation but creative solution finders. More than two third 2/3 of respondents as reflected by **70%** (n=36) reported to have a positive attitude towards the issues of life. This might be good for employees to remain productive and effective, since respondents indicated for example that “challenges made me who I am, they are learning curves and they good for growth”, that ”problems are there to be solved and one can never conquer what you do not confront”. From the researcher’s point of view, this attitude can be supported and supplemented through the provision of EWP services.

On the other hand, **22%** (n=12) of the respondents did not expresses their opinion making it difficult to comment on their attitude. While **8%** (n=4) of respondents

acknowledged the interface between work and personal problems that "*work and personal problems they go hand in hand and can impact on the wellbeing and performance"*.

5.4.3 Support from Co-Worker

Almost half of respondents as indicated by **40%** (n=21) that they received support sometimes from co-worker, **23%** (n=12) of the respondents indicated very often, **19%** (n=10) indicated often, **16%** (n=8) indicated that they never received support and **2%** (n=1) did not answer the question. It is apparent that employees were not supporting one another as much as it may be needed as only 23% indicated that they received support very often. A management member stated that:

"For us as the employers, we are cold in terms of giving support; I have not seen us as management getting involved. We normally shift this role to HR, it is more convenient to us, HR sends flowers and we done our part as employers".

The researcher sense that it would depend on the nature of the problem experienced and the type of support an individual required at a particular time as some problems might be complex for co-worker to offer supports. Thus, Akabas and Kurzman (2005) recommended that policies need to be established based on the employees needs as there are more dynamics in the workplace, and effort to attract, retain, and develop a diverse work population, while balancing the needs of all employees becomes a critical feature. The researcher recommends that the representation of a culture of care is needed because SSC is a social entity**,** and employees need to be supportive of each other before they demonstrate care and understanding to their organizational clients.

5.4.4 Interface between Work Stress and Home

Although it is noted that employees "live where they work and work where they live" Akabas & Kurzman (2005), SSC employees reported a different view on the given understanding since **35%** (n=18) of the respondents indicated that their work stress does not make them irritable at home. While **32%** (n=17) indicated seldom, **19%** (n=10) indicated often, **8%** (n=4) did not answer the question, and **6%** (n=3) indicated that very

often they get irritable at home when had a difficult day at work. It is marked that work stress does not make some employees irritable at home as it indicated by **35%**; this might be true because **44.1%** of respondents indicated previously that they spoke about their problems with spouse, family members and friends and this could be a contributing factor that they are not irritated by work stress when they get home. On the other hand, it is noted that some employees brought their personal problems at work as it is expressed by two management members:

"Some employees have problems at home and they bring them to work and it is just natural".

"We are human, we are not compartmentalized, if something is wrong in your finance, family or marriage you are not a robot that you can change/switch off, the moment you walk in there, it is bound to impact the way you do your work to a certain extent, you need to be super human".

5.4.5 Job Stress

One third of respondents **32%** (n=17) indicated that their job was stressful, **27%** (n=14) indicated not stressful, **17%** (n=9) indicated none of the above, **16%** (n=8) indicated very stressful, **4%** (n=2) indicated extremely stressful and another **4%** (n=2) unanswered. Excessive stress interferes with productivity and reduces physical and emotional health, as the definition of stress by Schultz & Schultz (2006), states that "stress is a psychological agent's that influences physical and emotional wellbeing and human ability to perform".

The researcher made further analysis to see which department has a high number of employees who indicated stressful and very stressful. It was found that, firstly percentages of *stressful* are actually cutting across the main two divisions; Operation and Finance, with Administration, Information Technology, and Human Resources reported with low percents. Secondly, percentages of *very stressful* are shared between the same two divisions again; Operation and Finance. In the same vein, the percentages of respondents who indicated that their job is stressful and very stressful

also cut across ages. This finding is congruent with feedback drawn from executive management members who highlighted departments/division prone to organizational stress:

"Those who joined the company and not well informed/oriented to activities of the organization are likely to be stress and again this results in some departments being at the receiving end. Those who punch numbers and management are probably more stressed".

"Department that are prone to organizational stress and usually the one linked to overwork and demand by clients especially Debtors section, Customer Care, all staff members doing data capture/typists, Claimants Officers and HR staffs"

"Some divisions that prone to organizational stress, Finance, IT for example but you needs to analyze if it is personal, system, managerial problem or what is it?"

It is concluded that departments carrying out the core function e.g. Operation and those that offer supporting function e.g. IT and Finance are prone to organisational stress. In addition, **16%** (n=8) of the respondents who indicated stressful made it clear that it is not their job that is stressful but the working environment. It is recommended that a stress risk assessment be conducted to find out the root causes of stress on the job and thereafter introduce a stress management program.

Additionally, respondents identified physical conditions causing discomfort at the workplace and they pinpointed lack of enough office space to be the main cause of discomfort as indicated by **46%** (n=31) of the respondents. Ventilation come second with **19%** (n=13), chairs **11%** (n=7), office location **8%** (n=6), **5%** (n=4) did not express their opinion, **3%** (n=2) indicated others and stairs **1%** (n=1). Ventilation was also identified by one management members who mentioned that:

"Customer Officers are in direct contacts with clients and they get sick a lot and they are mostly with doctors. It could be because of the contact with clients, people come in and out. They can infect the air; we can try to sterilize the air within to make sure if there are air borne germs, they get killed".

Analysis went further to see branches with such conditions and it was found that lack of Office space was experienced at all offices except for Grootfontein and Katima Mulilo. Ventilation is experienced in Windhoek, Rundu, Oshakati, Walvis Bay and Luderitz. Chairs are experienced at Rundu, Oshakati, Walvis Bay and Windhoek while stairs problems experienced at Walvis Bay and Rundu. An ergonomics study is therefore recommended to find out how a workplace and the equipment used there can best be designed for comfort, efficiency, safety, and productivity.

5.4.6 Promotion of Wellness at SSC Workplaces

Through the study it became prevalent that promotion of Wellness issues at the SSC workplace was not done as **74%** (n=39) of the respondents indicated, **18%** (n=9) indicated that they do not know anything about Wellness being ever promoted at SSC workplace, **6%** (n=3) indicated (Yes) Wellness is promoted and **2%** (n=1) did not express their opinion. In absences of a Wellness Programme which can perform an educative, informative and supporting and caring role, employees give the impression to not know and see how else the Wellness issues were promoted. Alongside their response, some respondents made note that:

"Those experienced personal and work-related problems were not helped at all and nothing is done to recurrent problems or concerns affected employees".

Since Wellness aspects were not promoted at the workplace, this could mean that the wellbeing and job performance of employees had been impacted negatively. This has been acknowledged by respondents and indeed by the executive management as they gave examples to show how personal and work related problems impacted on wellbeing:

"We had a colleague who was an HIV sufferer, it had gone from bad to worse but as an employer we were cold against that case, and it was in fact a colleague who had sent out a list. This is where I real see EWP to give another dimension from employer's side to look after us and our families. If you look at our vision we are saying Namibian dependents but we are cold towards the vision with references to our employees".

"There was a case here of an employee who was seeing a psychologist and the medical aid was depleted and the company decided not to pay despite her improvement,

management was sort of waiting for the medical doctor to declare her unfit for work. Management felt that it not its responsibilities as they already contributing to the medical aid and cannot go an extra mile for employees".

"It is unfortunate that some employees were referred to professional but fell back into relapse; they eventually had to resign as we explored all possible action".

All over again, it terms of demonstrating care and support, two of the management members emphasized:

"What we try to do is to fix the problem with spending a lot of money on corporate image, videos and billboard and yet inside the place is in shamble. We first need to internalize, if you healthy inside you will able to present that outside. I think what we need to do is to first start inside. Your advertisement should come from inside not from outside, and your advertisement will be a great success if staff members are happy. And I know we will not all get happy, but if we know that even the most difficult staff members know that in the structure of the SSC, they also get listened to".

"Activities to allow motivational speakers, wellness day, family days should be done yearly, to show employees that we care".

5.4.7 Specific Work Factors

Work factors that were identified to affect negatively motivation, satisfaction and involvement of employees were communication **27%** (n=20), aspect of leadership **27%** (n=20) and advancement opportunities **27%** (n=20), social climate 1**2%** (n=6), job security **4%** (n=2) while **2%** (n=1) did not answer the question. With regard to communication, it is indicated thought the study that the flow of information between management and employees is tight and sometimes management members do not have correct and same information about what is happening at SSC. Several quotes were indicated earlier regards communication at the SSC workplace and others are:

"No free flow of information between management and departments".

"I think most of the problems are between departments, as departments do not speak to each other, we do not have regular meetings and each department protects their own area, if there is no proper communication resulting in breakdowns in processes".

"I think that the biggest frustration for staff members is that the perceptions that nobody listen to them, and that nobody listen to them, they are there to make sure that they slow down the process. We need to have a process where staff members can just go and sit with somebody and talk, we should have a channel to use what has been said".

According to Schuler (1998), “communication in organization is essential to reduce to minimum and to increase the effectiveness of employees in carrying out their daily tasks, therefore SSC need to revise its communication strategies.

Two, the aspect of leadership was also rated high and it seems to be a problem as management team themselves acknowledged it by saying “*management they have their own issues to solve because they are divided and employees have also picked it up”***.** Manning (2004) stated that good leadership skills are required when organization is changing as some employees might be enthusiastic while some may be not and SSC is restructuring. The following remarks were made regarding leadership:

“At least in the last two or three meetings that were held at inappropriate times, they were organized at 16h30 and it only started at 16h45 as employees trickle down there and sometimes the CEO come late. These meetings were on most important decision, and employees are often bombarded with information and never given chance to air their opinion”.

“You find people here who have been here for many years, and at times it is good as they have good institutional memories in these employees but they become complacent and they develop an entitlement culture and they become resistance to change”.

“SSC need to be different in the way we conduct the business, we need to be market leader not follower, we need to be leaders in our own league. We need to come up with new ideas, the biggest challenge for this programme is to be a leader and not a follower. The moment you want to introduce something different from what all other organizations are doing, and then you will be attacked.”

Based on the given remarks, the researcher recommends that management members should constantly seek to improve and develop their own leadership skills. In addition, management needs to work as a team and they need to adopt a new culture because a fractured management will not lead others for common goal.

Thirdly, little chance of advancement opportunities in terms of growth and development was appeared to have hampered motivation, satisfaction and involvement among

employees. The researcher is of the opinion that advancement opportunities can provide great chance for SSC as it encourage development of employees and increase individual talents at all levels of the organization. As it has been indicated earlier that *"SSC as an employer is not helping us enough to further studies as SSC only gives loans that need to be paid back and I cannot afford it".* It was also mentioned by a management member that, "*most of the employees here are grade 12 holders if not standard 8 holders of that time because most of the came from Ministry of Labour".* One manager also stated that:

"The contagious issues now, is even you identify employees for training, the CEO will just come in and does not agree with you, even though you as a line manager this is what employees need the CEO just say no, the issue of power comes in".

The researcher sees the need for employees to be abreast with new development and technologies for better service delivery. In addition, SSC need to foster development where employee's recognition of contributions, innovation, candor and consistent achievement of performance standards should be a model. Again, with regard to job security, it is noted by management that:

"There is still fear of job losses. No matter how much we talk, no matter how many decisions and resolutions the board had passed and public announcement made and yet in terms of the numbers on the structure, it shows that there will be redundancy and what do we do with those employees?"

In contrast, respondents were also asked aspect of work factors that positively effects motivation, satisfaction and involvement and they identified job security **30%** (n=16), quality of leadership **18%** (n=9), communication **15%** (n=8), social climate **14**% (n=7), advancement opportunities **12**% (n=6) and another **12**% (n=6) of respondents did not answer the question. One third of the population appeared to be guaranteed of keeping their job at SSC, meaning they experience high job security. Generally in Namibia, jobs in government office and parastatals are perceived to be secure unlike in private sector. SSC is a government agency, it emerged from Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and this could be the reasons that some employees felt that their job is secured. Based on this, the researcher is of the opinion that SSC does not only need employees who

are mainly motivated by job security over knowledge and competency, thus development programme should be promoted to have skilled and competitive employees.

*Secondly, leadership emerged again with **18%** (n=9), this means that there were some respondents who experienced a management with leadership, although this was not something management felt themselves. Thus, it is recommended that SSC management should continue with their good practices and at the same time discard values and principle that promote division within a team. Communication on the other hand emerged with **15%** (n=8) as some respondents felt that communication takes place. This expression was also supported by two management members who stated that:*

"Communication is there, but we just end there at communication and nothing is done about employee's concerns and next time you talk, it is just another talk show".

"Communication is a little bit difficulty, as employees have various expectations as far as communication is concerned. As management of the institution, there are things you can communicate and solicit input".

5.4.8 Understanding of SSC Vision

About **73%** (n=38) knew the Vision of SSC, **25%** (n=13) did not answer the question, and **2%** (n=1) stated that SSC do not have a vision for its employees. It is good to note that large percentages of respondents know SSC vision *"to make SSC a household name in Namibia".* The twenty five percents **25%** (n=13) of the respondents seem not to have known the vision of the organization they worked for or know it but do not associate with it. It is concerning to see employees worked without understanding or believing the frame of references of services they offered to the Namibian people. The researcher recommends;

- Firstly, that SSC management needs to create a working knowledge and understanding of the vision among its employees so they identify with it at all times.
- Secondly, there is a need to create awareness and articulate activities that generate excitement, enthusiasm and commitment about the vision.
- Thirdly, creating a general working knowledge of principles that underpin the realness of SSC vision, this can be facilitated directly as SSC need to

demonstrate from a different angle “making SSC a households name starting inside its own house”, by caring for its employees first as it eventual get to clients.

Have taken note of the two percent **2%** (n=1) that stated that, SSC does not have a vision for its employees, it is understandable that if SSC is not taking care of its employees then they may not identify with the organizational vision and this sentiment was also echoed by one management members who stated:

“If you look at our vision we are saying Namibian dependents but when it comes to employer employee relationship, we are cold towards the vision with references to our employees.

5.4.9 What Motivates SSC Employees

The research respondents reported that they were motivated by many reasons ranged from career and organizational motives. Majority of respondents as indicated by **51%** (n=27) reported that they are motivated by the fact that they working/employed, that their current position is a stepping stone to what they want to achieve in life and that they believe in the mandate of SSC and they enjoy serving the public. In addition, **28%** (n=14) respondents indicated that remuneration gives the financial freedom and enable them to take care of themselves and their families. And lastly the remaining **21%** (n=11) of the respondents indicated that they were not motivated by anything when they come to work every day. To some extended management members were aware of the motivational level of employees as two members stated that:

“You can see of people they are doing work but they do it for sake of doing it and there is no passion of their job”.

“Some of us as colleagues were talking as to how do you we lift the morale of employees? An employee, who is happy in his mind, is a happy worker”.

The researcher recommends to management to develop a strategy to look specifically into different aspects of motivation as it is noted that some respondents were not motivated at all. The strategy could further explore, interest employees, career

aspirations, and development and individual learning needs. Again, given the mandate of SSC, strategy should also look into the provision monetary incentives or non-financial incentives, such as flexible working hours, time off for personal or family responsibilities and training and development?.

Besides, respondent were asked to indicate support of labour union to employees experienced work related problems. Perception on support from Labour Union showed that **43%** (n=22) said the union was not helping them, **27%** (n=14) indicated that the Union did get involved and helped those experienced work related problems, **15%** (n=8) did not answer the question and **15%** (n=8) indicated that they do not know if the Union is doing anything. It is known that the function of the Labor Union is not limited to assisting its members only in collective bargaining efforts. The trade union, through its leadership, bargains with the employer on behalf of its members and negotiates labor contracts and working conditions with employers. In line with implementation of EWP, labour union are also viewed as advocates for change as they lobby for strategies to mitigating impacts of personal and work related problems. Thus, it is recommended for the involvement of labour union in the promotion of employee's wellbeing.

5.4.10 Respondents Comments on EWP and Questionnaire

The half of the respondents as indicated by **54%** (n=27) did not answer the question. The comments provided by **46%** (n=25) were mostly in favour of the development and implementation of EWP at SSC workplaces as respondent mentioned that "*they need professional services and that SSC took long and in turn they lost a lot of valuable employees please implement we really need it*". Some comments were giving warnings that "*Employee Wellness Survey should not become "yet just another paper pushing exercise and the person implementing it should remain focus".* With regard to the questionnaire, a respondent commented that *"I appreciate the way you pose questions but I do not have answers to all questions".*

6. Conclusion

The overall aim of the investigation was to identify personal and work related problems of employees at SSC in Namibia. This chapter presented the research findings and had profiled experienced personal and work related problems among employees of Social Security Commission. It is also reported that these problems are on an increase and they are not limited to employees at a particular department of level of seniority. It appeared that management was aware of these problems and their impacts on wellbeing and job performance and as such they indicated a positive way forward of supporting the design and implementation of EWP at SSC workplace. The findings showed that majority of respondent understand the benefits of EWP and it seem that they are willing to utilize its services once operational. It is suggested that the obtain data shall be used to inform the development of EWP at SSC workplace.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Introduction

In the absence of EWP the traditional ways of managing work processes prevail, however the current status quo in the Namibian work environment shows a need to establish systems which constantly look into employers and employees issues. This practice can be advantageous as it may reduce the likelihood of poor human relations developing between employees, which could impact negatively on employee wellbeing and job performance. The study showed that SSC employees experienced personal and work-related problems and respondents expressed the need to implement EWP at the SSC workplace. This chapter summarises the main findings of the research and recommends a possible course of action.

6.2 Summary of the Main Findings and Conclusion

The overall aim of this research project was to identify employees' personal and work-related problems and perception of the impact on wellbeing and job performance. Summary of the main findings are discussed, in answer to the four main research questions.

6.2.1 Impacts of Personal Problems on Wellbeing and Job Performance

Research respondents identified the following forms of personal problems experienced by employees of SSC. The problems ranged from social, psychological, emotional and physical problems and they call for an integrated approach to address all collectively. The graph and tabulated problems below show the main problems identified, however there were also some others identified by small percentages and are not showed below. On the graph, percentages show for men and women while on the table percentages were added together.

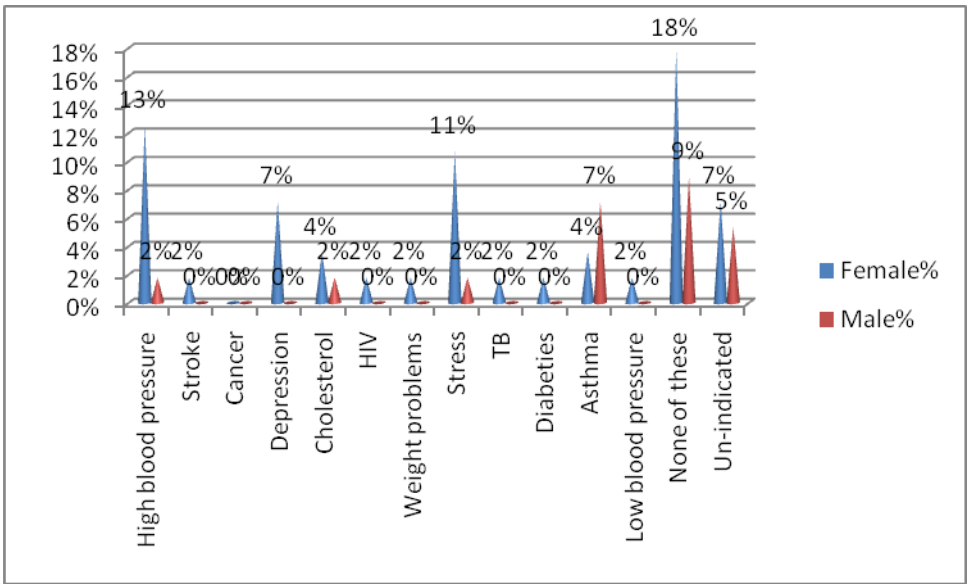


Figure 4: Health related problems (N=52)

In addition to the experienced health problems showed above, other personal and work-related problems are tabulated below.

Table 8: Identified personal problems experienced by SSC employees (N=52)

Personal	**%**	**(n)**
Misunderstanding with spouse	4%	8
Personal illness	1%	2
Death/illness in the family	3%	6
Lack of family support	6%	12
Lack of self motivation	1%	2
Financial problems	10%	20
Separated from family due to work	1%	2
Other……	0%	
Work related		
Poor relationship with immediate colleagues	10%	19
Poor supervision/management	21%	41
Deadline pressure	3%	6
Lack of transparency/honesty (communication)	13%	26
Conflict due to diverse staff population (diversity)	4%	7
Slow decision making process	12%	23
Bad work habits /ethics (organisational culture)	12%	23
	100%	**197**

It is reported that the experienced personal and work-related problems were not limited to employees at a particular area/branch or level of seniority in the institution. It was concluded by management that the workplace is not an island and thus, employees of the SSC operate in a global system and any external social and economic issues are bound to impact on them.

6.2.2 Impacts of Work Related Problems on Wellbeing and Job Performance

Throughout the study respondents identified various work-related problems that they perceived to have impacted on their wellbeing and job performance. Findings obtained from the questionnaire and interviews with management indicated the manner in which things were done at SSC as a major source of strain at the workplace. It was further described by five management members that the aspect of bringing new ideas and suggesting new ways of doing things and prompt decision making was not a culture of SSC. These seemed to have led three management members concluding that the SSC

is not a learning organisation, as new ideas were blocked and new activities were personalised due personal vendettas within management. In addition, co-operation between the management appeared to be a problem as it was mentioned by two management members that SSC management team is divided and the only forum where management meets is at management meetings. These meetings are said to be frequently postponed, making it difficult to manage processes and slowing down decision making.

Thirdly, the aspect of supervision was added to the list by two managers who mentioned that there are supervisors not living up to expectations - regarding either the way they operate, or their level of knowledge or skills. They further expressed that these supervisors were afraid of taking decisions or entertaining new ideas from their subordinates. These issues of supervision and management was raised by **21%** (n=41) of the respondents. Fourthly, organisational change and restructuring appeared to have been a source of stress to many employees as it was mentioned by four management members that “constant change at the SSC workplace e.g. re-organisational processes (restructuring) which had dragged on since 2002 had impacted negatively on performance, as employees do not understand the parameters and detail of the process.

Fifthly, it emerged that the SSC does not have a strategy to recognise and reward good performers. This was reported by general employees and management. Some employees expressed their frustration as they did not feel valued. Sixthly, in terms of process and procedures, employees who experienced problems were supposed to seek help from Human Resources; however employees seem not to trust HR for various reasons e.g. breaching confidentiality. It was also reported that HR does not have capacity to deal with employee’s personal or work-related concerns and needs. This

was attributed to what some managers observed - that HR does not have power to influence decisions as far as employee's problems were concerned.

Finally, sixty percent of respondents indicated that management did nothing to help employees who experienced personal and work-related problems. It was perceived by four management members that management find it difficult to identify themselves with their own team and it was mentioned that they were divided between those who have worked for the SSC for a long time and those who have recently joined. One manager specifically indicated that "*sometimes because of the rigidness of our structure you end up suppressing the needs of staff members, which ultimately will have impact in terms of results**".*** Perhaps all these could have led to the experienced difficulties in managing employees and establishing good working alliances with employees, as well as between management members themselves.

In fact, during the interviews, the researcher noted how management responded as if they were referring to others and not themselves as a management team. Some of the noted expressions were, "management need to start with themselves" instead of "we need to start with ourselves" and "it first has to start with them as a team" instead of "it has to start with us". This might be reflecting on their practice as highlighted above and perhaps as a result they find it challenging to function as a real team. The point above demonstrates the way things were done, or the culture at SSC and it seemed to not be favoured by the employees. This interpretation was reinforced by all management members who recognised the need to do things differently. It transpired that there is a need to discuss important information formally, as employees reported that information was passed on informally, as regular meetings were not taking place and standardised management meetings were often postponed. This seems to cause communication breakdown and increased rumour- mongering.

6.2.3 Perception on Personal and Work Related Problems

The perceptions of respondents on personal and work related problems impacting their wellbeing and job performance varied, with **70%** (n=36) who indicated that they had a positive attitude towards personal and work-related problems as their responses were summed that:

"Problems are there to be solved, challenges are part of life, it is about what you do with them and that you can never conquer what you do not confront".

It was indicated throughout the study that in the absence of a formal programme, direct impact on personal wellbeing and job performance was felt and observed every working day. The impacts reported were as follows:

- High rate of absence without official leave (AWOL)
- Sick leave was reported to be high as employees were often sick. This was indicated by management, by respondents and the sick leave report (June 2009)
- Employees were coming too late to work or leaving a little too early
- Employees lost passion and were seem unwilling to go an extra mile for clients
- Job performance lowered as employees were not meeting the deadlines required by all departments.
- There were no regular meetings and those that existed were not regular.

6.2.4 Practice to Help Employees at SSC Workplaces

James et al. (2003) mentioned that employee wellbeing is a key factor in determining an organisation's long-term performance, since there is a direct link between performance levels and the general health of the workforce. With regards to the current practice at SSC workplaces to help employees manage personal and work-related problems, the study demonstrated that nothing much is done for employees who experienced personal and work-related problems, although these problems or concerns were known by SSC management. It is therefore evident that EWP is needed and all management

indicated that it will add value to the business operation of the SSC. Three of the management members stated:

"Especially where we are now, I cannot even quantify it in dollar terms the benefits of EWP at the SSC. As long as the programme is not abused and employees are not neglecting their tasks, then for sure, the programme will help us".

"Definitely, the value will be enormous".

It was cautioned that for EWP to be successful, it should be a designed by all employees and should have clear goals and objectives. The overall strategy should complement the organisational objectives; however wellness activities should not be overly prioritised over regular SSC functions. It was also made clear that activities provided should be in the best interest of employees and progress and effectiveness should be measurable and must be evaluated. Alongside with the implementation of Programme, other aspects at the workplace also need immediate attention.

- There is need to create rapport between management and employees at different levels to lessen polarisation (e.g. US and THEM).
- Team-building activities are required to help employees identify with one another and their team as SSC employees
- The researcher noted management partiality in understanding the effect on an employee's wellbeing, thus there seem to be a great need for management members to feel the effects of healthy wellbeing for themselves, in order to be able to support the initiative fully and experience the value for themselves. The researcher observed that most management members felt relieved after interviews and it seemed to them that the interviews were almost a 'complaining session' for them to air their views and concerns and have someone listening to them. This again justifies the need for the Wellness Programme at the SSC workplace.
- In terms of work-related problems, there is a need for SSC to internalise and learn how to serve their clients effectively and efficiently, as this will lessen unnecessary frustrations and stress resulting from the nature of work.

- A paradigm shift is required at SSC to allow employees to express new ideas without fear of failing and for management to manage the institution and its employees for the better.
- There is a need to bring employee's educational level up to standard and this can be done through the provision of educational financial assistance.

Lastly, research respondents and management's expectations of EWP were that all forms of problems at the workplace should be attended to. It was emphasised that employees should get to discuss their problems and receive the help they need to develop a Healthy, Productive, Satisfied, Motivated and Happy Workforce. Lastly, EWP is also expected to build a wall of trust between employees and management.

6.3 Conclusion from the Main Findings

The research findings brought to light several personal and work-related problems, as identified by employees of SSC. The identified problems seemed to impact on wellbeing and job performance in an absence of EWP. Since identified problems were unattended, this could have led to the epxression of negative feelings toward the SSC management. From the wellbeing perspective, a healthy workforce means the presence of positive feelings in the employees that should result in happier and more productive employees. This seems not to be the case at the SSC workplace (James et al, 2003).

It was made clear that personal and organisational problems were experienced by employees of all ages, sex, across departments and branches and at all levels of the organisation. These problems seem not only impacted wellbeing and performance but to a large extent it has also impacted on the way things were done at the SSC. All these appeared to have affected SSC team members, team performance, as well as individual performance. In addition, findings highlighted restructuring, management style, trust, leadership, communication, supervision/ insecure supervisors, lower educational level and an 'un-flourishing culture', to be just some of the factors that contributed to high

stress levels among employees of SSC. As a result, just as mentioned by Matteson (2002), the effect was felt by the employer in high health costs, lower productivity, reduced motivation and counter-productive behaviors.

6.4 Recommendations

6.4.1 Recommendation to SSC Management

The Namibian Labour Act (Act 11 of 2007), section 39 (1) (a) states that every employer in charge of the permission where employees are employed must, without charge to the employees, provide a working environment that is safe, is without risk to the health of employees and has adequate arrangements for the welfare of employees. Employees have a right to work in good environment to enable them to perform their duties as per the employment contract. The researcher has made the following recommendations:

One, as organisational culture is believed to be one strong element at the workplace that can influence the development of all forms of work related problems, it is recommended that the patterns of belief and behaviors need to change for SSC to be a learning organisation where employees take chances and explore new activities and approaches. Two, as three management members echoed the sensitiveness of SSC mandate:

"I think what we really need to do is to be sensitive to the plight of our claimants, because most of them do not know what is expected, yet we have decision makers and supervisors who just do not care and cannot go an extra mile just for clients".

This means that all SSC staff members need to internalise the needs of their clients to a degree, who at most had gone through a life-changing event and therefore needed immediate and quality services. Three, the profiled problems calls SSC to invest in the development of a comprehensive EWP to ensure that employees are healthy and fit "to

administer and manage public funds professionally" (vision). Management need to support HR initiatives as human recourses management is central to the organisational performance and existence, and in this context, EWP falls under the Human Resource Departments. In addition, proactive measures are required in the way SSC attends to personal and work-related problems to prevent possible harm to employee's wellbeing and limit chances where performance is decreased. With regards to EWP, it is recommended that management need to give EWP some so sort of power to really help employees, although it is known that:

"Management will not change overnight, but is important that management need to take ownership and take the lead in activities".

"There is a negative perception existing in management as activities are introduced but management shut them down or they simply not support them.

Last, but not least, the promotion of a work ethic should take place for employees to value their job and be self-motivated. The researcher acknowledges SSC management for the expressed willingness to introduce EWP to look into employees issues and concerns at the workplace. It is also noted that SSC management might have a challenging task to manage an institution with a sensitive mandate and its employees of which some were seconded to the SSC from the Ministry of Labour.

6.4.2 Recommendation for Occupational Social Work in Namibia

EWP is a new field in the Namibian workplace, thus it is recommended that a strong marketing tool has to be designed to help employees understand the programme and its benefit on individual employees and for organisations as a whole. This is mainly because such programmes should address employees and organisational problems. It is also important for the Occupational Social Workers or HR practitioners to first conduct assessments to inform the development of EWP activities or services. In addition,

implementers need to inform management on the needed wide power for EWP to serve the interest of employees, which will benefit the employer later.

Furthermore, the implementers of EWP should give feedback to management as this will help management to understand the progress of work based programmers and to then commit more and support budgetary allocations to EWP activities. In terms of EWP benefits, consideration also need to be given to employees families and their dependents as this will harmonise the SSC mandate to its own employees, since the vision of SSC is to become a household name. It also worth mentioning that to increase participation and reduce resistance, the programme should not be developed by management for everybody else, but should be developed by everybody else; and everybody should participate in it and own it for high success rate. A framework to guide the implementation of EWP services, and a comprehensive policy, is required.

6.4.3 Recommendation for Practice

EWP has long been advocated for as a way to take care of employees, who are the assets of an organisation. The expected deliverables are: decreases in healthcare costs, reduce absenteeism, an increase in productivity and healthy, happy employees. The ultimate goal of a successful EWP is to empower employees to make wise lifestyle decisions, to give them the knowledge, tools and support necessary to be healthy in their lives and to maintain a balance required for improved or increased work performance.

The research findings can be translated into the formulation of a guideline which institutions or organisations may review when designing or implementing EWP at the workplace. The guideline is developed after extensive reading about the development and implementation of EWP at workplaces. Akabasa & Kurzman (2005), Mogorosi

(2009) and Govender & Terblanche (2009), discussed important factors to consider when implementing EAP and EWP at the work place.

- The first step is gaining complete upper management support as it helps remove barriers associated with design and implementation of EWP. Generally, management would ask "How much is this going to cost us?"
- High health costs, absenteeism, low morale, decrease in performance, all translates into low organisational performance, which leads to likely costs associated with absence of EWP at workplaces.
- The scope of the EWP should be aligned to operational needs of the organisation and activities should address critical dimensions, such as employee's personal and work-related problems, to promote wellbeing and overall job performance.
- For the sustainability of EWP, the organisation should have a policy and value statement pertaining to EWP. The components of education, awareness, care and support, monitoring and advocacy may be cornerstones. Initiatives should be guided by statutory requirements for instance Labour Act and Healthy and Safety Act.
- The structural placement is of outmost importance, hence the question, where do you place the EWP division on the organogram? The driver of the programme should be impartial. Ideally the manager of the programme should have some decision making power in order to influence strategic direction. Programs evaluation is most crucial step for further management support of EWP functions.
- Appropriate allocation of skilled human resources to drive the programme is important as some organisations designate Human Resources Managers or Benefits Coordinators to manage the EWP, on top of their full-time job. This programme is people-centered and if left to unskilled human resources it will cause more harm than good.

- Before initiating a programme it is a good idea to survey the employee population's needs, cultural aspects and interests. In this way, the content of the programme will be responsive to the reality on the ground.
- It should be emphasised that employee participation is key to its success in addressing bottom line of the organisation and bringing about change.
- EWP is for all employees irrespective of their functional responsibilities; therefore the consumption of its services must be a necessity to all across the board.
- The style of communicating benefits and activity of EWP is significant because employees have numerous ways in which they understand process and internalise new information. Therefore different communication platforms and methodology should be adopted to attract the attention of employees to the wellness services. It would be imperative to choose different venues, time, as well as resource person to facilitate some Wellness activities from time to time. This may encourage full/better participation of the employees into the programme activity.
- Implementers of EWP need to be people focused and results driven to be able to balance or satisfy needs of employees and organisation. Within an organisation, there are many systems that can make, or break down, an employee's ability and desire to perform to the best of their abilities. Therefore a need assessment to determine employees and corporate needs is a priority.

6.4.4 Recommendation for Future Research

The following recommendations for future research were suggested:

- Once EWP is implemented, it will be important to evaluate the services and see if it adds meaning to lives of employees and also see if it helps employees solve and manage problems. And in turn if employees wellbeing and job performance is enhanced.

- There seems to be a general perception among employees that management does not care. The researcher senses the need to manage this perception by conducting an organisational climate survey to explore more on feelings of employees.
- Akabas & Kurzman (2005) stated that work and employment issues assume a prominent role in people's lives; Occupational Social Workers can research the meaning of work in the lives of employees and see how to integrate research data to develop motivational strategies where motivational level and morale is perceived to be low.

6.5 Concluding Comments

Personal and work-related problems as experienced by employees of Social Security Commission in Namibia were explored and profiled. This research report had also noted the impact of identified problems on employee's wellbeing and job performance. The SSC attempted to develop a policy on Employee Assistance Programmes, but this policy has been dormant, thus at the time of the investigation it was mentioned in several occasion that the SSC does nothing to help employees who experience problems. It is highly recommended that the existing EAP policy be reviewed and changed so that the SSC develops and implements a Comprehensive Employee Wellness Programme, which will address both personal and work-related problems. This can enhance the meaning of work among SSC employees and the many functions that work serves, as is summed by Sigmund Freud's quote that "ability to work is one of the two hallmarks of adulthood" (the other being the ability to love) (Akabas & Kurzman, 1993).

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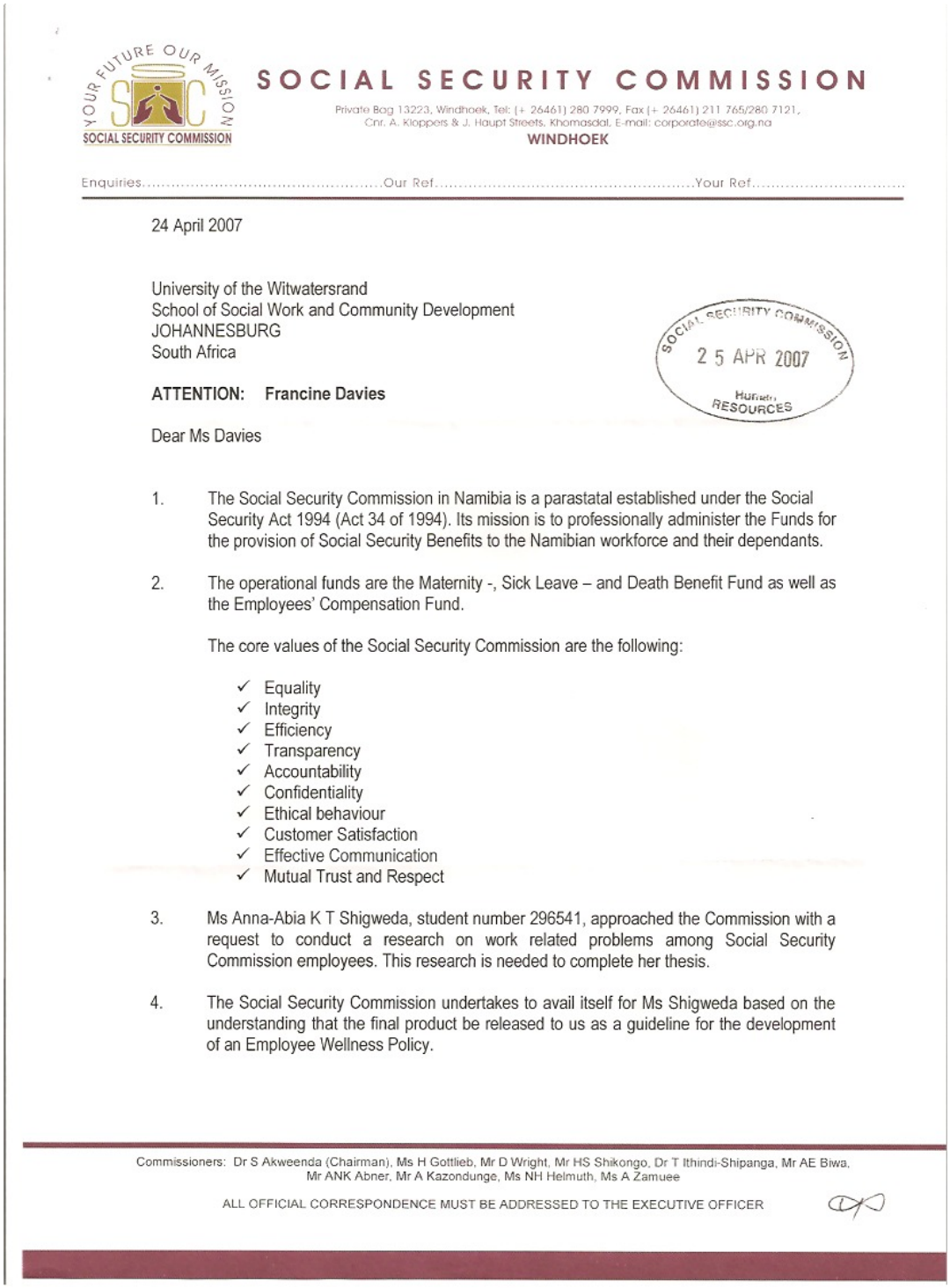
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LIST APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A: Authorization Letter to Conduct Research with SSC Employees



SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION

Private Bag 13223, Windhoek, Tel: (+ 26461) 280 7999, Fax (+ 26461) 211 765/280 7121,
Cnr. A. Kloppers & J. Haupt Streets, Khomasdal, E-mail: corporate@ssc.org.na
WINDHOEK

Enquiries.....Our Ref.....Your Ref.....

24 April 2007

University of the Witwatersrand
School of Social Work and Community Development
JOHANNESBURG
South Africa

SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION
25 APR 2007
Human RESOURCES

ATTENTION: Francine Davies

Dear Ms Davies

1. The Social Security Commission in Namibia is a parastatal established under the Social Security Act 1994 (Act 34 of 1994). Its mission is to professionally administer the Funds for the provision of Social Security Benefits to the Namibian workforce and their dependants.

2. The operational funds are the Maternity -, Sick Leave – and Death Benefit Fund as well as the Employees' Compensation Fund.

   The core values of the Social Security Commission are the following:

   - ✓ Equality
   - ✓ Integrity
   - ✓ Efficiency
   - ✓ Transparency
   - ✓ Accountability
   - ✓ Confidentiality
   - ✓ Ethical behaviour
   - ✓ Customer Satisfaction
   - ✓ Effective Communication
   - ✓ Mutual Trust and Respect

3. Ms Anna-Abia K T Shigweda, student number 296541, approached the Commission with a request to conduct a research on work related problems among Social Security Commission employees. This research is needed to complete her thesis.

4. The Social Security Commission undertakes to avail itself for Ms Shigweda based on the understanding that the final product be released to us as a guideline for the development of an Employee Wellness Policy.

Commissioners: Dr S Akweenda (Chairman), Ms H Gottlieb, Mr D Wright, Mr HS Shikongo, Dr T Ithindi-Shipanga, Mr AE Biwa, Mr ANK Abner, Mr A Kazondunge, Ms NH Helmuth, Ms A Zamuee

ALL OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE MUST BE ADDRESSED TO THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

5. Ms Shigweda needs to inform the General Manager: Human Resources about her program in this regard.

6. It is trusted that you will find abovementioned condition acceptable.

Yours Sincerely

Festus Hangula
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

APPENDIX B: WELLNESS QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SSC

Dear Colleagues,

The Human Resource Department is spearheading the development and implementation of a work site Employee Wellness Programme. This is a comprehensive Programme that aims at identifying, analysing and profiling experienced personal & work related problems impacting your wellbeing and job performance. The intended commitment is to address possible underlying factors influencing employee's behaviours in order to create a supportive working environment. To achieve this, it is crucial to use an "employee centered approach" by firstly gathering relevant data from employees and thereafter use the findings to plan and design a Wellness Programme for SSC employees.

My name is Anna-Abia Shigwedha, a Masters Degree Candidate at Witwatersrand University, Johannesburg. I am inviting you all to participate in the Wellness Survey. Your name/anything that identifies you is not required, your identity is protected. This exercise is voluntary. And if you feel that you do not want to continue answering the questionnaire, it is voluntary to withdraw. **Please take time to fill in the questionnaire as your ideas are cherished in this process. Indicate with an X where necessary or fill in your answer in spaces provided.**

PART ONE: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Indicate your sex.

Male		**Female**	

2. Indicate your age.

☐ 20 - 25 yrs

	26-30 yrs
	31-35 yrs
	36-40 yrs
	41- 46 yrs
	47– 51 yrs
	52 Years and above

3. What is your marital status?

	Single
	Widower
	Married
	Widow
	Cohabiting
	Divorced

4. Race

Black		**White**	

5. Your highest level of education?

	Less than grade 12
	High School – Grade 12
	College graduate/Certificate
	Polytechnic graduate/Diploma
	University graduate Honours /B-Degree
	University graduate/Masters Degree
	PHD

6. Are you currently furthering your qualifications? YF N

7. Your position at Social Security Commission.

Senior management or executive level

Middle management	
Supervisory level	
Administration position	
Technician	
General workers	
Other not mentioned here	

8. Where are you stationed/working (Branch area), please mark with a X.

Otjiwarongo		Walvis Bay		Keetmanshop		Luderitz		Oshakati		Rundu	
Grootfontein		Katima Mulilo		Windhoek							

9. In which division/department do you work?

a) Finance
b) Human Resource
c) Information Technology
d) Administration
e) Customer Care
f) Operations
g) Other…… .....(Specify)

10. How long have you been employed by the Namibian Social Security Commission?

a) Under 3 yrs.
b) 4- 6 yrs.
c) 7- 9 yrs.
d) 10- 12 yrs.
e) 13 and above

PART TWO: GENERAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

11. Indicate what have you been treated / taken medication for....

Heart condition		High blood		Stroke		Cancer		Depression/		Cholesterol		Other	
HIV		Weight problems		TB		Allergies		Diabetes		Asthma		None of these	

12. Please indicate in the appropriate box (Always/ Sometimes /Never)

	Always	Sometimes	Never
I take my health seriously			
I am worried about my physical health			
I get enough sleep			
I wake up feeling refreshed after a night's rest			
I wake up exhausted and not feeling like going to work			

I wake up enthusiastic but get discouraged when I get			
I eat a healthy diet			
I notice physical sign that I may not be healthy			
I maintain a health exercise routine			
I do different things to raise my energy levels			

13.1 In your life, what stresses/upsets you often?

	(a) Personal problems
	(b) Work related problems
	(c) Both
	(d) Not applicable

13.2. If you ticked A/B/C above, tick problems/ challenges you face often, you can tick more than 1.

Personal	**Work related**
…..Misunderstanding with spouse	….Poor relationship with immediate colleagues
…..Personal illness	….Poor supervision/management
…..Death/illness in the family	….Not completing work on time
…..lack of family support	….Lack of transparency/truth/honesty
…..Lack of self motivation	….Conflict due to diverse staff population
….. Separated from family due to work	….Slow decision making process
….. Financial problems	….Role conflict/ no clear job description
Others.....	Others.....

13.3 How often do you experience challenges you ticked above?

Very often		Often		Seldom		Never	

14. Tick from the list below, how your react to the challenges that you ticked in 13.2, you may tick more than one.

……Stay away from work

……Inform your immediate supervisor

……Come to work but not complete work

……Report to work but not do work

……Put in sick/vacation leave

……Ignore the situation and concentrate on your work

15. Do you think your reactions to challenges solve or manage the problem?

Always		Sometime		Not always		Never	

16. Are you aware of the Employee Assistance Policy at SSC? ☐ Yes ☐ No

17. If you answered <u>YES/NO in</u> the previous question, explains briefly what is Employee Assistance Policy at SSC?

……
……
……

18. What is SSC response when employees are experiencing problems?

---

19. In your opinion, is there a need to develop an Employee Wellness Programme at your workplace, motivate your answer?

Yes_____

No_____

20. If you have answered YES, in the previous question, please tick problems that will make you approach Wellness Office once in place;

Deadline pressure		Cancer	
Stress		Living positively with HIV	

Death in a family		Conflict with colleagues	
Supervision issues		Diversity issues	
Depression		Harassment issues	
Substance dependence and abuse		Structure issues	

21. In your opinion, what possible factors would impact the provision of Employee Wellness Services at SSC workplace?

_____

_____

22. Why is Employee Wellness Programme a programme for employees?

…….....

PART THREE: PERSONAL FACTORS

23. Will you speak to someone when you are faced with a challenge?

☐ YES

☐ NO

24. Please indicate, who would you prefer to speak to when experiencing a problem?

a) ..... Colleague/supervisor/manager
b) .....Social Worker/Psychologist/Religious leader
c) .....Friend/Spouse/ other family members
d) ……. Prefer not to speak to anyone at all
e) Others, specify……

25. Indicate True or False on the following statements.

	True/False
I have friends amongst those people with whom I work	.....
I feel free to approach management at any time	.....
I feel people I work with are committed to working together as a team	.....
I feel my colleagues in our department are motivated and support each other	.....
Employees at SSC are willing to go the extra mile when needed	.....

26. What is your general attitude towards personal and work related challenges?

_____

27. How often do you get help and support from your co-worker if you are faced with a challenge?

Very often		Often		Sometimes		Never	

28. How often do problems at work make you irritable at home?

Very often		Often		Seldom		Never	

PART FOUR: WORK RELATED PROBLEMS

29. Would you consider your job as?

- ☐ Stressful
- ☐ Very stressful
- ☐ Extremely stressful
- ☐ Not stressful
- ☐ None of the above

30. Do you think aspects of Wellness are promoted at SSC workplaces, please explain?

Yes……

No……

31. Unpleasant physical conditions at the workplace can cause some degree of discomfort. Mark with an X the conditions that make you uncomfortable at work?

Office space	Location	Chairs	Ventilation	Lighting	Stairs	Others specify.....

32. Which aspect of work factor negatively affects your motivation, satisfaction and involvement?

Quality of leadership		Communication		Job security		Social climate	
Advancement opportunities		Others ……					

33. Which aspect of work factor positively influence your motivation, satisfaction and involvement?

Quality of leadership		Communication		Job security		Social climate	
Advancement opportunities							

34. What is the Vision of SSC?

_____

35. Indicate with an X, would you generally consider yourself as:

a) .....Happy employee
b) .....Disgruntled employee
c) .....Frustrated employee
d) .....Disappointed employee
e) .....None of the above

36. What motivates you to come to work every day?

.....

37. Does Labour Union support employees experiencing work related problems?

Yes		No		I do not know	

38. Any comment?

……
……

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

APPENDIX C: In – Depth Interview With SSC Management

Interview Question Sample for SSC Executive Management

1. Working for SSC, have you noticed/heard of employees experiencing personal/work related problems, Elaborate on the problems experienced?
2. When employee experiences problem, do you think it will have a negative impact on their general wellbeing and work performance, please explain? **Or if there is no problems the question will be rephrased,** What is in place that is helping employees with personal and work related problems (given that personal and work related problems are not rife in your organisation)?
3. What is your general understanding of the Employee Wellness Programme?
4. At SSC workplace, do you think there are some common problems impacting general wellbeing and work performance of employees?
5. What can you suggest to minimise the impact of common problems at SSC workplace?
6. In your opinion, how can management build and model a culture of care at workplace?
7. Communication and participatory decision making are key principles in fostering a team work environment, what would you say are the practices at SSC?
8. Do you think Employee Wellness Programme is needed at SSC workplaces?
9. Once EWP is developed and fully functioning, would you allow employees in your department to take part in its activities? Please motivate your answer.
10. Overall, do you think Employee Wellness Programme will add value to the business operation of SSC, please motivate your answer?
11. Applicants at SSC are mostly members of society who are in dire need of immediate and quality services, how would your department foster a more responsive service provision?
12. Due to the nature of work within specific departments, would you say there are some departments that are more prone to organisational stress?
13. What are the strategic outcomes expected as far as Employee Wellness is concerned?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND INFORMATION!

APPENDIX D: RESPONDENTS INFORMATION SHEET

Dear SSC Employees,

The Executive Management of Social Security Commission sanctioned and initiated the Employee Wellness Programme. The programme will serve as an organisational resource as it will identify, analyse and profile personal and work related problems impacting employees' general wellbeing and job performance. This research study aims to gather employee's opinion on the best approach to address possible underlying factors influencing employee behaviours and to enhance a supportive working environment. All Social Security employees are invited take 30 minutes to answer this questionnaire; your participation and ideas make a difference.

Please note the following important information

1) Your participation in this research is valued greatly;

(2) Participation is voluntary, and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits that you entitled;

(3) You may discontinue participation at any time;

(4) Answering this questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes;

(5) The obtained research data will inform the development of the Employee Wellness Programme;

(6) The executive summary of the research information will be provided to you via email;

(7) If you find the questionnaire emotionally distressing and you need to speak to someone, please speak to a counselor by dialing 061 – 23 2221 for counseling.

(8) If you have any questions regarding the questionnaire please contact Anna-Abia Shigwedha @ 0812587315 or write an email to address given above.

Instruction to complete this questionnaire:

- Please do not write your name or anything that may identify you;
- Please be honest as possible, this will help in addressing your needs;
- It remains your choice to print the questionnaire and fill it in manually or to fill it in electronically and print it thereafter. There will be a box at the reception area where you can put the completed questionnaire;
- Please note that your information is anonymous and will be kept confidential as the researcher will handle it with diligence.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEWS AND RECORD CONSENT FORM

The aim of conducting interview is to gather in-depth information from management on their general understanding of EWP and their perception on the experienced personal and work/organisational problems. This information is necessary as it will determine management support in the sanction of change effort and efficiency of Employee Wellness Programme. It is important that interview data are understood within a given context and interpreted correctly.

Please sign below to give consent for the interview to be **audio recorded** for better analysis and interpretation on emerging themes.

.....Signature .....Date

Thank you very much for your cooperation!