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Exploring the Perceptions of Supervisors in the South African Police Service on Supervisory Referrals

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EXPLORING THE PERCEPTIONS OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICES SUPERVISORS ON SUPERVISORY REFERRALS

The Department of Social Work

School of Human and Community Development

Faculty of Humanities

University of the Witwatersrand

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts in Social Work in the field of Occupational Social Work

by

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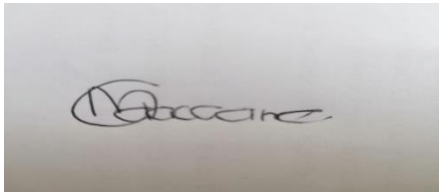
Dr Roshini Pillay

September 2024

Declaration

I, Kgalaletso Matshupe Molokoane (Student No. 302261) thus declare that the information I have provided about exploring the perception of South African Police Services supervisors on supervisory referrals is my own work and that all sources used in this report have been referenced.



_____ 18 September 2024

Kgalaletso Matshupe Molokoane Date

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to my beloved parents, Mr Sekgwari Molokoane and Mrs Lieschen Molokoane who encouraged me in every way, who made sure that I do not give up and taught me to trust in God at all times. Your love, support and trust in me is indescribable. Thank you and I love you.

Abstract

The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) at the South African Police Services (SAPS) is a service established to assist employees who experience both personal and work-related challenges. It is recognised as a unique tool for addressing issues that could impede employees' effectiveness and productivity. Supervisors are recognised as important stakeholders as they are responsible for referring troubled employees to the EAP. This study draws from existing literature that highlights the growing prevalence of organisational stress in the workplace and the high rate of underutilisation of EAP services, despite supervisory training efforts aimed at empowering supervisors to refer employees to the EAP. The primary purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of SAPS supervisors on supervisory referrals. The study employed qualitative research, and purposive sampling was used to recruit nine participants and three key informants at the SAPS to participate in the study. Data was collected through semi-structured one-on-one interviews, guided by an interview schedule, and ethical aspects were considered. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data, to identify themes and contextualise the findings. Findings from the study suggest that supervisors understand their role in supervisory referral and value the importance of employee assistance practitioners (EAPS) rendering supervisory training. The findings further identified constraining factors that hinder supervisory referral, including a lack of trust, poor training attendance and a lack of visibility of EAPS even when the programme is well marketed. Therefore, frequent supervisory trainings and re-evaluation of the marketing strategies and content of the training are recommended.

Key words

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), South African Police Services (SAPS), Supervisor, Supervisory Referral, Referral, Troubled employee

Abbreviations

EAP	Employee Assistance Programme
EAPA-SA	Employee Assistance Professional Association of South Africa
EAPS	Employee Assistance Practitioners
EHWS	Employee Health and Wellness Services
LRA	Labour Relations Act
OHSA	Occupational Health and Safety Act
PTSD	Post Traumatic Post Disorder
SAPS	South African Police Services
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organization

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Chapter 1

Background to the Study

1.1 Introduction

Supervisors play a significant role in the referral of employees to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) when faced with challenges that affect their productivity in a workplace. They are the link between employees and the EAP. Supervisors are responsible for noticing any concerns that endanger workplace safety, declines in performance, and policy violations (Tiner, 2006). As a result, behavioural changes in employees are in the hands of supervisors, who should be conscious of their effect on the employee's behaviour.

According to Willbanks (1999), EAPs are primarily meant to assist employees with personal difficulties that impair job performance, and many organisations depend on their managers to identify problematic employees and refer them to the EAP for assistance. According to Blair (2004), supervisors are important role players with regard to the EAP because they are the first to observe any reduction or change in work performance. Referral of troubled employees for EAP services contributes to the well-being of both the employee and the organisation.

In organisations like the South African Police Services (SAPS), employees are faced with organisational stressors that affect their work lives. In an effort to overcome these challenges, the SAPS implemented an EAP as a problem-solving intervention. EAP or Employee Health and Wellness Services (EHWS), as it is called in the SAPS, offer a variety of support services to police officers, including psychotherapy, crisis intervention, and suicide prevention programmes; however, according to Boshoff et al. (2015), a low number of police officers utilise these services. It is inevitable that the crime rate in South Africa has put immense pressure on South Africa's police officers. Some identified work-related stressful events impacting the mental health of police officers include long working hours and heavy workloads, police culture, and organisational change (Purba & Demou, 2019). With South Africa having the fourth-highest crime rate in the world, following Venezuela, Papua New Guinea and Afghanistan respectively (World Population Review, 2022), the pressure on the SAPS employees is inevitable. In the absence of support structures or if there is a lack of personal characteristics that enable police officers to manage, police officers may be especially susceptible to mental health issues (Loriol, 2016). Such identified risks could impact their

productivity and the well-being of employees at the workplace. It is for those reasons that the SAPS offers EAP at workplaces to assist with improving the employees' quality of life.

Supervisors in the organisation are expected to make referrals after having identified troubled employees; they have to comprehend precisely when and how recommendations have to be made. According to Cottongin (2005, as cited in Mthimunye, 2007), supervisors must be knowledgeable about employee work performance, documentation, and conflict, as well as accessible resources and support.

Little conclusive evidence exists on the perception of supervisors regarding the referral of employees to the EAP, and as a result, the study's goal was to investigate supervisors' perceptions on supervisory referrals within the SAPS. The ultimate advantage of undertaking this study was to understand the perception of supervisors on supervisory referral with the aim of increasing supervisory referral and the EAP utilisation rate in the SAPS to address organisational stresses experienced by SAPS employees. Research findings will further assist the organisation in enhancing the supervisory training to ensure that the content covers the information necessary to improve supervisory referral.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The SAPS provides difficult services that have a variety of negative effects on individual employees. These occurrences have a detrimental impact on employees' work performance. Experience has shown that if they are not addressed immediately, they are more likely to hinder their productivity at work. Therefore SAPS, the employer, and supervisors have to ensure that employees are both physically and mentally productive. To ensure that employees are effective in the workplace, it is therefore important that they are referred to the EAP when they experience problems.

SAPS established the EAP to assist employees in coping with the occupational stressors. The EAP was initially institutionalised to address alcohol addiction issues faced by employees in workplaces (Rajin, 2012), and as time progressed, the scope of services became comprehensive and accommodated other employee challenges. In line with a lot of other public entities, the SAPS has acknowledged its duty to its workers; as a result, the institutionalisation of the EAP in 2003 was a direct result of this admission (Rajin, 2012). The high rate of police burnout, suicides, and other organisational pressures among SAPS employees remains concerning even with the EAP in place in the organisation.

Supervisors have a duty to identify and refer troubled employees to the EAP services in order to promote desired behaviour. Simelane (2007) describes the role of supervisors as being at the core of the EAP. The workplace expects managers and supervisors to monitor behavioural, physical, and social indications that impact work performance negatively (Rajin, 2012). These responsibilities fall on supervisors, who must complete EAP training in order to be able to identify early stress signs in employees and facilitate their referral to EAP services. Supervisory training may be as often as possible or when the need arises. Mogorosi (2009) mentions that supervisors must get supervisory training that includes a wide range of concerns such as substance misuse, family difficulties, intervention tactics, and the referral process.

The EAP in organisations was initiated to alleviate problems and increase productivity; however, studies indicate that there is a high rate of underutilisation of the EAP (Manganyi, 2015). A study by Mugari (2011) showed that there is an underutilisation of the EAP in the SAPS. Despite employees being aware of the services, low utilisation of the EAP service is observed. It is unclear if supervisors' lack of referrals or employees' ignorance of the organisation's EAP services accounts for the low usage.

Supervisory training enhances supervisory referral by equipping supervisors with skills to identify and refer clients as soon as a challenge is identified. It focuses on training supervisors and other stakeholders on intervention strategies, processes for referrals, and indicators of a troubled employee (Dipela & Sithole, 2021). Supervisory training helps to maintain the organisation's productivity. The involvement of supervisors in EAP supervisory training has been related to the ability of supervisors to identify troubled employees, including the supervisors' span of control, job longevity, and managerial status (Bayer, 1990, as cited in Mahlahlane, 2003). Mugari (2011) conducted research that revealed that supervisors make 21 percent of referrals in contrast to the 9 percent of self-referrals (informal referrals) that arise from a lack of understanding and information on the EAP referral system. This is because supervisors who undergo training are equipped with recognition, intervention and suitable referral skills (formal referrals).

Findings from this research will assist in understanding the perceptions of supervisors on supervisory referrals, as their perceptions have a direct influence on the rate of utilisation of EAP services. The findings will increase possibilities for revising supervisory training to ensure increased use of EAP services. If no investigation is conducted, supervisors run the risk of not utilising the programme at all. For the programme to see an increase in supervisory referrals,

supervisors' needs and perceptions towards supervisory referrals must be known and understood.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research question was formulated for the research study:

What are the perceptions of supervisors regarding supervisory referral in the South African Police Service?

1.4 Aim(s) and Objectives

1.4.1 Aim/Research Purpose

The purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of supervisors on supervisory referral at the South African Police Service.

1.4.2 Research Objectives

The following objectives were set:

- To establish the awareness of SAPS supervisors on supervisory referral.
- To ascertain the views of supervisors on their role in supervisory referral.
- To explore the nature of training that has been conducted on supervisory referral.
- To establish how marketing has been conducted on supervisory training.
- To explore the techniques used to evaluate supervisory training
- To formulate recommendations regarding the referral role of supervisors

1.5 Definitions of Concepts

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) refers to a programme in an organisation designed to identify and enhance employees' wellness, physically and mentally, as well as address any issues of productivity. It is a programme aimed at achieving a state of balance between the well-being of employees and the workplace by a professionally trained person (EAPA-SA, 2015; Osilla & Van Busum, 2012).

Supervisor according to the EAPA SA (2005), is a person in a position of authority who oversees the performance of subordinate staff. Thus, the researcher sees a supervisor as a senior person with the authority to enforce the rules and policies of the agency and also steering their

subordinates' behaviour towards the organisation's objectives. Supervisors share knowledge and expertise when they guide subordinates (Schwartz& Schwartz, 2020).

Referral is defined by Hepworth et al. (2010) as a process where others have identified a need to help in the best interest of the troubled person. It is an act of sending someone for help when the need has been identified.

Supervisory Referrals are referrals that are supervisor-initiated (Thomas et al., 1994, as cited in Toverud, 1999) with knowledge of what resources are available and what the needs of the clients are (Barker, 1988). The supervisor should be involved in the referral process and trained to have a comprehensive awareness of the helping process (Mahlahlane, 2003).

South African Police Services (SAPS) in terms of the Constitution of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996), is defined as an organisation responsible for creating a safe and secure environment for all people of South Africa, bound by a code of conduct which should also form a part of their employees' code of life, principles and values.

Troubled employee according to Taute and De Winaar (2008), is an employee who has a personal or work-related difficulty that prevents them from performing optimally economically and socially.

1.6 Theoretical Framework(s) underpinning the Study

The researcher adopted the Ecological System Theory, the theory developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979), because the goal was to explore the perceptions of supervisors on supervisory referral. The theoretical framework applied helps the researcher to focus the research, to test the theory and apply the findings to relevant research methodologies (Maree, 2016). In qualitative research, the theoretical framework serves as a guiding factor to guarantee that the study will effectively describe the matter at hand (Padgett, 2017).

Ecological Systems Theory is widely acknowledged as one of the most credible theories explaining how social surroundings impact human development. (Hepworth et al., 2010). The theory argues that the environment with which you interact affects every facet of your life. The theory further helps to understand the challenges that supervisors in the police sector face and affect how they view and perceive things.

The theory is not only concerned with various systems, but also on interactions between systems (Hepworth et al., 2010). The nature of the work and environment will influence how

individuals interact and respond to situations in which they find themselves. The theory better explains how the police environment affects how they handle and address the occupational stressors they encounter.

Ecological Systems Theory in practice aims to foster a strong relationship between individuals and their environment by mitigating life stressors, enhancing personal and social resources to enhance coping strategies, and influencing environmental forces to meet people's needs (Payne, 2014). The social worker will explore the perception of supervisors holistically, holding the viewpoint that individuals interconnect with their social and physical environment.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

A small number of cases addressed through the EAP are formal referrals, which are brought about by concerns about an employee's performance at work. Different factors influence supervisors' EAP referral decisions, and these factors have been found to generally motivate referral action, although not always in a way that fits the programme's early intervention aims (Harley, 1990). To understand the perceptions of supervisors on supervisory referral, in this section the following aspects are covered: Police Services globally, impact of crime on SAPS, the role of supervisors, elements of an effective EAP, factors and constraints affecting supervisory referral, supervisory training, different types of referrals, and the importance of training.

2.2 Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

The EAP was first implemented in the United States of America (USA) as an Occupational Alcoholism Programme to assist employees struggling with alcohol issues in the workplace (Dickman & Challenger, 2003). The programme during that time was solely meant to address and provide assistance to employees experiencing alcohol problems. In South Africa, EAPs were relatively new in the workplaces emerging locally in the early 1980s (Dewe et al., 2000). Currently, both private and government departments are investing resources in EAPs to serve both the employer's and the employees' interest. EAPs are utilized both in the public and private sector aimed at enhancing employee well-being and productivity in the workplace. Badul (2018) mentions that the programme was implemented in the South African public sector to address a range of issues, including but not restricted to drug and alcohol addiction, workplace adaptation issues, issues with mental health and interpersonal relationships, and others. It is believed that the EAP is a tool for problem solving for individuals in the workplace. Dipela and Sithole (2021) define EAP as a programme that links employees with personal issues to the right resources to enhance productivity, with the main objective being to help employees restore their emotional and physical well-being.

Naidoo and Jano (2003) indicate that EAPs are crucial in lowering absenteeism, accidents at work and complaints. It also plays an important role in eliminating all the hurdles preventing an individual from functioning optimally at work. The programmes focus on solving a wide

range of productivity-related difficulties. EAP in South Africa has been influenced by international changes (Naidoo & Jano, 2003).

Prior to EAPs, employees resorted to unhealthy coping mechanisms like substance misuse to cope with challenges. The introduction of EAP was solely to address substance abuse; however, EAP shifted focus due to increased social problems (Mogorosi, 2009). Bophela and Govender (2015) further state that, EAPs are the key instruments for attending to the well-being of employees and for reaching the important milestones of the organisational performance and productivity.

Different occupational challenges impact employees negatively in the workplace, and the EAP assists in managing the challenges experienced. Counsellors, psychologists, chaplains, and psychometrics provide this assistance, recognising the importance of each profession's role in assisting SAPS employees identified to have experienced a traumatic event (Grobler & Joubert, 2012). Bophela and Govender (2015) mention that EAPS provide a wide range of services to the workplace community, using different methods to address personal and work-related issues that may affect productivity and effectiveness. The EAPS assist employees faced with challenges in order to be capable of functioning effectively in the workplace; their roles and function within the SAPS will be discussed next.

2.3 The Roles and Functions of EA Practitioners in SAPS

EAPS are intended to provide a range of psychological services to employees (Baskar et al., 2021), their scope of services broadened as more occupational stressors were experienced and affected employees' productivity at the workplace. The programme initially focused on alcohol addiction problems that employees encountered in the workplace (Grobler & Joubert, 2012). The EAP became comprehensive and accommodated issues such as financial, psychological, and work-related stress that affected work performance (Grobler & Joubert, 2012). EAPS are responsible for providing support to employees of the SAPS and promoting wellness in the organisation.

EAPS have received specialised training to address a variety of employee issues. The primary focus is on personal coping skills to help individuals to cope effectively with challenges and improve their quality of life (Baskar et al., 2021). EAPS have the responsibility to render services that will raise awareness and empower employees with the skills to identify symptoms of occupational stressors that may hinder them from being fully functional in the workplace.

EAPs at the SAPS are offered through a combined multi-disciplinary approach. The EAP at the SAPS comprises social workers, psychologists, and chaplains (Grobler & Joubert, 2012). Their services are available to assist all SAPS employees, and collectively, they render support services to the SAPS. EAPS provide services through therapeutic counselling, and when the organisation lacks resources, they make referrals. It is important for the EAPS to maintain communication and relationships with external resources, that assist to guarantee that the employee receives the necessary services when needed. The background of the SAPS is therefore discussed next.

2.4 South African Police Services

The mandate of the SAPS is to provide safe environment to a population of approximately 60,5 million people (Stats SA, 2021); however, only a small portion of the communities receive effective and efficient police services. This insufficiency of human resources in the SAPS contributes to the workload of SAPS members, which leads to increased stress and fatigue, hindering productivity and creating more challenges.

According to South African Yearbook (2017), "The SAPS derives its power and functions from Section 205 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 and from the SAPS Act, 1995 (Act 68 of 1995), this legislation regulates the SAPS in terms of its core function, which is to prevent, investigate and combat crime". Wasserman et al. (2019) mention that one of the demanding jobs in the world is serving the country, and the experiences one has there, can significantly affect their physical and mental health.

In the study conducted by Babatunde (2013), he found that due to lack of employees, aggression, an excessive amount of paperwork, inadequate equipments, working irregular hours, and being in violent circumstances, the SAPS has a high rate of organisational stress. The World Health Organization (WHO) (2019) warns that poor working conditions can result in substance abuse, poor physical and mental health and lost productivity. With all the occupational stress affecting the SAPS employees, employees are unable to provide quality service to the communities they are serving. The safety of public members, as well of that of the SAPS employees is compromised and a rise in crime is observed. The impact of crime on the SAPS is discussed next.

2.5 Impact of Crime on SAPS

Crime yields substantial and diverse repercussions for individual victims, extending to their families, friends, and communities (Velazquez & Hernandez, 2019). The trauma that results from victimization can have a profound and destructive impact on victims of crime and their close associates. This impact is not exclusive to civilians; even police officers are susceptible to becoming victims of crimes, whether in the line of duty or during their off-duty hours. Moreover, witnessing heinous activities and crimes can leave lasting negative imprints on their lives, affecting them as integral members of the communities they serve.

According to Velazquez and Hermandez (2019), police and emergency medical technicians are the most affected by crime because they are the first group of respondents to the crime scene. Therefore, they are at risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Mathuthu-Ndlela (2020) indicates that crime in South Africa has been increasing since the mid 1980's and many factors contribute to the increase in crime. The impact of crime is not only felt by victims of crime, but also by the SAPS personnel. Next, occupational stressors experienced by SAPS personnels are highlighted.

2.6 Occupational Stressors

Occupational stress, according to Cho and Park (2021), refers to a collection of emotional, cognitive, physiological, and behavioural responses to potentially harmful parts of the work environment. Sebastian (2018) adds that the occupational stress is a response that people may have when faced with expectations and demands that are out of line with their skills and expertise, and which challenge their ability to cope. It occurs when stress and expectations exceed an individual's abilities. Cronje et al. (2020) mention that occupational stress has a substantial impact on an organisation's productivity and is closely linked to the health and safety of its employees. The pressures have an impact on the personnel's well-being and performance when doing their duties.

Yip et al. (2012) in the United States of America and Gaur et al. (2021) in India both indicate that police officers are most vulnerable to risk factors that contribute to suicide. Yip et al. (2012) discovered that the working environment exposes 80 percent of police officers to suicide. In addition to the risk factors identified in the USA, India identified interpersonal relations between officers and junior ranks, a lack of promotion, difficult service conditions,

personal health issues, and difficult duty hours as contributing factors to suicide (Gaur et al., 2021).

Occupational stress can be caused by both internal and external stimuli, such as accidents and death, as well as anger, dissatisfaction and anxiety. Wassermann et al. (2019) found a positive correlations between the mental health, stress, and traumatic aspects of crime scene to cause PTSD, while Purba and Demou (2019) discovered that psychological stress can be caused by issues such as not feeling safe at home, having irregular working hours, not having enough staff, not being praised for good work, working overtime, not getting paid enough, and waiting too long to get promoted.

According to Pienaar and Rothman (2006), the stressors faced by South African police were more organizational in nature. Additionally, they revealed that three common individual police stressors in a South African sample were incompetent supervisors and managers, unjust court rulings, and emotional detachments from families. A lack of organisational support and poor relationships among police officers have a significant impact on the SAPs personnel's occupational stress.

The introduction of EAP in the organisation attempts to reduce the pressure of occupational stressors on police personnel. In Canada, the most common professional resource offered to police officers is the formal support of the EAP (Newell et al., 2022). For Canadian Police Service organisations, the EAP is a government-funded programme that provides support services to help manage mental health needs and pressures such as addictions and substance abuse, family problems, mental health-related concerns and stress at the workplace. Like Canada, South Africa introduced the EAP services at the SAPS workplaces to address possible occupational stressors that may affect the well-being and productivity of police officers. These include health risk factors (mental health and suicide), lifestyle diseases (high blood pressure and substance abuse), personal matters (finances, divorce), occupational matters (violent and aggressive nature of crime and murder of a colleague.) and operational exposure (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, (2016); Thaba (2018). Next, we consider the role of supervision at SAPS.

2.7 The Role of Supervisors at SAPS

Supervisors at SAPS are expected to ensure that service delivery is advanced, and the well-being of employees is well taken care of in order for them to perform the expected duties. Their roles include ensuring that performance improvement results in providing a supportive organisational culture that is based on norms and standards (Badul & Subban, 2022). They are

responsible for monitoring and evaluating job performance (Mthimunye, 2007). The Employee Assistance Professionals Association South Africa (EAPA-SA) (2005) defines a supervisor as a person in a position of power who keeps an eye on the work that their subordinate employees are doing.

The SAPS ranking system is made up of eight different ranking structures with which workers appointed under SAPS Act 68 of 1995 interact. Employees at the levels of captain, superintendent, senior superintendent, and director serve as intermediate and senior supervisors within the system. These are the junior and senior managers and supervisors who also conduct operational duties under the SAPS Act 68 of 1995. Their roles as supervisors of various working units allow them to identify and refer employees to EAPS for EAP services.

A supervisor's role is to facilitate communication between management and employees. According to Googins et al. (1981, as cited in Simelane, 2007), supervisors' organisational role and functions not only put them in an ideal position to identify, confront, and refer employees for help, but also expect and sanction them to identify and resolve deteriorating job performance. The significance of this position is emphasised because neglecting to carry out responsibilities directly affects the quality of services provided and undermines the legitimacy of the government's commitment to the people.

Within the SAPS organisation, supervisors are in constant contact with the employees, and as a result, they are in a better position to identify troubled employees. Based on the above, the researcher is of the opinion that the supervisors play an important role in ensuring that employees are in their best working conditions by making sure that they receive enough and adequate support through the services rendered by EAPS.

2.8 Supervisory Referral

According to Mahlahlane (2003), a supervisor’s understanding of the EAP, its application and the necessary abilities to enable them to refer are all factors that influence the supervisory referral, either directly or indirectly. In order for supervisors to refer, it is important that they are familiar with the referral process and understand the importance of EAP services.

Supervisors are the first to notice any changes in an employee; therefore, it is important for the supervisors to have a full understanding of the EAP referral process of employees. Supervisors refer employees to the EAP to address behaviours that interfere with the production in order to assist employees to function effectively. Terblanche (2018) asserts that the purpose of referral

is to address the employee's needs and guarantee the provision of suitable care. Appropriate referral of employees increases the job performance and well-being of employees; it enhances the credibility of the EAP in an organisation and ensures timely resolution of the problem (EAPA-SA, 2010). Different types of referrals are discussed.

2.9 Types of Referrals

An employee can access the services of the programme through self-referral, informal supervisor referral or formal supervisor referral.

2.9.1 Self-referral

An employee can initiate seeking EAP services when they are experiencing challenges. Every employee has the right and responsibility to seek support and assistance voluntarily and at an early stage. Emener et al. (2003) point out that self-referrals happen when an employee chooses to independently seek out EAP support. Employees initiate self-referrals when they recognise the challenges they face and have the insight and knowledge that they can visit the EAP (Taute & De Winaar, 2008).

2.9.2 Informal Supervisor Referral

Informal referrals, according to Cagney (2006), are referrals that regularly happen as a result of pressure from supervisors who are hesitant to take supervisory action. In an informal referral, the supervisor suggests the services to the employee after realising a change in the employee's behaviour, without any formal record (Tiner 2006). The supervisor does not expect feedback; their role is to advise the employee about the EAP services. If the supervisor learns that the employee is facing some type of personal issues that have not yet affected their performance, they may choose to make an informal referral.

2.9.3 Formal Supervisor Referral

The formal supervisor referral is based on a consistent pattern of worsening job performance over time. The referral may be made by the supervisor if the employee exhibits a decline in work productivity over a period of time (Badul & Subban, 2022). According to Myers (1984), the supervisor will initiate a formal referral when an employee's performance declines and with the employee's consent, they will be sent to the EAPS to address the behaviour. Therefore, a formal referral needs to be made in writing.

Formal referrals are the most effective for addressing other factors such as absenteeism, workplace behaviour changes, declining and poor work performance and identified personal problem (Badul & Subban, 2022). Poor work performance refers to an employee failing to sustain the employers' expectations for both quantity and quality of work performance (Rowe et al., 2005). The Labour Relations Act, (Act 66 of 1995) sets clear guidelines of how employers should deal with poor work performance. Labour laws like the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) No. 85 of 1993 and the Labour Relations Act (LRA) No. 66 of 1995 also indicate that employers have to help workers with problems they bring to work and help them deal with risks at work that affect them. Contrary to the informal supervisor referral, supervisors who have formally referred a troubled employee to the EAP due to an observation in poor performance can receive feedback from the EAP. Taking in consideration all types of referrals to the EAP, there is low formal supervisory referral observed in the SAPS, and factors contributing to low supervisory referrals are discussed below.

2.10 Factors contributing to Low Supervisory Referral

Various factors contribute to low supervisory referral of troubled employees. Minimal and a lack of supervisory referrals has a significant impact on productivity and teamwork (Mthimunye, 2007).

According to Mthimunye (2007), supervisors lack knowledge about the proper procedures for referring troubled employees to the EAP. In order for supervisors to refer, it is evident that they need to know how and when to refer. This information regarding supervisory referral can be obtained through supervisory training. The supervisory training does not only assist supervisors in assisting employees, but it also assists in maintaining the productivity of the organisation. According to Simelane (2007), most supervisors choose not to initiate confronting employees because of its unpleasant nature, and some supervisors avoid the hostility that they may receive from the employees. The disadvantages of not referring troubled employees include increased behaviour such as absenteeism, presenteeism, failure to perform duties, and demotivation at the workplace.

Gerstein et al. (1994 as cited in Willbanks, 1999) indicate that supervisors who are less likely to refer employees to the EAP are supervisors with a high number of subordinates. This is because they may have less frequent interactions with the employees compared to supervisors who have a manageable staff size. The researcher agrees with this statement; managing a large

number of employees could potentially lead to troubled employees remaining unnoticed until they become completely dysfunctional in the workplace.

Research conducted both abroad and in South Africa revealed that there is a low rate of EAP service utilisation. Connelly et al. (2015 as cited in Leary 2021) found that 56.4 percent of police officers did not know how to access services given by their EAPS, with a greater issue of officers not using the EAP when they were aware of the programmes. The fear of stigma is one of the reasons why people do not use EAP services (Bullock & Garland, 2018 and Taute & De Winaar, 2018).

Mugari (2011) and Dipela and Sithole (2011) identified a lack of marketing as a contributing factor to the underutilisation of EAP services. These authors mention that services are not promoted inside the SAPS to ensure that officers who are involved in traumatic occurrences know where they may get help. Next, marketing strategies for EAP services are considered.

2.11 Marketing of EAP Services

According to the Standards Committee of EAPA-SA (2010), EAP marketing plays a major role in service usage. Marketing of EAP services involves promoting services to the service users to familiarise them with the services rendered; this will enable easy accessibility for the service users. Mogorosi (2009) mentions that increasing employees' awareness of EAP services, increasing their use of those services, increasing their familiarity and comfort level with EAP operations, improving their acceptance and use of those services, and increasing their utilisation are some of the goals of marketing the programmes. Therefore, marketing should be conducted continuously and in such a manner that it is easier for employees to understand their goals.

Interestingly, in the study conducted by Dipela and Sithole (2021) on the SAPS in the Limpopo Province, evidence showed that 78 percent of the participants have knowledge about the EAP through marketing; however, utilisation is less in the SAPS. This may suggest that the marketing strategy, methods, content and frequency of marketing need to be evaluated and improved for positive results. The EAPS needs to further take in consideration SAPS employees who permanently work night shift, while EAPS are on duty during the day. The effectiveness and visibility of the programme will only be clear if it is marketed effectively. According to Lodewyk (2011), the marketing of the EAP also lays the foundation from where the effectiveness of an EAP will be measured.

Marketing methods for EAP services can be through presentations, brochure distribution, poster displays, and special EAP events. Other methods, including emails, information sessions, workshops, and parade platforms, can be used to market EAP services in the SAPS workplace environment. Failure to market the programme effectively will have a negative impact on how people perceive it. Confidentiality in the EAP will be discussed next.

2.12 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is the foundation of EAP; thus, it is imperative that safety precautions be followed at all times to protect the programme; this may also determine how services are used (Manganyi, 2015). The concept of confidentiality pertains to the ethical duty of practitioners to protect data that has been entrusted to them by clients with whom they have a professional relationship (Makhubele, 2022). This entails not sharing the content or any private information with the supervisors who referred the employees or any other person without the consent of the client. Rajin (2012) adds that the disclosure of information to unauthorised individuals is a major transgression of many professions' code of conduct and is unlawful. Failure to maintain confidentiality can lead to clients choosing not to utilise the EAP services. Therefore, information shared by clients should at all times be kept safe and confidential as it has a significant positive effect on the use of EAP services.

Rosemary (2024) states that the importance of maintaining confidentiality is widely acknowledged, yet this acknowledgement is often hindered by the failure to recognise the obligation to uphold confidentiality. If employees are not assured of confidentiality, they may decide not to use the EAP services (Mugari, 2011). The EAPS office setting should be conducive and support the therapeutic sessions. The offices should protect clients who have sought help, from the employer or coworkers. Service users should be at ease to utilise the EAP services without fear of being seen or judged post using the services.

2.13 Supervisory Training

To make a successful employee referral, supervisors must be able to assess a tough situation and intervene in the most supportive and constructive way feasible. Badul and Subban (2022, 134) state that "the goal of the employee assistance supervisory training programmes has been to enhance supervisory skills to identify employees experiencing personal difficulties through declining job performance and to facilitate intervention, and referral through the supportive confrontation strategy". The EAPA-SA (2015) identifies the goal of training as enhancing

employees' and organisational resilience. The programme is there to strengthen the knowledge and skills of the supervisors in identifying troubled employees and being able to refer them.

The EAPA-SA (2015) highlights that the training should be developmental and should focus on practical aspects that will equip supervisors with the necessary skills. According to Cagney (2006), emphasis is placed on the need of supervisory training. Supervisory training increases the productivity and wellness of employees at the workplace. It is the degree to which managers are prepared to recognise and recommend employees for EAP services that will sustain healthy employees in the workplace. Supervisory training prepares managers, labour representatives, and supervisors to carry out their functional responsibilities, which include using the EAP and providing access to it (EAPA-SA, 2015).

For supervisors to refer troubled employees effectively, they must understand fully the procedure of identifying and referring, therefore conducting the training should be in an organised manner and be repeated as necessary. For the supervisor training to be effective, Badul and Subban (2022) suggest that the training ought to be carried out by someone who is well-versed in the Employee Health and Wellness Services (EHWS), and the content should include encouragement of a management referral programme. There is a need to conduct the training frequently as a refresher course on how to identify troubled employees, to constantly enrich supervisors and the leadership with the knowledge and skills. Lefakane (2017) promotes the need for continuing education and training and its importance, arguing that the workforce of millennials requires regular updating of their knowledge and abilities.

The understanding of supervisory referral through training will enable managers and supervisors to carry out their functional responsibilities in terms of using, assisting, and gaining access to the EAP. The training further enables supervisors to recognise and identify well-being concerns and enable them to respond to employee well-being issues effectively and timely. The EAPA-SA (2015) indicates that the training covers and emphasises the importance and positive impact of the EAP on the organisation. It also addresses prevention programmes based on processes for referring employees who are experiencing difficulties and gives supervisors more authority.

Other studies highlighted the challenges experienced in carrying out supervisor training. According to Tiner (2006), challenges to render regular training have been experienced due to supervisors being unable to attend training sessions because of their busy schedules and that employees lacked motivation to participate in lengthy training sessions. Supervisors' desire to

attend training is largely dependent on the strategies employed to market the training, its significance and the approaches used to render the training. Next, methods of training will be discussed.

2.14 Training

Training is critical for imparting skills and knowledge to individuals so they can undertake a specific activity. According to Mannion (2006), training and development support in the effort to handle difficult personnel, they enhance both the work environment and employee job performance. Training provides an opportunity for individuals to improve the effectiveness of an organisation. The EAPA-SA (2015) specifies that the intendent target audience for training includes union representatives, managers, first-time supervisors, employees' dependents and employees themselves.

According to Robbins et al. (1998, as cited in Dipela & Sithole et al., 2021), training has traditionally been characterised as the process through which people improve their abilities, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours. The training is designed to teach managers how to recognise and deal with troubled personnel. Training on EAP services will help to eliminate the doubts employees have about the EAP.

In contrast to SAPS training, the goal of police basic training, as outlined in the Constitution of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996), is to provide newly appointed officials with a set of legal and policing skills, enabling them to protect and assist community members. As a result, this will enhance community satisfaction and foster a safe and secure environment for all South Africans to live in. The training period for the SAPS primarily focuses on physical skills such as handling firearms, pepper sprays, and protective shields, but it does not address the stress associated with the intense nature of their work. It is therefore evident that the focus of the SAPS basic training is on maintaining a safe and secure society, as well as learning tactical techniques and skills needed to perform policing duties, with less consideration being given to psychosocial services to help improve the health and wellness of their new members.

2.14.1 Methods of Training

When implementing supervisory training, it is important to adopt different methods or styles. According to Beier and Kanfer (2010), to meet each employee's personal preferred learning style, EAPS should facilitate training sessions in an organised manner and make the material more engaging for the participants. Different techniques incorporated into the training improve

the effectiveness of the training. Kunche et al. (2011) identify role-playing as a technique that can be used in training. Through role-playing, participants assume different roles and act out those roles in a group setting to learn and practise handling diverse scenarios. During role-play, trainees are able to observe and provide input that will help others to understand the behaviour and situation better.

Supervisory referral training in an organisation can also incorporate lecture-style training. This type of training can be an invaluable resource for communicating information quickly (Kunche et al., 2011). Lecture-style training is beneficial for a large group and can cover a lot of information. However, there is little or no interaction between the trainer and trainee. Studies show that people only retain 20 percent of what they are taught in a lecture (Kunche et al., 2011).

Group discussions and activities can be an excellent training choice for the correct type of employee. This method of training allows participants to engage and share opinions. The process is mostly guided by the facilitator (Kunche et al., 2011). Group discussion can be an effective method in supervisory referral training, as it enables participants to openly discuss the optimal implementation of referrals, and the challenges encountered when referring an employee. The use of case studies and role plays can be practical strategies to involve supervisors with the purposes of teaching and enhancing skills.

Identifying the best method of employee training increases its effectiveness. All methods of training are important and effective for different groups; good implementation of the method will contribute to the end goal.

2.15 Conclusion

In conclusion, supervisory referral training is an essential component of the procedure of EAP utilisation. Supervisors take on the responsibility of referring troubled employees to the EAP to mitigate the risks they encounter. When supervisors and management receive proper and regular training, they will be well-equipped to refer troubled employees. A positive relationship between the employee and the supervisor can further motivate troubled employees to seek assistance from the EAP for their challenges.

It matters essential that supervisors be aware of and comprehend their part in the supervisory referral process and be equipped with skills to identify deterioration in an employee. The method of implementation of supervisory training contributes to the efficacy of the training

and its influence on the referral of employees. When the correct method of training is used, supervisors' confidence in referring increases. Despite the inevitable resistance from supervisors, it is crucial to comprehend their perspectives on the process in order to address the contributing factors to fewer referrals of troubled employees and lower utilisation of the EAP services.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Research methodology refers to the systematic technique used throughout the research and is a guide to how the research was conducted (Igwenagu, 2016). This study aimed to explore the perceptions of supervisors on supervisory referral at the SAPS. This chapter describe the research methodology used to determine the best possible research design, sampling, and research tools. The chapter further discusses the data collection and data analysis methods adopted in the study. The chapter ends with a discussion of potential limitations and issues related to ethics.

3.2 Research Approach

The researcher employed the qualitative research approach. This approach put an emphasis on explaining and comprehending the phenomenon rather than explaining or predicting human behaviour (Babbie & Mouton, 2012; De Vos et al., 2011). The qualitative method provides a more in-depth knowledge about the subject under study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). The use of this qualitative method permitted the researcher to gather a vast amount of data and understand the participants' true perceptions.

The qualitative approach focuses on the subjective evaluation of beliefs, attitudes, and actions (Kothari, 2004) and is not concerned with numbers. Its main goal is to create a thorough comprehension of the phenomenon. The approach provided in-depth information that was investigated by engaging the participants. Through the use of a qualitative research approach, this study was able to provide a detailed account of the participants' thoughts, feelings, and experiences regarding the topic under investigation.

3.3 Research Design

According to Zainal (2007), a case study design is a research method that enables a limited number of individuals to participate in a thorough examination of data within a particular context. The study focused on SAPS supervisors who had received supervisory training and EAPS who had provided supervisory training within the SAPS context. By utilising the design, the researcher was capable of gathering extensive information as the key informants were able to provide the information.

3.4 Study Population, Sampling and Sampling Procedures

3.4.1 Population

According to Bryman (2011), a population refers to all of the people, events, organisational units, case records, and other sampling units that are relevant to the research problem. Lussier (2008) mentions that research population refers to all elements, individuals or units that meet the criteria for a group to be studied from which a sample is taken for in-depth-analysis. The study population for this study was supervisors and EAPS in the SAPS. The researcher concentrated exclusively on supervisors who had participated in supervisory training and EAPS who had rendered supervisory training in police stations within Johannesburg North.

3.4.2 Sampling

Sampling is done by purposefully choosing a sufficient number of individuals from each subgroup within the larger group to be investigated, or by using random selection (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). For the purpose of the study, purposive sampling was utilised to ensure that the research study's sample accurately reflected the population from whom the research was drawn (Igwenagu, 2016). The benefits of purposive sampling include the inclusion of appropriate participants in the study, which increases the accuracy of the data and saves time and money during data collection (Bernard & Bernard, 2013).

The inclusion criteria for sampling for the study were individuals, both males and females, who have been supervisors in their respective police stations for more than five years. Participants are from Randburg Police Station, Linden Police Station, Bramley Police Station, and Parkview Police Station in Johannesburg North, Gauteng All supervisors have more than four subordinates and have attended the supervisory training in the past five years. With regard to the EAPS, they had to have presented the supervisory training in the last five years. Participants could be of any gender, age, religion, or culture. Fifteen (15) participants were recruited from four police stations, but only 13 participants took part in the study: nine supervisors and three EAPS. One supervisor’s interview was excluded as it was inaudible, one participant’s interview was terminated, and the last participant did not keep the appointment, and a replacement could not be found.

3.5 Research Instruments

Semi-structured interview guides (Appendices D and E) were used to collect information from the participants. The semi-structured interviews allow for flexibility in terms of depth and scope while being organised around a specific area of interest (De Vos et al., 2011). The researcher employed specific interviewing techniques to enhance participant responses and allow a comprehensive collection of rich data. Although the interview schedule was followed during the interview, follow-up questions were used to get clarification on statements made and to go deeper regarding the responses provided. The researcher utilised two different interview schedules for SAPS supervisors and EAPS to facilitate interaction with the participants. By using the open-ended questions in each interview schedule, the researcher led rather than dictated the interview.

3.6 Methods of Data Collection

The research process relies heavily on data collection technique and its application, as it serves as an essential bridge connecting theory and practice (De Vos et al., 2011). This method involves a detailed plan of procedure that aims to gather data for a specific purpose (Grinnell & Unrau 2010). Face-to-face interviews was adopted and the chosen method of data collection produced comprehensive data, permitting the researcher to have a thorough understanding of the subject under investigation.

The researcher used the semi-structured interviews and chose an interview guide with open-ended questions to gather information. A semi-structured interview was suitable for the study as the questions were planned but also flexible (Ebrahim & Bowling, 2005). The interview guide was designed to be adaptable so that the researcher could ask participants additional or follow-up questions about their experiences, difficulties, and coping mechanisms as needed. The researcher took cognizance of the interviewing skills together with the awareness of interviewing methods to collect data from the participants.

3.7 Methods of Data Analysis

The researcher analysed the data using Braun and Clarke's (2006) model of thematic analysis. According to De Vos et al. (2017), data analysis is the process of bringing order; structure and meaning to the data collected. In qualitative research, data analysis involves using classification, interconnections, and descriptions to understand the phenomenon being studied (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process enables the researcher to interpret and explain the data

that was collected (Graue, 2015). Analysing information involves examining the data gathered from participants, combining it, and organising it in a way that is both comprehensible and manageable.

Clarke et al. (2015) identifies six phases, namely familiarisation, coding, categorising themes, reviewing themes, defining themes and naming themes and writing up the results. These steps were implemented to analyse the data. In the first phase of analysing the data, the researcher familiarised herself with the data collected by using the tape-recorded data from the interviews and transcribed it into verbatim transcripts. The second stage is coding, this step involved creating the first set of codes by going line-by-line through the data to find intriguing concepts. This was conducted by using highlighters to identify intriguing concepts. According to Clarke et al. (2015), coding is a systematic process of identifying and labelling relevant features of the data and identifying patterns. Furthermore, the researcher grouped similar codes by pasting them together to create themes. The third stage involved searching for themes that captured information that was very relevant to the goals and objectives (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Tables were used to group the codes into themes and sub-themes. Following that phase, the researcher examined the themes to determine their coherence, identify the central idea of each theme and its relationship to others, and explore the interactions between sub-themes and the main theme.

The last phase was writing up the report. Once the researcher gained confidence in the data, findings were documented and backed up with verbatim quotes from the participants. The researcher carried out every step of the data analysis procedure.

3.8 Data Verification

The researcher used data verification methods to ensure the accuracy, trustworthiness, validity, and reliability of the collected data (Anney, 2014). Trustworthiness according to Anney (2014) refers to the validity of a qualitative study's conclusions. Four indicators determine trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and authenticity. This section discusses each of these concepts and provides an explanation of their implementation in the research study.

3.8.1 Credibility

Sound qualitative research methodology is grounded on credibility. According to Kumar (2014), credibility involves establishing that the results of qualitative research are believable from the perspective of the participants in the research. According to Connelly (2016),

extended interaction with participants, peer debriefing, member verification, and reflective journaling are methods employed to build trustworthiness. The researcher established a personal relationship with the participants before the interview by introducing themself and outlining the goal of the study. The researcher further emphasised that participation was voluntary. After every interview, the researcher recorded their feelings and observations in the diary. This ensured that the research method and results were without bias.

3.8.2 Transferability

Transferability means a qualitative study's findings, or output, should be recognisable not only by other scholars in the field, but also by the context within which the study has been conducted (De Vos et al., 2017). Purposive sampling increased transferability by obtaining rich data from the participants who demonstrated the most characteristics of the studied population and had direct exposure to the research matter. The researcher also made an effort to ensure that the study's methodology and context could be carefully considered that the research and its findings could be favourably compared with studies conducted in comparable contexts, and that participants gave thorough explanations of the phenomenon that is being studied.

3.8.3 Dependability

Dependability is defined by Connelly (2016) as the ability of the data to remain consistent over time and in the study's specific condition. The researcher provided a thorough explanation of the data collection, recording, and analysis procedures. The research report explained the complete research process, including sampling, techniques for gathering data, and data analysis, all of which were backed up by recordings. The researcher also made sure that the procedures were documented properly in order to guarantee reliability.

3.8.4 Confirmability

In qualitative research, confirmability refers to the importance of a self-critical attitude towards your own preconceptions and the need for continuous reflexivity (Connelly, 2016). The researcher ensured that their opinions and perceptions with regard to the subject matter were withheld. The attitudes and responses of participants were captured without making assumptions. Audit tapes and verbatim transcripts, which are available for review, ensured the conformability of the study.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

All areas of research involve ethical concerns; however, studying the most disadvantaged members of society raises special ethical concerns (Flewitt, 2005). As a result, it is critical to consider important aspects during each step of the research. The researcher conducted this research in a manner that ensured no harm to others and adhered to ethical standards.

The ethics screening committee approved the research, and ethical clearance was granted. The participant information sheet (Appendix A) furnished sufficient information to enable potential participants to make a well-informed decision regarding their involvement in the research, emphasising that at any point during the study, they could withdraw from being interviewed. The following ethics were considered in this study:

3.9.1 Informed Consent

According to Strydom (2011), getting participants' informed consent guarantees their complete understanding and cooperation while also putting them at ease and reducing any potential hostility, resistance, or uneasiness that they might have. Trochim (2002) further emphasises that research participants must be adequately informed about the procedures and risks involved in the research and they ought to give their consent to participate in the study. Prior to starting with data collection, the researcher obtained informed consent from the SAPS National Head Office in writing to conduct the study in the selected police stations. A participant information sheet (Appendix A) providing details on every facet of the investigation was provided to each participant. The informed consent form informed participants about the study's purpose and their ability to withdraw from participation at any time during the interview. The researcher fully informed the participants about the procedures and risks involved before they gave their consent and at no point did any of the participants raise objections to signing the forms voluntarily. All participants willingly signed the written consent forms and agreed to audio recordings, which were later transcribed.

3.9.2 Anonymity/Confidentiality

It is the researcher's obligation to ensure that participants are guaranteed anonymity and that their information is utilised solely for the purpose of the study. Confidentiality is a vital value to the idea that individuals matter, while anonymity is the notion of ensuring an unknown name or unknown authorship when publishing the research findings (Rose., 2006).

The researcher reassured the participants that the information acquired during the interview would remain confidential and preserved in a safe environment. Participants are more willing to share personal details about their experiences and perspectives when they are assured of confidentiality (Rose, 2006). To maintain their anonymity, the researcher used pseudonyms rather than their real identities. Participants were informed that the transcripts and recordings would only be accessible to the research supervisor and the researcher.

3.9.3 Deception of Subjects/Participants

Deception of participants, according to Babbie and Mouton (2012), involves purposefully withholding information or offering incorrect information in order to coerce participants to engage who would otherwise possibly refuse to participate. Transparency was practised by the researcher, ensuring that there were no threats or remuneration attached to participation in the study. The researcher thoroughly informed the participants about the study's purpose, benefits, and risks, without withholding any information. The researcher was able to answer all the questions raised when introducing the study's objective to the participants. No false information was used to deceive participants into participating in the study.

3.9.4 Voluntary Participation

According to Rubin et al. (2005, as cited in de Vos et al., 2017), participation in a project ought to be entirely voluntary. Participants granted the researcher permission to participate in the study by signing a consent form prior to the interview. The participant information sheet (Appendix A) provided enough details so that potential participants may decide for themselves whether or not to participate in the study. The consent form clearly stated that participation is entirely voluntary and potential participants may withdraw from the interview at any point.

3.10 Limitations and Delimitations

The researcher made every effort to minimize the constraints. In order to address the limitations, the researcher conducted interviews only with participants who granted permission to take part and have their voices recorded.

Due to reasons that the researcher is an outsider at the SAPS organisation, it was a challenge to secure appointments with the participants and key informants, which in turn caused a delay in data gathering. The study's sample size consisted of a total of 12 participants (N-12); therefore, the study's findings cannot be generalised

Chapter 4

Presentation of Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the main research findings of the data gathered from individual interviews conducted. Thematic analysis was adopted, which is the process of analysing data through finding themes in qualitative data and applying those themes in response to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The chapter opens with the participants' demographic data, which is followed by a thorough analysis of the themes that emerged from the data and the literature that support the findings.

4.2 Demographic Information

Table 1*:*

Profile of Supervisors (N=9)

Demographic Factors	Sub-Category	Number
Age	47	1
	50	1
	52	1
	53	1
	54	2
	55	1
	56	2
Gender	Female	2
	Male	7
Years of Experience	5-10	3
	11-20	4
	21-30	1
	31-35	1
Number of Subordinates	13-19	3
	20-29	4
	40-46	1
	70-79	1

Table 1 illustrates that participants comprised of seven males and two females who are supervisors from four different police stations. There were more males in the study compared to the females. Participants are individuals between the ages of 47 years and 56 years old and participants reported to have between 13 and 79 subordinates under their supervision. Participants have work experiences that range from 5 years to 35years in the supervisor position.

Table 2:

Profile of key informants (N=3)

Demographic Factors	Sub-Category	Number
Age	34	1
	36	1
	43	1
Gender	Female	2
	Male	1
Years of Experience	9	1
	6	1
	12	1
Registration with EAPA-SA	Yes	1
	No	2

Table 2 illustrates the demographic background of three key informants: two females and one male. Participants range in age from 34 years and 43 years old and have been qualified as EAPS with years of experience between 6 and 12 years. One of the key informants is registered with EAPA, and two are not registered.

4.3 Presentation of Themes

Table 3 illustrates the objectives of the study, the themes found from the information gathered from the interviews, and the quotes from the interviews that give validity to the themes.

Table 3:

Table of Findings

Objectives	**Themes**	**Quote**
To establish the awareness of SAPS supervisors on supervisory referral.	**Theme 1** Supervisor's Awareness of Supervisory Referral • Understanding of EAP • Understanding of supervisory referral	It basically means services that we have that is available to all members to be able to deal with all their personal and work issues. They assist us, they assist the members with regard to private matters, with regard to police matters, with regard to stressful issues, financial 1issues, they're there to support the members in totality. [Francis, male, 32 years of experience]
To determine the views of supervisors on their role in supervisory referral.	**Theme 2** Perception of supervisors on supervisory referral • Supervisor's role • Visibility of EAP • Constraining factors to supervisory referral	I think that is when I see one of my members maybe is not coping in doing his duties. That member, obviously, I will talk to that member, but if I can see that he has a problem, obviously I will refer that member to let me say, a professional (EHW). [Thabo, male, 12y ears of experience]

To explore the nature of training that has been conducted on supervisory referral.	**Theme 3** Experiences of Supervisory Training • Frequency of training • Style of training	We render, I render the supervisory training, mainly for the supervisors and the managers and we do it in the form of presentation. [Molefe, male, 6 years of experience]
To establish how marketing has been conducted on supervisory training.	**Theme 4** Marketing strategies on supervisory training • Station Lectures/ Parades • Organisational meetings	We've got management meetings where we discuss things, you know. We get on our station lectures specifically, EHW, they come to the station lectures. They attend the lectures. You know, they come and do, you know, they speak about, you know, suicide, financial problems. [Molefe, male, 6 years of experience]
To explore the techniques used to evaluate supervisory training	**Theme 5** Evaluation of supervisory training • Referral Form • Increase in referral • Correct completion of referral form	Yes, we do the evaluation whereby we give the participants the evaluation forms, and then they evaluate how was the session, and how did they been, how did they benefit or what did they benefit from the session and how more do they think we as the EAP

		office can improve towards rendering this supervisory trainings and how best do they think we can also improve towards marketing our services to the officials. [Molefe, male, 9 years of experience]
To formulate recommendations regarding referral role of supervisors	**Theme 6** Recommendations regarding referral role of supervisors • Consistency in supervisory trainings • Feedback from EAP • Permanently appointed EAP at police stations	So if we can have people like that appointed at the station, which we don't have at this stage, we're only working through EHW. So we don't have people at the station that members can go to and can go and speak to them. I know that's also, that's actually one of the requirements that we need at the station is that you have certain appointed managers that can be used as, you know, that can do debriefing sessions. [Christina, female, 10 years of experience]

4.3.1 Theme 1: SAPS Supervisors Awareness on Supervisory Referral

The first theme that surfaced from the collected data is the respondents' awareness of supervisory referral. Sub-themes emerging from the data include the Understanding of EAP and Understanding of supervisory referral.

Sub-theme 1.1: Understanding of the EAP

Participants were questioned regarding their comprehension of the EAP in order to investigate their awareness of it. All supervisors showed an insight into the EAP and the role that the EAP plays in the workplace. The following response supports this statement:

> *It's basically a means services that we have that is available to all members to be able to deal with all their personal and work issues. They assist us, they assist the members with regard to private matters, with regard to police matters, with regard to stressful issues, financial issues, they're there to support the members in totality.* [Francis, male, 32 years of experience]

Francis, who has about 32 years of experience, demonstrates in the quote above that they understand what the EAP is in relation to the EAPA definition and acknowledges the value that the EAP offers both the employer and the supervisor, as well as the personal and professional issues that the service can manage.

A similar quote by Matome, who has 5 years of experience, shows further understanding and awareness of the EAP by supervisors: *"My understanding of EAP is that it is a work-based intervention that is designed to assist employees with their personal problems, not forgetting work-related issues as well. I think that is what it was designed for"* [Matome, male, 5 years of experience].

From the gathered data, it is evident that respondents maintain a clear understanding of the EAP within the SAPS workplace. The results demonstrate the participants' awareness of the EAP and illustrates that they have an understanding of their role. It is clear from the aforementioned responses that supervisors who participated in supervisory training benefitted from having a good understanding of the EAP and various aspects of the programme. Next, the researcher will explore the participants' comprehension of a supervisory referral.

Sub-theme 1.2: Understanding of Supervisory Referral

Supervisory referral is critical to understanding EAP services. The data gathered from the interviews revealed that six of the nine participants had a good understanding of supervisory referral, which is important for comprehending EAP services. The next quote shows a participant who mentions that:

> *I think that is when I see one of my members maybe is not coping in doing his duties. That member, obviously, I will talk to that member, but if I can see that he has a problem, obviously I will refer that member to let me say, a professional (EHW).* [Thabo, male, 12 years of experience]

This quote demonstrates the supervisor's extensive understanding of supervisory referral, their familiarity with the involved processes, and their ability to provide a scenario. In the response, the participant highlighted their involvement in the process of referring, including some of the characteristics of the process.

The supervisor outlined the critical role their play and the steps they will take to initiate a supervisory referral, aimed at addressing the occupational stressor experienced by the supervisee. This demonstrates the extent to which the supervisor understands the supervisory process, which is in relation to the supervisory referral definition by Toverud (1999).

4.3.2 Theme 2: Perception of Supervisors on Supervisory Referral

Sub-theme 2.1: Supervisor's Role

The supervisor's role in the supervisory referral is critical. When participants were asked about their role in the supervisory referral process, seven participants proved to have an understanding with regard to their roles as supervisors in the process. One participant demonstrated that with the following quote:

> *Yes, my role will be to identify junior members who are having problems; like last night I was phoned by the police, they had a firearm from one of my juniors, and I'm going to refer him to EAP, so my main aim is to identify the problematic police official. I'll sit down with him or her explain to her that I'm going to refer you to the EHW.* [Thoko, female, 20 years of experience]

Thoko, a participant with approximately 20 years of work experience, showcased their comprehension of their supervisory role in the workplace. They also provided an example of

how they utilised the process to elucidate their role and ensure effective reintegration of the individual into the workplace following a referral.

Their explanation of the process is similar to Mahlahlane's (2003) definition of the supervisor's role in the process, which further demonstrated their understanding of the ethics involved in the process.

Sub-theme 2.2: Visibility of EAP

The aspect of visibility of the EAP in this context entails knowing about services rendered and the accessibility of the EAP for referral of troubled employees. All participants reported hearing or seeing the EAPS during parades and monthly station lectures. They indicated that EAPS are available when needed. An extract from one participant states: *"I can say they come twice a month; sometimes they come and check; sometimes they are getting invited during the station lecture; sometimes they only come when they are called. But it's very rare that they are here (police station)"* [Thabang, male, 9 years of experience].

The response from Thabang, who has about nine years of experience, explains that services rendered by EAPS are well known by supervisors, and the EAPS are visible and easily accessible when needed, despite not always being at the police station. In their response, they suggest that EAPS only visit the police station upon request, not of their own volition.

According to Masango (2020), visibility refers to the ease with which the program can be seen and accessible in the workplace. Police stations should take measures to ensure the visibility of EA practitioners, as this visibility not only promotes accessibility but also increases the number of troubled employees that supervisors refer.

Sub-theme 2.3: Constraining factors to Supervisory referral

2.3.1 Lack of Trust and Confidentiality

The theme of lack of trust appeared frequently during the interview process with both groups of participants, the officials and the supervisors. Five of the participants highlighted the lack of trust as a contributing factor to employees not utilising the EAP services even when referred by supervisors. An EAP service's effectiveness in the workplace depends on trust and confidentiality.

A quote from one of the participants mentions:

> *Yeah, it's not effective and the most stumbling block in their intervention is trust. You see, members, mostly will tell you straight that no I don't trust the EHW because you know, will go to them, and explain my problems and all those things. The next thing, I hear somebody telling me about my problems. So that the most important thing, trust, and… yeah.* [Sipho, male, 27 years of experience].

Sipho, who has about 27 years of experience, emphasised that employees' lack of trust prevents them from utilising the EAP services when they are referred. This is a concern that supervisors express, and it also affects their confidence in referring. This lack of trust demonstrates the reluctance by employees to come forward to obtain assistance from the EAP on a self-referral process due to trust-related issues.

Fear of other police members circulating and discussing their stories could lead to trust issues in such cases. The findings corroborate the view of Zhou et al. (2017) that using EAP services can lead to stigma, which may be linked to confidentiality concerns that should be addressed to enhance employees' perception of the programme.

2.3.2 Location of EHW

The following sub-theme emanated from the participants' responses to the above sub-theme as a follow-up question.

There is a stigma associated with EAP services, which leads to employees' reluctance to utilise them out of fear of stigmatization. Three participants suggested that outsourcing the EAP services could encourage more employees to use them, thereby preventing stigmatization. Three of the participants indicated that outsourcing the EAP services could assist in more employees accessing the services in avoidance of being stigmatised. This is confirmed by the extract: *"The outside one will be the best one because no one will know that you went to that. Because these things, we see them happening"* [Thabo, male, 12 years of experience].

The participant's response demonstrates concern about the stigma around EAP services and how they might have experienced it. This indicates that employees are resistant to consulting due to their previous experiences and their observations at the police station. Fandie and Naudé (2019) also mention that, the stigma, which is often a result of societal and cultural factors, hinders the utilisation of EAP services by employees.

On the contrary, three participants mentioned that an in-house EAP is more understanding of the SAPS environment, and as a result, they will be able to assist employees as they are familiar with the challenges police officers encounter. A quote from the participant indicates:

> *I would say the internal is much better because they understand what we're going through. They've been there. They've worked already outside. And then they've gone into this line. So they've been there. They've visited scenes. They've also been to murder scenes. They've also encountered rescheduling of members. They've also encountered shifts. They've also encountered being posted here but coming from Limpopo.*
>
> *They've also encountered all of those issues. Whereas the private sector, no, they won't understand the police. They won't understand the nature of it. No. They won't understand the police in general* [Francis, male, 32 years of experience].

The quote above demonstrates that an internal EAP has a clear understanding of the dynamics of the organisation and how they affect the employees. As a result, it is easier for an internal EAP to work with the employee. The quote also illustrates various scenarios in which an internal EAP can interact with employees.

2.3.3 Lack of training attendance

Supervisors' lack of attendance of supervisory training presents another challenge. All three key informants mentioned that the attendance at the supervisory training is low, which impacts on the supervisory referral process. One key informant shared this sentiment in the following comment: *"To be honest, it is very difficult to have a group; they will either not attend or you will only have two or three people, so it is sometimes useless to plan for a group"* [Miranda, female, 6 years of experience].

The above response shows that there is resistance from supervisors in terms of attending supervisory training, even after proper planning. The response is an indication of multiple failed attempts to conduct supervisory training. Considering that supervisors are essential to the supervisory referral process due to their daily interactions with employees, this suggests that EAPS should implement alternative measures to ensure the distribution of information to them.

The response contradicts the views and responses of the supervisors, who verbalised their interest in attending the training often. Two participants expressed the importance of

conducting supervisory training frequently to remind supervisors of their roles and aid in identifying troubled employees.

One participant mentioned the following:

> *We need that training. We need it. I think it's very important. The training is very important. But in the police, they give us a lot of trainings, but coming to this one, we never have that kind of training. But if we do have the training that way, to deal with the members, you attend that kind of training, I think it will assist a lot. It will assist a lot.* [Thabo, male, 12 years of experience]

The above data indicates that, although all supervisors have previously attended the supervisory training, the training is not conducted as often as it should be to remind supervisors of the content of the training. These findings correspond to findings in Theme 3, Sub-Theme 1.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Experiences on Supervisory Referral

When participants were asked about their experiences of supervisory training, two main themes emerged: the frequency of the training and the style of training.

Sub-theme 3.1: Frequency

Ongoing training is important to enhance the knowledge and skills of supervisors. As a result, the EAPA-SA (2015) further suggests that supervisory training should be conducted repeatedly when necessary to enhance supervisors' ability to make appropriate referrals. Participants were asked on the frequency that training was conducted, and a participant responded that: "*I can't even recall when did … I and it was like 2 hours, an hour; it's not enough. It's not enough"* [Sipho, male, 27 years of experience].

Sipho's response reveals the participant's dissatisfaction with the frequency of supervisory training. This implies that supervisors rarely participate in supervisory training as it is seldom conducted in the workplace, therefore, participants recommend investing more time in supervisory training and conducting the training to equip supervisors with the necessary information and knowledge.

Similar views emerged from another participant, who also perceived the frequency of training to a lesser extent.

> *We need that training. We need it. I think it's very important. The training is very important. But in the police, they give us a lot of training. But coming to this one, we*

> *never have that kind of training. But if we do have the training that way, to deal with the members, you attend that kind of training, I think it will assist a lot. It will assist a lot.* [Thabo, male, 12 years of experience]

The participant's response echoes their dissatisfaction with the training's frequency and expresses their desire for more frequent supervisory training from the EAP at the stations. This demonstrates that the participant understands the knowledge to be obtained in the training and the information that will assist them in identifying and dealing with the supervisee, as they mentioned.

The style of training is another identified theme in this section, which will be discussed next.

Sub-theme 3.2: Style of training

One participant mentioned that the lecturer style of presenting the supervisory training is the most common and preferred style used. The participant mentioned: *"It was like a lecture, just you sitting there; you know they are explaining to you the processes; you're listening; and you know sometimes how frustrating it is to listen to a person talking for 2-3 hours"* [Sipho, male, 27 years of experience].

The key informant, an EA practitioner, confirmed this statement. They quoted: *"We render, I render the supervisory training, mainly for the supervisors and the managers, and we do it in the form of a presentation"* [Molefe, male, 6 years of experience].

The findings indicate that presentation style, or lecture style, is a common mode of approach used to deliver supervisory training. This mode of delivery EAPS adopt is beneficial in providing an opportunity for participants to acquire intensive knowledge in short periods of time. However, it may mean that supervisors do not have much knowledge on how to handle matters as the training suggest.

The primary method of providing information has been through a series of lectures. Different approaches can be considered by EAPS, including role-play, to encourage more engagement.

4.3.4 Theme 4: Marketing Strategies on Supervisory Training

Marketing is critical for the consistent utilisation of EAP services. The following theme focuses on the marketing strategies used to market SAPS supervisory training.

Sub-theme 4.1: Station Lectures/Parades

Six of the nine participants indicated that marketing efforts for supervisory training within the SAPS are primarily conducted through internal channels. During the station lectures, the participants mentioned having heard of the supervisory training. One participant explained the following:

> *For them, most of the time when we got the station lecture, they come. The station lecture is where all the police station members come together … So those social workers from EHW, most of the time they come on the station lecture. They explain their roles to us, everything that if you need this and this and this, we are here for you. They come to explain to us during those station lectures*. [Thabo, male, 12 years of experience]

The findings indicate that the SAPS commonly markets services through station lectures, providing supervisors with a valuable platform to gather as much information as possible about EAP services. This method allows the EAPS to reach most of the target employees through this platform. Participants indicated that station lectures are the primary channel for disseminating information about SAPS EAP training. This approach ensures consistent communication and engagement, keeping supervisors informed about available resources and training opportunities.

Sub-theme 4.2 : Meetings

Two participants reported learning about supervisory training at a meeting where EAPS were invited. One of the most successful methods for letting employees know about the EAP is a meeting (Stone, 2011). One participant quoted indicated the following:

> *We've got management meetings where we discuss things, you know. We get on our station lectures specifically, EHW, they come to the station lectures. They attend the lectures. You know, they come and do, you know, they speak about, you know, suicide, financial problems.* [Molefe, male, 6 years of experience]

The quote shows that SAPS management values the importance of the EAP in the workplace, as they invite them to provide their services during their meetings. It further demonstrates that not only does the EAP provide information on their services, but it also addresses other factors that affect the employees' work and personal aspects of life.

The key informant confirmed the above statement by mentioning that:

> *Even when there are meetings, we go to their meetings, whether it's management meeting, the station lecture, we go there, and we request a platform so that even if they know about who we are, but we need to keep on reminding them about our service.* [Ada, female, 12 years of experience]

The above demonstrates the efforts EAPS make to ensure that they get an opportunity to market their services and make sure that their services are accessible. The findings further demonstrate that management meetings offer a chance to connect with the core targeted employees and serve as a crucial step in informing supervisors about supervisory training. This is a good strategy, supported by a guideline provided by the EAPA-SA (2010) in which the EAP can be marketed, and a strategy that promotes interaction between the EAP and employees.

4.3.5 Theme 5: Evaluation of Supervisory Training

The purpose of this section is to provide insight into the evaluation techniques used to assess supervisory techniques.

Sub-theme 5.1: Referral Form

Participants were questioned regarding the methods used to evaluate the supervisory training. One key informant mentioned that an evaluation form is used at the end of each supervisory training conducted for better implementation in the next training. Their response is captured as follows:

> *Yes, we do the evaluation whereby we give the participants the evaluation forms, and then they evaluate how was the session, and how did they been, how did they benefit or what did they benefit from the session and how more do they think we as the EAP office can improve towards rendering this supervisory trainings and how best do they think we can also improve towards marketing our services to the officials.* [Molefe, male, 6 years of experience]

Despite only one participant mentioning the use of an evaluation form post-supervisory training, the participant demonstrated a clear understanding of its use and also shared aspects of the evaluation process to enhance future supervisory training. The feedback from the participant demonstrates that some EAPS do put efforts into ensuring that supervisors receive

the best services to be able to utilise the services. The earlier challenge, which revealed low supervisory training attendance, may be the cause of the absence of evaluation forms.

Sub-theme 5.2: An increase in referral

One key informant shared that they are observing changes in referral patterns, particularly an increase in referrals to the EAP. The following is an extract from the respondent*: "To get to know that they listen to what you were talking about, you will see by the number of the referrals whether they, they managed to grasp it or not referrals will come or referrals will not come"* [Ada, female, 12 years of experience].

According to the findings, there is a link between supervisory training and increased programme utilisation. Feedback shows that the more supervisors are exposed to supervisory training, the more they are confident in their role of referring and confident in the process of referral. Supervisors' referral of supervisees to the EAP shows that they have an understanding gained from the supervisory training and that they are convinced of the programme's advantages.

Sub-theme 5.3: Correct completion of the Referral Form

One key informant stated that referral supervisors use and complete referral forms correctly as a result of the supervisory training.

> *If somebody completes the form or completed the form correctly, that's when I will say, okay, this person paid much attention, you understand? Or when they start to, like states, because our form it states, social work services, psychological or spiritual services? yeah. When they refer to the relevant like profession without even like, coming via me.* [Miranda, female, 6 years of experience]

The findings reveal that the observation from the key informants as the training providers shows that, with insight regarding supervisory referral, supervisors are able to complete the referral form correctly and identify the kinds of issues they should refer to the EAP. In view of the information given, it is clear that insight into supervisory referral will bring changes, clarifying to the EAPS the impact of the supervisory training.

4.3.6 Theme 6: Recommendations regarding Supervisory Training

In this theme, participants suggested ways to promote and improve supervisory training at the SAPS. The suggestions included the following sub-theme:

Sub-theme 6.1: Recommendations for enhancing Supervisory Training

- **6.1.1 Consistency in supervisory training**

Consistency in rendering supervisory training and EAP services was suggested by supervisors as an important aspect of supervisory referral. Participants pointed out that EAPS visit the police stations very seldom; therefore it will be effective to have EAPS visit the police stations often to address and prevent employees' challenges. Frequent training, such as refresher training, will strengthen the relationship between supervisors and EAPS and increase the referral rate. This is supported by Manganyi (2015), who mentions that the main objective of supervisory training is to raise supervisors' awareness of "troubled" employees and to promote utilisation through education.

- **6.1.2 Feedback from EAP**

Two participants highlighted that it is of the utmost importance to receive feedback post-referral from the EAP post intervention. The participants suggested that providing supervisors with feedback will be helpful in determining whether employees have consulted the EAPS and understanding how they can further support the employee.

- **6.1.3 Permanent appointment of EAP at the police stations**

One participant indicated that having a permanent EAPS at the police station will assist in addressing the immediate challenges of the referred employees. This suggestion is supported by the following statement:

> *So if we can have people like that appointed at the station, which we don't have at this stage, we're only working through EHW. So we don't have people at the station that members can go to and can go and speak to them. I know that's also, that's actually one of the requirements that we need at the station is that you have certain appointed managers that can be used as, you know, that can do debriefing sessions.* [Christina, female, 10 years of experience]

The quote above shows the need for full-time EAPS in a police station, as police employees face challenges on a daily basis. At the moment, one EAPS currently renders services to more than three police stations. The participants indicated that permanently placed EAPS should be available; alternatively, training should be provided to increase the knowledge of supervisors regarding assisting employees when the need arises.

4.4 Conclusion

The findings about SAPS supervisors' opinions and perceptions of supervisory referral were described in this chapter. Six themes emerged during the data analysis process from the data collected from 12 semi-structured interviews; with 9 participants and 3 key informants.

The data analysis revealed that supervisors have a strong comprehension of the EAP in a workplace and understand their role in supervisory referral. The collected data further demonstrated how supervisors view their role as critical to the process. This indicates that, through supervisory training, supervisors are able to execute their responsibilities in terms of identifying and referring troubled employees. Participants' responses on their experiences further highlighted the gap and challenges that supervisors encounter in referring employees and that affect the use of EAP services.

The data further revealed challenges participants faces with regard to supervisory referral, including lack of trust and stigma. These have a huge impact on utilisation of EAP services, which also impacts on the process of supervisory referral. The data collected further revealed that participants' lack of attendance to training sessions due to commitments of supervisors, affect supervisory referral, which also has a direct impact on the effectiveness of employee referrals.

Responses from the participants offered insightful suggestions for putting supervisory training into practice. Participants recommended that more supervisory training be conducted to constantly remind and empower supervisors with the knowledge and skills to identify troubled employees. This demonstrated that supervisors regard supervisory training as an important tool to address work and personal challenges that employees face, hence their enthusiasm to have frequent and consistent supervisory training.

The next chapter will discuss the findings, the conclusion, and the recommendations.

Chapter 5

Discussion of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the main findings related to the research study's objectives, draw conclusions from those findings, and provide recommendations for future studies. The study focused on the perceptions of SAPS supervisors about supervisory referrals.

5.2 Summary of the Main Findings

The aim of this study was to answer the question: What are the perceptions of South African police service supervisors on supervisory referral? The specific objectives consequently were: to establish the awareness of SAPS supervisors on supervisory referral, to determine the views of supervisors on their role in supervisory referral, to explore the nature of training that has been conducted on supervisory referral, to establish how marketing has been conducted on supervisory training, to explore the techniques used to evaluate supervisory training, and to formulate recommendations regarding the referral role of supervisors. The results discussed in this summary show that the study achieved the aim and objectives as outlined.

5.2.1 Objective 1: To establish the awareness of SAPS Supervisors on Supervisory Referral

The findings under this objective are that participants are informed about the EAP and the resources available to address personal and professional challenges experienced. Participants demonstrated their awareness of the EAP by stating that the EAP is an essential resource for handling both work and private issues employees encounter, with the goal of supporting employees in their work.

The findings additionally demonstrate that most of the participants are aware of supervisory referrals. From their responses, it is evident that they understand their role in referring troubled employees to the EAP and that they are familiar with the process. The findings show that participants are aware of supervisory referral, which demonstrates that through attending the supervisory training, participants become empowered with the services that the EAP renders and their role within the process.

5.2.2 Objective 2: To ascertain the Views of Supervisors on their role in Supervisory Referral

Findings indicate that most of the participants are knowledgeable of the role they play as supervisors, as they mentioned that their roles include identifying and referring troubled employees to the EAP and the ethics involved. Participants reported that their role also includes having a supportive relationship with employees to ensure that they are coping in the workplace. The findings further demonstrate that EAPS are visible at the workplace, and supervisors are aware of the EAP services in their workplace through station parades and meetings.

The findings show that in the supervisors' role of referring, there are constraining factors to the process. Participants reported that because of a lack of trust and confidentiality from employees, as well as the stigma associated with the EAP, many are reluctant to use these services. With employees not having trust in EAP services, this causes a reluctance among supervisors to refer employees to the EAP, which also impacts the utilisation of EAP services. Participants further perceived that the location of EAPS influences supervisory referrals. Other participants indicated that the in-house EAP affects the utilisation of their services, suggesting that outsourced EAPs be used. Participants indicated that employees fear being seen using the EAP services and avoid the EAP due to the stigma related to the EAP in the work environment. They believe that when EAP services are outsourced, their concerns will not be known in the workplace. In contrast, some participants, believed that in-house EAPs are better because they have a better understanding of the police workplace dynamics. They further indicated that having in-house EAPs increases EAP visibility and may increase the utilisation of EAP services due to their easy accessibility. According to the findings, there is a view that different models of the EAP must be considered in the organisation. Each employee faces unique challenges, and internal or external models, or a combination of both, may best address some.

The findings further show that the other factor that affects supervisory referral is the poor attendance of supervisory training by supervisors, which affects the utilisation of the services. With poor attendance, supervisors lose out on honing their skills in identifying troubled employees and the proper process of referring. This indicates that ongoing education is important for enhancing productivity and ensuring the well-being of employees.

5.2.3 Objective 3: To explore the Nature of Training that has been conducted on Supervisory Referral

The main finding was that EAPS conduct supervisory training, implementing them in a lecture or presentation style. While key informants noted that the training style effectively reached a wide range of participants, other participants, specifically supervisors, criticized the method, arguing that it hinders effective participation by causing participants to lose concentration due to a lack of engagement. The key informants agreed that the lack of attendance and the style they employ prevent the use of any aids or activities during the training, thus suggesting that facilitators need to customise their training methods to maximise the outcome of the training.

Findings further indicated the challenge experienced by participants with regard to the frequency at which supervisory training is conducted. The participants expressed that the frequency of supervisory training falls short of what is necessary to consistently remind them of the referral procedure and other relevant factors. This influences the effectiveness of employee referrals, the use of appropriate referral forms, and the understanding of the feedback supervisors should receive following a referral.

5.2.4 Objective 4: To establish how Marketing has been conducted on Supervisory Training

With regard to the fourth objective, findings revealed supervisors' awareness of the EAP services provided at police stations and indicated a successful marketing strategy for supervisory training. Participants stated that supervisory training was promoted through oral presentations during station parades and management meetings. The method, which reaches a vast number of employees within the workplace, proves to be the most common and effective mode of EAP marketing. The identified internal channels stipulated above serve as primary avenues for disseminating information about available resources and training opportunities, ensuring consistent communication and engagement with supervisors and other members of the SAPS. However, the research identified a shortcoming with the mentioned marketing strategies. Due to EAPS working during the day, this results in employees working night shifts and outside the police stations not having access to the shared information at station parades and meetings. As a result, exclusion from the platform that shares the EAP information contributes to the lack of supervisory referral at the SAPS.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that there are no existing initiatives to advance the EAP activities to promote the programme; there is a lack of visible posters, banners, roadshows, and signage boards. The researcher asserts that poor EAP marketing has a detrimental effect on the use of services. If employees do not know much about the services offered by the programme, they might not be motivated to use it. The concern highlights how crucial education on EAP services is in terms of improving supervisory referral. Findings demonstrated that it is important for EAPS to invest in other aspects of marketing services to increase using the services provided by the EAP. Proactive marketing strategies such as distributing pamphlets, posters, or holding dedicated marketing events should be adopted. Failure to market the services effectively will potentially lead to a high rate of non-attendance at training due to limited awareness among members. Comments from participants suggest that EAPS need to take a more proactive role in promoting the services in the organisation.

5.2.5 Objective 5: To explore the Techniques used to evaluate Supervisory Training

The findings showed that more than one standardised method is used to evaluate supervisory training conducted. Key informants stated that techniques such as written evaluation forms and observations are used to evaluate supervisory training. Continuous evaluation of the efficacy and significance of the programme is important to confirm that the programme still serves its purpose and to improve the programme.

Findings showed that evaluation of the supervisory referral programme is done through observation of the correct usage of the referral form. The use of a formal referral form indicates the success of supervisory training. The findings also indicated that supervisory training evaluation is based on an increase in referrals. Participants mentioned that an increase in referrals demonstrates that supervisors were empowered through the programme, where they gained knowledge and skills for identifying troubled employees.

5.2.6 Objective 6: To formulate Recommendations regarding Referral Role of Supervisors

The research findings indicated a need for consistent supervisory training within the organisation to continuously refresh supervisors' knowledge in identifying and referring troubled employees for EAP services. This will improve and encourage the use of EAP services through supervisory employee referral. The findings also revealed that supervisors expect feedback when they refer employees to the EAP. Two of the participants indicated that

feedback from the EAP encourages them to refer to the EAP and helps them to understand the kind of support that they need to give to the referred employees.

5.3 Conclusions drawn from the Research Study

The perceptions of SAPS supervisors on supervisory referral were explored, and all the objectives of the study were accomplished. It was evident from the research that supervisors are aware of the EAP in the workplace and the services it provides. It is also believed that supervisors understand supervisory referral and the role they play in the process.

The research results revealed that EAPs are visible and accessible to employees in the workplace, and supervisors are able to refer troubled employees to EAPs. The visibility of the EAP is increased through the marketing strategies it uses. Despite the visibility and accessibility of the EAP in the workplace, there are, however, constraining factors that hinder supervisory referral. The barriers to supervisory referral included trust and confidentiality, the location of the EHWS, and a lack of attendance at supervisory training. The research results further revealed that although participants have attended the supervisory training, they are of the view that it is not conducted as often as it should be to revive and remind them of the knowledge to identify and refer troubled employees. Therefore, the study suggests that consistent supervisory training and management's engagement in ensuring supervisors attend the training can resolve the identified challenges.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Recommendations for SAPS Staff and Supervisors

It is recommended that supervisors be held accountable for attending supervisory training annually as planned by the EAPS, as it is important for supervisors to be continually conscientized on supervisory referral to be able to implement the referral process. Supervisory training should be made mandatory for all supervisors to ensure that all supervisors are regularly exposed to the supervisory training.

5.4.2 Recommendation for the Employee Assistant Practitioners

It is recommended that EAPS conduct supervisory training regularly and consistently. Such training act as refreshing courses and assist supervisors in better understanding their responsibilities during the referral process.

It is recommended that EAPS broaden their marketing strategies to market their services to employees. To promote the EAP services, practitioners should adopt various strategies and utilise promotional materials such as banners, posters, pamphlets, and emails. There should be continuous promotion of their services to promote easy accessibility of the EAP services.

It is also recommended that EAPS reassure the employees of the protection of confidentiality to gain trust from service users. Confidentiality should be thoroughly explained during marketing and during the first intervention with employees. The utilisation of EAP services is positively affected by trust; the more an employee's level of trust in the EAPs and their results, the higher the likelihood that they will use the EAPs.

5.4.3 Recommendation for the Organisation

It is recommended that a well-structured supervisory referral training manual be developed for the organisation. The manual should be easy to understand and have relevant and important information that EAPS must convey to supervisors, including services rendered by the EAP, the role of supervisors, the identification of troubled employees, and the referral form.

It is recommended that the organisation should develop and implement a functional incident reporting system that will monitor the frequency at which supervisors refer employees and the types of employee referrals from supervisors.

5.4.4 Recommendation for the Future Research

The research was conducted with supervisors and EAPS in Johannesburg North police stations, and it is therefore recommended that future research be conducted in other provinces to determine whether the findings of this research and those to be conducted produce the same results.

Only nine supervisors and three EAPS participated in the research study; it is recommended that a larger sample be used for future research.

Future research could look at ways in which supervisory training can be marketed to encourage supervisors to attend the supervisory training scheduled by EAPS and whether the perception of supervisors will change if supervisory training is conducted on a regular basis.

5.5 Conclusion

Based on the gathered information, the research question has been fully addressed. The research has successfully established the perception of SAPS supervisors, fulfilling its overall goal. All study participants are aware of the EAP and EAP services provided by the SAPS, through the effective marketing efforts. Participants are cognizant of the supervisory referral and their own role within it. This indicates that the goal of the supervisory training is achieved when rendered.

It can further be concluded that participants hold a positive impression regarding the supervisory referral and have demonstrated their willingness to attend the supervisory training to acquire more knowledge. They demonstrated their commitment by advocating for frequent and consistent training sessions.

The results revealed that supervisory training contributes towards equipped supervisors who have the necessary abilities to assess a situation and act in the most encouraging and constructive way feasible in order to make a successful referral.

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Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet

Exploring the Perceptions of South African Services Supervisors on Supervisory Referrals.

Good day,

My name is Kgalaletso Molokoane, I am a Masters student in Occupational Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. My supervisor is Dr. Roshini Pilllay. I am conducting a research study about the perception of SAPS supervisors on supervisory referrals. The study title is Exploring the Perceptions of South African Services Supervisors on supervisory referrals.

I am inviting you to take part in an interview. If you decide to take part, your participation in this research study will last only 1 hour. The interview will take place at your place of work at your preferred time. With your permission, I would like to audio record the interview. This data will be stored in a computer through a password-protected file and deleted after 1 year of publication. Only the researcher and the supervisor will have access to the data.

During the research activity, I will not ask for any personal information about you nor include any personal information. The interview will be confidential and anonymous. When I share the results of the research study, I will not include your name or anything else that could identify you.

If you decide to take part in the research study, it should be because you want to volunteer. You can stop being in the study at any time. You do not have to answer any questions if you do not want to. You will not get any direct benefits if you choose to join the research study. You will not lose any services, benefits or rights you would normally have if you decide not to join. Taking part in the research study will not cost you anything and you will not be paid for being in this research study.

The risks for this research study are no more than what happens in everyday life. This research study will be written up as a research report. If you would like to receive a summary of this report, I will be happy to send it to you.

If you have any questions during or afterwards about this research study, feel free to contact me or my supervisor on the details listed below. If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical procedures of this research study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), telephone +27(0) 11 717 1408, email hrecnon-medical@wits.ac.za.

Yours sincerely,
Ms Kgalaletso Molokoane

Researcher:
Kgalaletso Molokoane
302261@students.wits.ac.za

Supervisor:
Dr, Roshini Pillay
Roshini.pillay@wits.ac.za
0117174486

Appendix B: Informed Consent Letter

Study Topic: Exploring the Perceptions of South African Police Services Supervisors on Supervisory Referrals

Name of researcher: Kgalaletso Molokoane

I, _____ agree to participate in this research project.

I agree to the following:

(Please circle the relevant options below)

The research study was explained to me. I understand what this study is about.	YES	NO
I understand that I can volunteer to take part in the study	YES	NO
I agree that the interview may be audio recorded	YES	NO
I agree that direct quotations from my interview may be used by the researcher in their research report	YES	NO
I agree that my participation will remain anonymous (my name or other identifying data will not be used by the researcher in their research report)	YES	NO
I agree that other researchers may use the information I provide in my interview (depending on their own ethics clearance being obtained) but my name and any personal information will not be used or passed on.	YES	NO

_____ (signature)

_____ (name of participant)

_____ (date)

_____ (signature)

_____ (name of researcher)

_____ (date)

Appendix C: Letter requesting Permission



University of the Witwatersrand,
School of Human & Community Development

The Chairperson of the Ethics Committee
South African Police Services
Johannesburg

2023/05/11

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Permission to conduct research at South African Police Services: Linden Police Station, Randburg Police Station, Parkview Police Station, and Bramley Police Station

My name is Kgalaletso Molokoane, student number 302261. I am studying for a Master's degree in Occupational Social Work and Research at the School of Human and Community Development at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am seeking permission to do research at the four police stations: Linden Police Station, Randburg Police Station, Bramley Police Station, and Parkview Police Station

I am conducting research on the Perception of South African Services Supervisors on Supervisory Referrals. Studies have shown underutilisation of Employee Assistance Programme in the organisation and low referral rate on supervisory referral. The study therefore aims to understand the perceptions of supervisors on supervisory referrals as their perceptions will have a direct impact and contribution to the opportunities in revising supervisory trainings.

The research will entail collecting data from staff members (supervisors) from the respective police stations. I will invite supervisors from your organisation to participate in this study. If they agree, they will be asked to be interviewed by myself. The interview will take an hour at their place of work at their preferred time, and permission for their responses to be audio recorded will be requested from the interviewees.

Participants will be asked to give their written consent before the research begins. Their responses will be treated confidentially, and their identities will be anonymous. Individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. The results will be communicated through a dissertation.

The research participants will not be disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study.

All research data will be saved in a computer in a password-protected file in google drive for the duration of the study and will only be destroyed one year after the completion of the dissertation.

I, therefore, request permission in writing to conduct my research at your organisation. The permission letter should be on your organisation's headed paper, signed and dated, and specifically referring to myself by name and the title of my study.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Kgalaletso Molokoane (302261)
0824043733
302261@students.wits.ac.za

Dr. Roshini Pillay
0117174486
Roshini.Pillay@wits.ac.za

Appendix D: Interview Schedule: SAPS Supervisors

Exploring the Perceptions of South African Police Services Supervisors on Supervisory Referrals

Demographic details:

Age

Gender

Years as a supervisor

Number of subordinates

1.What is your understanding of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)?

2. Please, may you offer a definition of what is a supervisory referral

3. Please explain to me your understanding of supervisory referral

4. Please explain to me how you see your role in the EAP

5. Can you explain to me your experiences of supervisory training? (prompt on who was facilitating, where it was conducted, what was the duration of the training, what activities were included, how it was conducted, how was the training evaluated)

6. Are you aware of the referral process, and what is your opinion on the procedure for referring a troubled employee to EAP? (prompt formal and informal referral)

7. Please explain to me your experiences of identifying and referring a troubled employee.

8. Can you please share with me how you heard about supervisory training (prompt on strategies used, what methods were used to market the training?)

9. Did the programme contribute to the intended outcome and expectations?

10. If you were conducting the supervisory training, how would you design the training?

Appendix E: Interview Schedule: Employee Assistance Practitioners

Exploring the Perceptions of South African Police Services Supervisors on Supervisory Referrals

Demographic details:

Age _____

Gender _____

Years of experience _____

Registration with EAPA- SA _____

1. What programmes do you render at SAPS?

2. Please explain to me your definition of supervisory referral

3. What method(s) is/are used to market these programmes? (prompt what strategies were used, how often was it marketed, how long before the training, accessibility of the method used, how participants were recruited/selected)

4. Please may you explain to me the content of the supervisory training (prompt if need analysis was conducted, what style of training, how often are they conducted, where are they conducted, how long was the training, what tools were used)

5. Please may you describe what are activities used in the supervisory training

6. Please explain to me the challenges you are experiencing in rendering the supervisory training

7. Please share the feedback post to rendering the supervisory programme

8. From your records, please share what kind of referral do you get most (formal or informal)

9. Please may you describe what are some methods used to evaluate the supervisory training programmes (prompt how was the training evaluated, what aspects were evaluated)

10. Did the programme achieve the intended outcomes? (prompt on the rate of referral, formal and voluntary, is the right procedure followed, referral reasons)

11. If you were the head of SAPS, what changes would you implement regarding the involvement of other supporting role players to the EAP

Appendix F: Ethical Clearance Certificate

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ETHICS COMMITTEE
CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: SW23/05/11**
PROJECT TITLE	Exploring the Perceptions of South African Police Services Supervisors on the use of Supervisory Referrals
INVESTIGATOR	**K M MOLOKOANE**
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR	SOCIAL WORK
DATE CONSIDERED	18 October 2023
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved unconditionally
RISK LEVEL	MINIMAL RISK
EXPIRY DATE	18 OCTOBER 2025

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 18 OCTOBER 2023 **CHAIRPERSON** (DR L PETERSEN)

cc: Supervisor: Dr R Pillay

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethics committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

Signature

Date 20 , 10 , 2023

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

Appendix G: Ethical Clearance (SAPS)

South African Police Service Suid-Afrikaanse Polisiediens

Privaatsak Private Bag X94	Pretoria 0001	Faks No. Fax No.	(012) 432 7866

Your reference/U verwysing:

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

THE HEAD: RESEARCH
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE
PRETORIA
0001

Enquiries/Navrae: **Col (Dr) Smit**
W/O Thenga
Tel: **(012) 432 7866**
Email: **ThengaS@saps.gov.za**

APPROVED

KM Molokoane
UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE: UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND: MASTERS DEGREE: EXPLORING THE PERCEPTIONS OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICES SUPERVISORS ON SUPERVISORY REFERRALS: RESEARCHER: KM MOLOKOANE

The above subject matter refers.

1. You are hereby granted approval for your research study on the above mentioned topic in terms of National Instruction 4 of 2022.

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

   The Provincial Commissioner: Gauteng:

   - **Contact Person:** Colonel NS Peters
   - **Contact Details:** (011) 547 9129
   - **Email address:** PetersNS@saps.gov.za

   - **Contact Person:** Captain Nevumbani
   - **Contact Details:** (011) 547 9189
   - **Email Address:** nevumbanivj@saps.gov.za

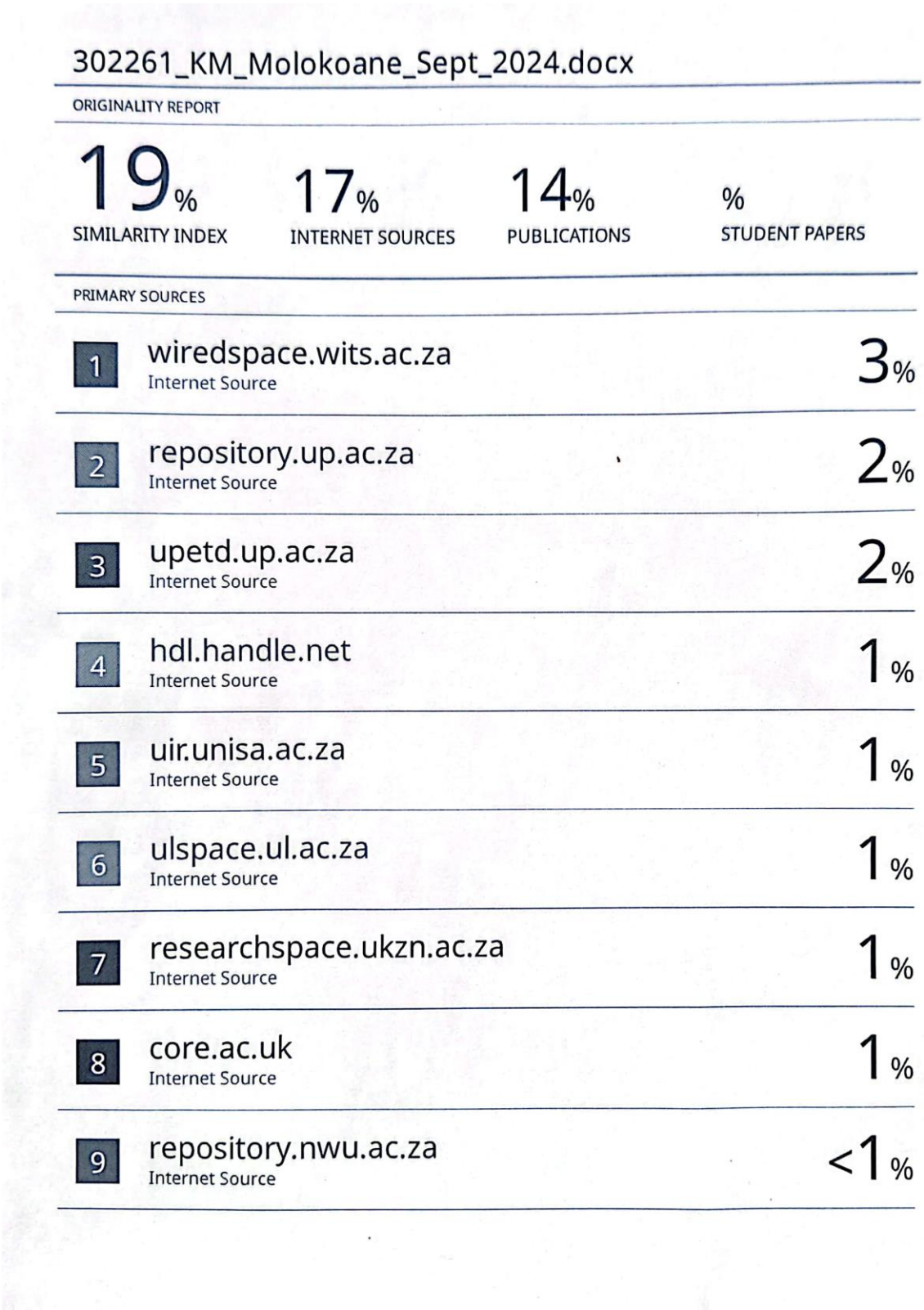
3. Kindly adhere to paragraph 8 of our attached letter signed on the **2023-08-22** with the same above reference number.

MAJOR GENERAL
THE HEAD: RESEARCH
DR PR VUMA

Date: 2023 -10- 1[illegible]

HERE

Appendix H: Turnitin



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