



**EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACT OF AN WELL-BEING
PROGRAMME ON STAFF PERFORMANCE IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY**

by

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DECLARATION

I, Olwethu Ngcingi, declare that the contents of this dissertation represent my own unaided work and that the dissertation has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Olwethu Ngcingi', written in a cursive style.

Signature:

Date: December 2020

ABSTRACT

An employee well-being programme is understood to be a positive contributor towards improved employee performance and morale in organisations. The elements that contribute to an employee's well-being, which are both intangible and to some degree measurable, are physical, emotional and social health. Employee well-being is an individual's freedom of choice, being able to realise his or her goals and provides a sense of achievement and encouragement. This includes experiencing fairness and equality in the workplace, resources, an individual's rights to training, security and having access to good health. This study aimed to determine how well-being programmes affect workplace performance and staff perceptions of how an employee wellness programme may influence performance at Company X, a medium-enterprise construction company in the Eastern Cape. The study considered the potential benefits of implementing a well-being programme at the selected company and the ensuing challenges that may be faced. A qualitative methodology was used. Data were obtained from 24 employees at various employment levels in the company by means of semi-structured interviews. Responses were coded and grouped thematically to identify the dominant themes. A strong link was found between employee well-being and workplace performance. Employees believed that the implementation of a well-being programme would foster a positive work environment and improved performance. The findings also indicated some anticipated challenges, including financial costs and time, lack of management support and commitment. However, despite these anticipated challenges, all staff were in favour of the introduction of an employee well-being programme. The results from the data analysis identify organisational policy and structure, training, health and wellness, employee relations, self-development and community engagement as key focus areas for the envisaged well-being programme at Company X.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my grandmother, Elsie Lindiwe Ngcingi (15 August 1929 - 27 September 2020), who passed away during this journey and who now watches over me from heaven.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AF	African female
AM	African male
B-BBEE	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
CETA	Construction Education and Training Authority
CF	Coloured female
CIDB	Construction Industry Development Board
CIPD	Chartered Institution of Personnel and Development
CM	Coloured male
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
EEA	Employment Equity Act
EE	Employment Equity
EWP	Employee well-being programme
GB	General Builder
HR	Human Resources
MD	Managing Director
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OAP	Occupational Alcoholism Programme
QotIP	Quality of the interview process
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
WF	White female
WM	White male

GLOSSARY

Employment Equity Act: promotes equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment by eliminating unfair discrimination and implementing affirmative action measures to achieve equality in the workplace.

Labour Relations Act: promotes a favourable working environment for the employer and employee

Occupational Health and Safety Act: aims to promote health and safety for all employees at work. Organisations should ensure that all employees are provided with safety and are without risk to hazardous activities to their health and safety in connection to work performed.

Performance: concerned with organisational profit

Skills Development Act: identifies skills gap in the South African workforce and improve the quality of life of employees and prospects of work.

Well-being: as opposed to wellness, well-being involves a more holistic approach that encompasses an employees 'physical, mental and psychological state.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Within the behavioural sciences and health psychology there has increasingly been a focus on the relationship between employee well-being and employee performance in the workplace (Avey, Luthans & Smith, 2010:17; Mazantsana, 2013:1). Chawla and Sharma (2019:3) and Kun and Gadanecz (2019:1-2) note that employee well-being includes both physical and psychological health and concur that well-being is perceived to be a contributing factor in an organisation's performance and success.

Fachruddin and Mangundjaya (2012:7-8) define employee well-being as the full incorporation of situations which include all physical, mental, spiritual and social states of mind that are based on both how employees experience their work environment and how they spend their free time. Keeman, Näswall and Malinen (2017:2) define employee well-being as a general fulfilment with and positive sentiments towards work. They further indicate that studies have revealed that increased well-being of employees results in better work performance.

A healthy working environment exists where people feel good, experience high levels of well-being and achieve high performance goals. High levels of employee well-being may depend on how an organisation manages its employees. When employees experience difficulties in balancing their work and home lives, it can lead to ill health and poor performance (Avey et al., 2010:17). Bennett et al. (2017:573) note that well-being gives an individual the ability to adapt to one's psychological state around them, such as experiencing control, support and low job demand. However, most research recommends that to achieve proper implementation of well-being, one should take into account that there could be limitations involved. These limitations may include the individual, the workplace and the economy and may influence the relationship between well-being and the work environment, working conditions and workplace resources. Mlangeni (2017:4) concurs that well-being is closely related to an individual's psychological state. Lack of supervisory and managerial skills may have a negative impact on an individual's mental health and job performance.

Rasulzada (2007:28) notes that positive well-being creates psychologically healthy individuals who are capable of showing better interpersonal behaviours, creating warm and trustworthy relationships, achieve higher work performance, increased punctuality and take fewer days of sick leave.

There is thus clear evidence in the literature of the relationship between employee well-being and productivity and that well-being influences employee performance, absenteeism and staff retention. Organisations are becoming increasingly aware of the positive role that employee well-being programmes (EWPs) play in addressing gaps between employee and organisational needs and in creating environments that promote physical health and psychological well-being (Noelcke, 2004:1; Rasulzada, 2007:30). Noelcke (2004:1) is of the view that to be effective, employee wellness management in organisations should range from simply offering information to workers, to health and fitness awareness, flexibility of hours and reward programmes.

1.2 Background to the study

This study was conducted at a medium-sized construction company in the EC, hereafter called Company X. Company X specialises in modern building solutions for all building requirements. According to the Managing Director of Company X, the company was formed in 1997 and by 2017 had a turnover of R225 million. The company has a head office located in East London, with offices in Port Elizabeth and Mthatha. Data from the company's HR department show that the staff complement is approximately 350 members, of whom 25 are permanent salaried staff and 293 are temporary contract workers who are wage earners. Salaried staff includes administrative workers, site managers and top management. Contract workers are mostly labourers employed on building sites.

In the three years preceding this study (2015, 2016 and 2017), Company X did not meet all its performance targets and there was little confidence among management that this would improve in the foreseeable future. This lack of confidence was driven not only by broader regional, national and international economic factors but also by general agreement that internal matters in the company were a contributing factor in the falling performance rates. Data obtained from the HR department indicate statistical evidence of increased attrition rates among salaried staff over the past four years (2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017). Evidence from exit interviews and the nature of staff complaints support management's concerns that staff may no longer be happy and that the company should investigate urgent interventions to address staff unhappiness, absenteeism and attrition.

The response from the HR office was to recommend that the company should consider implementing a EWP to address some of the company's internal problems. The Managing Director noted that at the time (2015), the company had no clearly defined HR policies or effective structures in place to address employee well-being issues. Senior management responded positively to the idea of an EWP. They supported the researcher and granted permission to conduct this study to investigate the possible benefits and challenges of EWP

implementation in the company, through studying available literature and interviewing salaried head-office staff.

1.3 Problem statement

Company X has not met its performance targets for the last three years (2015, 2016 and 2017). Evidence from the HR office suggests that this may partly be due to low staff morale, high absenteeism and high attrition rates. Therefore, the company is urgently seeking to investigate effective ways to address these problems.

1.4 Research aim

The aim of this research is to investigate the possible benefits and challenges of the implementation of an EWP in Company X to improve employee well-being and work performance.

1.5 Research objectives

To achieve its aims, the main research objective was to describe how does employee well-being influence performance, followed by the secondary objectives:

- to explore the possible benefits of implementing an EWP at Company X; and
- to explore the possible challenges to implementing an EWP at Company X

1.6 Research questions

The primary research question for this study along with sub-questions:

What are employee perception of how the introduction of an EWP may influence performance?

- How does employee well-being influence performance?
- What are the possible benefits of implementing an EWP at Company X?
- What are the possible challenges of implementing an EWP at Company X?

1.7 The contribution of the research

It is envisaged that the primary outcome of this research will be the development and implementation of a EWP framework at Company X, which will positively impact performance and assist the company to meet its future performance targets. This study will also add to the

existing body of literature on the benefits of EWPs in organisations and the challenges in implementing these programmes.

1.8 Delimitation of the research

Delimitations of this research are:

- i. This research is limited to the role of EWPs on staff performance in the construction industry in the Eastern Cape, South Africa.
- ii. This research is limited to one company (Company X) because this is where the research outcomes will potentially be used to improve the company's performance, possibly through the implementation of a well-being programme.

1.9 Ethical considerations

Ethics reflect the norms and rules of acceptable behaviour when conducting research (Rule & John, 2011:111). According to Rule and John (2011:112), common principles and practices in ethical considerations should aim to contribute to the public good and should not cause any harm to participants. In addition, the researcher should not compromise personal autonomy. The researcher should respect and protect participant rights and participants should be informed and allowed to decide whether to participate in the study and choose to withdraw at any time from the study. The ethical considerations of this study were guided by Rule and John (2011:112) and are outlined below:

- i. The researcher obtained approval from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology's (CPUT) Business and Management Sciences Faculty Ethics Committee before the research commenced (see Appendix A).
- ii. This dissertation underwent a Turnitin plagiarism test and meets CPUT's compliance standards.
- iii. Respondents' participation in the study was voluntary. Participants were asked to read and sign an informed consent form (see Appendix C).
- iv. All data gathered from the study was stored in a protected environment and was not given to any other party or used for any purpose other than that stated in this study.

1.10 Outline of the study

Chapter 1: This chapter provided a general introduction and a detailed background to the study. It listed the aim, objectives and research questions of the study. It also denotes the study limitations and the ethical considerations. Finally, this chapter concluded with a summarised outline of the study.

Chapter 2: Chapter 2 briefly describes the purpose of a literature review. It discusses the key terms used in the study and reviews literature relevant to the aim, objectives and research questions of the study. The chapter focuses on providing a comprehensive overview of what the literature reveals about how employee well-being influences performance. This overview addresses the first objective for the study.

Chapter 3: The chapter describes the methodology and methods applied in the study. It gives a rationale for the selection of the sample population and describes how data were collected and analysed.

Chapter 4: Chapter 4 describes, analyses and discusses the primary research data to address the second and third research objectives of this study, namely, to explore the possible benefits of implementing an EWP at Company X and the possible challenges to implementing the EWP. The chapter also discusses the triangulation of the primary data with the data reported in the literature, to explicate how employee well-being influences performance.

Chapter 5: This chapter summarises the findings of the research and presents the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the findings. The chapter also addresses the limitations of the research and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

According to Jesson, Matheson and Lacey (2011:9), a literature review provides normative criteria, which are used as a relevant standard against which something can be measured, such as assumptions, hypotheses or data collected in a particular research study. Mazantsana, (2013:61) notes that the literature is a repository of information on what has been published on a topic by accredited scholars and researchers. It is important for students to conduct a comprehensive literature review to familiarise themselves with a significant body of current research undertaken by others in the field to provide credible theoretical underpinnings for the research, to inform themselves and to critically appraise work that has already been undertaken in the area of interest (Arshed & Danson, 2015:138).

The literature reviewed outlines pertinent theoretical outlooks and previous research findings on the links between employee well-being and performance, how EWP's influence performance, the possible benefits of introducing EWP's and the possible challenges that may be stumbling blocks in implementing EWP's successfully. The literature review for this dissertation is not extensive but it does aim to provide a comprehensive foundation and a guide for this study. The foundational information in this literature review supports the study on the link between EWP's and performance and is related to the research objectives of the study.

According to Nzonzo (2017:45), employee well-being aims at optimising the physical and mental health of employees but goes beyond this to address broader and more general aspects of wellness that impact emotional satisfaction. Employee well-being refers specifically to the strong relationship between employee morale and the sustenance of positive work performance. Maintenance of employee well-being improves the performance of an organisation as a whole (Nzonzo, 2017:45). Research has defined employee performance as activities involving one's work that organisations use to measure an individual's contribution towards reaching organisational targets (Ying, 2012:16; Pradhan & Jena, 2016:3). Gauche, de Beer and Brink (2017:322) note that within an organisation there are various ways which can create a better impact on the "employee well-being" of workers. Such actions include supporting of mental health, training individuals with support activities, creation of a uniform culture within the workspace and offering reward and recognition benefits to the employees.

2.2 Theoretical frameworks

Self-determination, contingency theory and goal-setting are three theories that describe the links between employee well-being and productivity in the workplace. This section reviews

what is proposed in the literature for these theories and how these theories expound the positive correlation between employee well-being and performance in the workplace.

2.2.1 Self-determination theory

Figure 2.1 examines the level to which an employee can be self-determined and self-motivated. EWPs can play a very useful role in companies by providing a conduit for ensuring that employee needs are met. EWPs need to focus on creating structures and environments which will provide employees with work that is interesting, challenging and satisfying. The self-determination theory is of practical significance in explaining the link between employee well-being and performance (Church et al., 2013:524).

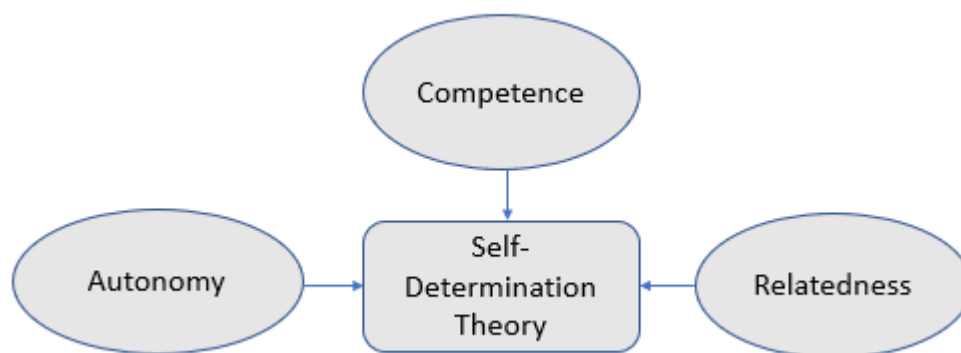


Figure 2.1: Self-determination theory

Source: Adapted from Sheldon, Abad and Omoile. (2009:460)

Sheldon et al. (2009:460) in Figure 2.1 above note that employee well-being is linked with work engagement, job satisfaction and high operational performance. Sheldon et al. (2009:460) define the concept of self-determination as people's ability to make their choices and manage their functions within an operation. Furthermore, the requirement for growth-driving behaviour is also a key aspect of this theory. It is an assumption which can be identified as how people in an operation deal with certain challenging situations within their various dimensions of behaviour. Strong self-determination creates self-motivation, which further leads to strong and positive operational performance. Fulfilment of these three needs (job satisfaction, make their own choices and training) strongly influences the extent to which an employee is motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically to effectively perform job tasks (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009:469).

Krause, North and Davidson. (2019:2) further explore the theory in relation to the various motivational factors that affect the growth of individual skills and competencies, behaviours and well-being. Krause et al. (2019:2) note that the focus of this theory is the degree to which

one's work can fulfil an individual's psychological needs, such as the need for relatedness, the need for competence and the need for autonomy. The need for relatedness refers to an individual's need for respect, belonging and security; the need for competence refers to the need for favourable challenging tasks and positive feedback and the need for autonomy refers to the need for being acknowledged, having a choice and being determined. When these needs are met, it leads to enhanced motivation, well-being and positive performance (Jeno, Adachi and Grytnes, 2019:671). Taris and Schaufeli (2015:23) note that when an employee feels rewarded in some way for performing in the workplace, s/he will be motivated sufficiently to complete tasks effectively. This results in higher levels of well-being when the employee's need for successful task accomplishment is met. Additionally, s/he is more likely to now experience the working environment as supportive and appreciative of his/her endeavours and thus the need to encounter positive working relationships is satisfied.

Employee well-being therefore also needs to address employee recognition and reward, which will provide the employee with both internal and external motivators and a sense of self-determination that result in positive performance and improved work outputs.

2.2.2 Contingency theory

Figure 2.2 depicts an effective leadership styles that can yield increased organizational performance. Well-being and performance of an employee play a significant role in leading an organisation to success. Popp and Hadwich (2018:46) define the contingency theory as specifically applicable to effective managerial behaviour between employers and employees. Through the help of the theory, an organisation is able to form a cordial relationship between the managers and employees, leading to an optimised performance, where leaders are matched to appropriate situations in context to the well-being of the employees.

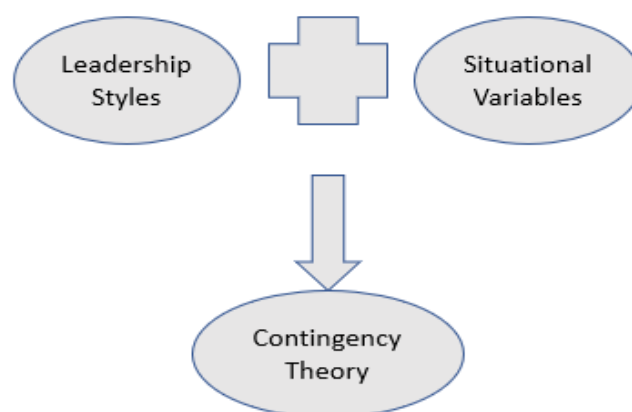


Figure 2.2: Contingency theory

Source: Adapted from Smit, de Coning and Visser (2005:55)

As opined by Taylor and Harris (2004:74), through effective leadership within the organisation, the team members are able to contribute better results with constant guidance and appropriate feedback.

The contingency theory also has a positive impact on an organisation in managing conflict proficiently—through effective communication management. Through the integration of conflict management tools with the contingency theory, organisations may enjoy a more harmonised environment that will promote productivity and well-being, as noted by Cameron, Pang and Jin (2007:528).

According to Smit et al. (2005:55) in figure 2.2 above, the contingency theory talks about improving and adapting a form of leadership style within organisations for overcoming external and internal constraints, depending on the situation at hand, in determining which leadership style will help. However, Harney (2016:72) and Kundu and Mondal (2019:3) argue that the theory is very limiting in implementing changes and does not provide flexibility to make the necessary changes. In addition, the theory may not be applicable to all departments in an organisation, which would make it difficult to implement (Kundu & Mondal, 2019:3). Therefore, when applying the contingency theory it is important to identify the type of leadership style an organisation will follow to yield its effectiveness.

2.2.3 Goal-setting theory

Figure 2.3 below is a motivational theory that describes the link between goals and performance. According to Yurtkoru, Bozkurt and Bekta (2017:796), the goal setting theory is considered an effective motivational theory leading to attaining high performances in employees. Through the implementation of the goal setting theory, an organisation seeks to develop an action plan for motivating the employee by setting both individual goals and organisational goals.



Figure 2.3: Goal Setting theory

Source: Adapted from Bush (2007:397)

Essentially, the theory as seen in Figure 2.3 is linked to driving the performance of an employee. However, Lunenburg (2011:3) and Yurtkoru et al. (2017:796) argue that if the goals set by the employees are inappropriate and too difficult to attain, then the outcome-based performance will decrease, leading to low employee performance. It is therefore crucial to set goals and realistic tasks that employees will be able to perform.

As opined by Bush (2007:397) in figure 2.3 above and Heslin, Carson and Vandewalle (2016:90), challenging and specific goals bring about motivation within employees, leading to high performance. In addition, the theory enlightens the need to contribute feedback for attaining better performance. Through clarity, task complexity and commitment, an employee is able to perform better within an organisational context. Goals are considered as the main objectives for an employee to effectively perform for achievements and although the principles of the goal setting theory analyses the development at an individual level, its relevance is still appropriate for an organisational context.

2.3 Conceptual literature

This section offers a comprehensive review of employee well-being and performance. It discusses the benefits of well-being and how improved performance positively affects an organisation. The literature identifies several core issues that should be considered when creating a framework for designing and implementing successful EWPs. This section also reviews how well-being links to performance.

2.3.1 Employee well-being

Dodge et al. (2012:222) note that an exact definition of well-being is difficult, given the broad variety of factors that influence individual feelings of well-being. They note, however, that understanding and addressing well-being is an important and growing area of research. Employee well-being can be promoted within an organisation with the help of various factors. As proposed by Bakker (2018:323) and Stoermer et al. (2018:15), there are a range of well-being programmes that help in promoting activities that support well-being of employees. These include:

- *Work engagement:* Work engagement is defined as the extent of the passion of an employee towards the organisation and the job role (Robertson-Smith & Markwick, 2009:9). Stoermer, Hitotsuyanagi-Hansel and Froese (2019:400) report that with help for proper engagement of employees, discretionary efforts are established on particular job activities. Therefore, effectiveness of work engagement is beyond the performance of an employee. With engagement of employees to job roles, the productivity and quality of deliverables improves with time.
- *Job satisfaction:* Van Wingerden, Bakker and Derks (2017:170) believe that with help for job satisfaction, an individual feels protected and can aim for proper career growth in a particular job-role. Benefits of job satisfaction are a comfortable balance between life and work as well as a positive approach towards the work on a whole.
- *Workers burnout:* According to Vinogradova, Tankovic and Richa Pavelin (2019:646-653), control of burnout syndrome among workers can be explained with reduction of exhaustion, headaches and lethargy within the workspace. The workers need to be granted opportunities to go off the grid to avoid burnout, along with the introduction of a meaningful approach to work assigned to them.

Litchfield et al. (2016:11) view well-being as an individual's overall and complete health state that encompasses robust social, mental and physical health as well as the absence of illness and disease.

Christianson et al. (2007, cited by Guest, 2017:26) note that when managers think of well-being, they often do so in too narrow a fashion, restricting their considerations to one dimension, such as job satisfaction.

Warr (2002:1) contends that well-being needs to be considered more broadly as the overall quality of an employee's experience and functioning at work. This holistic definition is based on the healthcare, philosophy, psychology and sociology literature, which converges on the three core dimensions of well-being—psychological, physical and social.

To determine states of employee well-being and the possible need for and nature of well-being interventions, companies would find it useful to have some credible forms of “measurement” but well-being is not something that can be pinned down simply by an empirical study (Dodge et al., 2012:230).

Sen and Nussbaum (2003:36) contend that an individual's state of being can be measured by their well-being status. The elements that contribute to this well-being status, which are intangible and to some degree measurable, are physical, mental and social health. Robertson and Cooper (2010:327) and Zacher and Staudinger (2018:4) agree that there is a positive correlation between a supportive work environment that provides employees with opportunities to do more, to grow and to be significantly satisfied in their jobs, and an element of “healthiness” in employees that is more than simply the evasion of being sick. Baptiste (2007:286) argues that when an employee's well-being is low and their health condition is not good, this may affect the success in performance at work.

Tehrani et al. (2007, cited by Armitage & Keeble-Ramsay, 2015:3) define organisational well-being as having meaningful challenging tasks that permit employees to apply their skills and knowledge in effective working teams, in a safe and healthy work environment. However, Armitage and Keeble-Ramsay (2015:4) note that employee well-being is determined by the relationship that the employee has with their manager. The stronger the relationship, the more employee well-being is enhanced, which therefore yields improved employee performance. The Chartered Institution of Personnel and Development (CIPD) research shows that employee engagement is an important constituent of well-being and influences employee turnover and absence (Baptiste, 2007:291).

Well-being not only benefits employees inside the workplace but also the people outside of work. Employees perform better when a well-being action is in place, which then results in increased organisational productivity and the organisation is seen as an environmentally and socially responsible employer for whom to work (Richard, Emener and Hutchison , 2009:72).

Fair and Wright (2016:3) conclude that well-being goes beyond just ‘wellness’. It is a broad meaning that includes the personal health of employees ‘working lives. Fair and Wright (2016:4) further note that well-being is about being content with where one is in life, whether it is in one's personal life, or at work.

2.3.2 Benefits of employee well-being programmes

According to Nzonzo (2017:41), employee well-being programmes play an integral role in *increasing the productivity of employees*. This is depicted in Figure 2.4 below. The self-determination theory (Sheldon et al., 2009) poses that when people can make choices and manage their functions within an organisation, it leads to motivation and improved performance. It further enables employees to gain an understanding of their importance within an organisation.

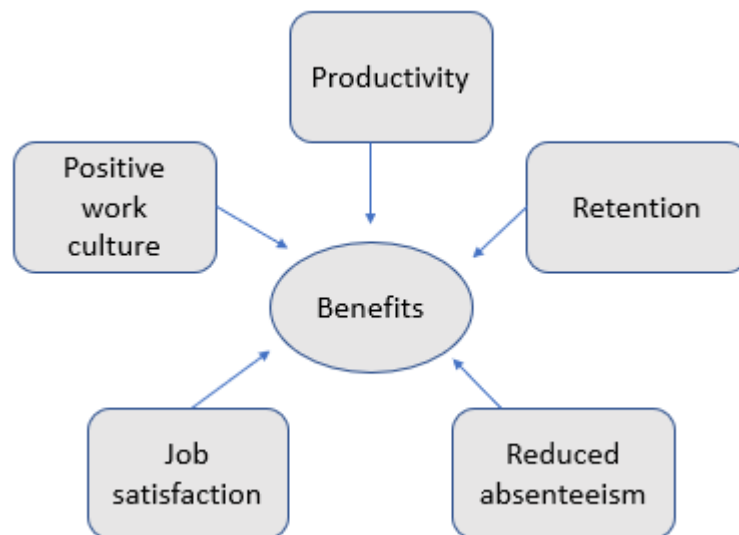


Figure 2.4: Benefits of Employee well-being programme

Source: Adapted from Nzonzo (2017:45)

Through implementation of EWPs, organisations in South Africa are able to manage their employee retention levels efficiently. This is facilitated through the personal and professional development of skills of employees. By having career growth opportunities within an organisation, employees remain satisfied, supported by the self-determination theory (Sheldon et al., 2009; Krause et al., 2019). This leads to an increase in *staff retention* in organisations. Apart from this, Gauche et al. (2017:13) noted that implementation of an EWP leads to a significant reduction in *absenteeism due to sickness and reduced presenteeism*. This is achieved by an organisation through efficiently managing its resources and adding value to the position held by an employee within an organisation. In addition, EWPs lead to reduced costs incurred by the organisation due to poor performance and reduced absenteeism. Increased motivation and *satisfaction among employees* further leads to enhancement of the company's image. According to Cloete (2015:26), through the provision of an EWP, organisations are able to take an employee-focused approach for improving performance. This plays a pivotal role in managing the image of the company leading, to a rise in pride and a

sense of belonging of employees. Application of the same further leads to an increase of new recruits due to the positive work culture within the company. According to the three theories (Pekuri, Haapasalo & Herrala, 2011:54; Salau et al., 2014:30; Sauermann, 2016:2), there is a clear link between productivity and performance.

Sections 2.3.3 - 2.3.11 below discuss the benefits of implementing an EWP.

2.3.3 Positive work culture

Lumen Learning (2017:10) defines culture as:

... creating its own consciousness in an organisation, indicating shared norms and values. These shared values are central elements of the organisation, as they generate buy-in and dedication from employees. These shared values create an expectation of success, both professional and personal, that can create high levels of trust and shared accountability.

Gangwar (2018:1) defines positive work culture as a healthy and supportive working environment that celebrates healthy competition and employee success and views failure as a learning curve. As opined by Gangwar (2018:1), an organisation that supports a positive work culture will build an environment that provides rewards and recognition, growth and development opportunities, which will in turn improve employee engagement. Both the self-determination and the contingency theories talk about guidance and appropriate feedback, effective leadership and flexibility (Taylor & Harris, 2004; Sheldon et al., 2009; Jeno et al., 2019).

South Africa is a culturally diverse country where employees have to grapple with the barriers of fear and being uninformed or inconsiderate of the needs of cultural differences. EWPs, such as recognition programmes for all employees, can assist by helping to build a diverse and inclusive empathetic organisational culture and atmosphere of mutual respect and performance-driven employees. This will help to foster better understanding of individual aspirations and encourage sharing of different ideas to help grow a high-performing organisation (Dombai, 1999:88). As discussed under the contingency theory (Cameron et al., 2007), the aim of organisations is to overcome conflict through effective communication. Dlamini (2015:4) attests to the importance of being able to adapt to diverse work surroundings and satisfying one's basic, derived and integrative needs. Dlamini (2015:4) further states that the South African construction industry is plagued by low performance; however, the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) has implemented methods to alleviate this situation and improve performance. Notwithstanding the methods undertaken to help boost performance, organisational culture also impacts employee work-life balance in the South African construction industry as it affects business outcomes (Dlamini, 2015:8). Mburugu (2017:1) adds that organisational culture is determined by the values, principles and beliefs,

which influence how employees interact with each other at work and ultimately affects the performance and productivity of employees. Mburugu (2017:1) further states that having a strong work ethic will yield positive benefits for an organisation. These benefits include employee retention, increased loyalty, attracting new talent and positive company image.

Pons-vignon and Anseeuw (2009:883) report that numerous policies and frameworks were introduced in South Africa with the aim of creating and improving a positive working environment to enhance employee well-being and performance.

The literature reviewed supports the notion that a positive, diverse and empathetic relationship with employees contributes to well-being at work. It is important, however, that everyone at all levels in the organisation respect diversity and work together to achieve common organisational goals to reduce the risk of underperformance.

2.3.4 Work-life balance

Dhas (2015:21660) defines work-life balance as when an organisation creates a supportive and healthy working environment in which employees can satisfy the need to balance their work and personal lives. Jamison and O'Mara (1991, cited by Grawitch & Ballard, 2016:132) support the notion that programmes to assist employees in balancing their work-life enable them to achieve the various behaviours that create a successful balance between their work and family lives. Being able to balance both the work- and personal life strengthens employee loyalty, job performance, life and family satisfaction (Dhas, 2015:21660; Grawitch & Ballard, 2016:132; Gragnano, Simbula & Miglioretti, 2020:2).

Having EWP in place, therefore, shows that the employer is mindful of an employee's responsibilities and obligations after working hours. Bennett et al. (2017:579) stress the importance of having work-life balance in organisations, as it is strongly linked with employee well-being, job satisfaction and lowered stress. Grawitch and Ballard (2016:133) note that employees do require flexibility during work hours, such as taking lunch any time or leaving work early, to meet the demands of their personal lives. Having performance rewards, such as sponsored family holiday trips, could enhance the work-life balance of the individual. Other examples that could be used to help balance employees' work and personal lives are having flexible working hours, providing child care facilities, having wellness days that include family participation and having policies and procedures in place that provide job security. Abioro, Oladejo and Ashogbon (2018:2) identify the following work-life balance strategies to be effective when adopted by organisations:

- *Flexitime*: Arranging with your superior time to start and end work. Having flexibility at work will lead to reduced absenteeism and increased job satisfaction. The self-

determination theory (Sheldon et al., 2009) states that one of the choices that people can make in organisation is flexitime. EWP could include the creation of policies around policies.

- *Teleworking*: Permission to work from home.
- *Reduced work weeks*: Working longer hours or shifts to reduce the number of days worked in a week.
- *Part-time work*: The ability to pursue personal obligations such as studies and also be able to fit in work.
- *Job sharing*: Sharing job responsibilities between two or more full time employees.

A recent study by Koekemoer (2020:1) reports that managing employee well-being has experienced a lot of changes in terms of a work-life balance policy during the 2020 pandemic of Covid-19. As per the World Health Organisation, individual stress has become a health epidemic in the 21st century. Therefore, employers need to modify the policy of work-life balance by considering the physical and mental health of employees. They must be given a confirmed working period daily. Organisations can develop entertaining group sessions online, where various acts such as creative group discussions, tactical playing and group exercises. It releases stress and gives enormous stability within the mindset of employees. It can bring an operational culture of mental and physical health, which could be beneficial for both employees and employers. As organisations, globally, entered the year of crisis with the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, many businesses operated from home. However, though working from home was perceived to be more relaxed and convenient, it has proven to be not so easy and has its own drawbacks, such as distractions from families, limited work equipment, house chores and the pressures of the never-ending work due to no time limits, (Mohammed, 2020:1).

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act (No. 75 of 1997) is a guide that determines the terms and conditions of employment in South Africa (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1997). Though the Act does not include flexible working hours as a requirement, employers have the option within the law to take work-life balance seriously and offer flexible working hours to their employees as a strategy to enhance performance and productivity. Numerous authors (Dhas, 2015:21660; Grawitch & Ballard, 2016:132; Abioro et al., 2018:2; Gagnano, 2020:2) concur that respecting employees 'needs for work-life balance can boost employee morale, thus reducing absenteeism and staff turnover and improving the company image as an employer of choice.

2.3.5 Employee growth and development

Another benefit that is supported by the self-determination theory is continuous training (Krause et al., 2019). According to Awasthi and Kumar (2016:66), one of the most crucial functions of human resources practitioners is the development of employees. As opined by Awasthi and Kumar (2016:66), employers should retain talent by providing employees with opportunities to grow, learn, progress and contribute towards the development of the organisation, by evaluating their abilities and sensing the change in the business environment and to check whether the skills of employees excel. This can be done by promoting comprehensive training programmes that ensure efficient transfer of knowledge that will challenge and stimulate employees in carrying out various aspects of their work. Employees feel valued when development opportunities are provided, they become satisfied and dedicated, which leads to enhanced performance. The goal-setting theory is another theory that drives performance in an organisation through the fulfilment of organisational and individual goals. This could be done by employees through setting development goals for themselves to attain this fulfilment (Yurtkoru et al., 2017:796).

Keeman et al. (2017:3) state that by engaging employees into learning activities fosters a high well-being characteristic of flourishing. They further note that continued learning allows individuals to keep challenging themselves in fulfilling their goals, which in turn, promotes social interaction and increases self-esteem. Grawitch and Ballard (2016:6) note that employees perform at their best when they have room for advancement. Employees tend to be loyal towards employers that invest in their growth and development. In developing the training arm of an EWP, employers have at their disposal prescriptive methods that they can employ, such as the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998 (RSA, 1998b) that aims at promoting economic empowerment by providing skills development services in the construction sector. The Construction Education and Training Authority (CETA) gives employers an opportunity to upskill their workforce on legislated training, such as learnerships and apprenticeships that are recognised by the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and promotes transformation in the construction industry (Construction Education and Training Authority [CETA], 2020). In turn, the company receives recognition in their Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Amendment Act, No. 53 of 2003 scorecard on the spend done for black employees in South Africa (RSA, 2003; DTIC, 2013). B-BBEE legislation was developed to transform and enhance South Africa's black economy to redress the legacy of apartheid. Due to the scarcity of skilled labour in South Africa and also financial constraints on the part of the employee, offering training presents the employee with opportunities for growth within the organisation, thereby leading to a motivated employee whose loyalty to the employer is strengthened. Although some organisations may benefit with their B-BBEE scorecards, Mzimela and Chikandiwa (2017:2) argue that prioritising employee-training will also provide

organisations with the benefit of achieving their objectives and putting them in a competitive position. Other benefits for the organisation include employee performance, market growth, organisational performance and employee retention. Benefits for the employee include employee satisfaction, employee performance, employee empowerment, employee commitment, effective training and development management, top management support and clear developmental goals and objectives (Mzimela & Chikandiwa, 2017:3-5).

2.3.6 Health and safety

The Occupational Health and Safety Act, No. 85 of 1993 in South Africa is legislated to assist organisations in creating a conducive working environment (RSA, 1993:12, 22). The Act defines Occupational Health and Safety by stating that all employers should aim to provide a safe work environment that is without any risks for the health and safety of its employees, in connection with the activities of persons at work. Employers are encouraged to establish a health and safety committee to consult on the development, promotion, maintaining and reviewing measure of the Act to guarantee that the health and safety of employees is taken seriously.

Organisations must follow proper health and safety procedures as prescribed by the law and according to their industry. According to RSA (1993:12, 22), organisations in the design, manufacturing, import, selling or supply industries are encouraged to comply with all the prescribed requirements of the Act. Employers who work in the erecting or installing industry shall, as far as possible, ensure nothing in erecting or installing makes it unsafe or a risk to the health and safety of employees when used (RSA, 1993:14). The Act further describes manufacturers, importers, sellers or suppliers of substances to be used at work should ensure that the substance is safe and does not pose a risk to the health of employees when used. Correct information should be available with proper guidelines on how to use the substances at work, with precautionary measures outlined. In the construction industry, all stakeholders such as clients, professionals, contractors and site workers should ensure that they adhere to the health and safety measures and regulations and stay clear of any risks when working at heights (Oke, Aigbavboa and Seemola, 2018:154).

Employers who prioritise the safety of their employees demonstrate how valuable their employees are to them. Okoro, van Heerden and Musonda (2018:2) agree, stating that organisations that show value by investing in the health and safety of their employees should enjoy success and continuity and they emphasise the importance of finding ways how to improve the health and safety performance in organisations. To increase the morale and performance of employees concerning health and safety, employers should put recognition programmes in place, such as rewards, safety incentives and training. In support, Bennett et

al. (2018:578) state that organisations that constantly promote health and employee well-being will enjoy high participation in health and well-being programmes offered and capitalise on guaranteed employee well-being and organisational success. Grawitch and Ballard (2016:9) note that having programmes such as wellness screenings and employee assistance programmes that will assist with alcohol abuse, drug abuse, anxiety, depression, counselling services and safety training, will improve workplace safety for employees. These programmes enhance the overall psychological well-being of employees through the prevention, management and treatment of possible health threats and problems. A lack of management of health and safety may result in increased accidents, which could be costly for organisations and possibly decrease employee performance and well-being. It is therefore crucial to have good motivation strategies in place to ensure compliance with all legislation.

2.3.7 Recognition and rewards

Another benefit that links well-being and performance, as contained in the self-determination theory, is having reward programmes at the workplace (Taris & Schaufeli, 2015:25). Kumari (2015:12) and Bennett et al. (2018:578) define recognition and rewards as a system that displays the importance and value of employees by ways of genuinely appreciating their work efforts. Rewards are designed to acknowledge good performance and motivate employees. Recognition is usually combined with reward programmes as a tool to retain employees. An employee reward system can be defined as a programme implemented to compensate good behaviour or achieving a specific goal. "They are normally considered separate from salary but may be monetary in nature or otherwise have a cost to the company" (Fair & Wright, 2016:7).

Recognition is more of a psychological tool, for example, showing gratitude or appreciation to the employee with a simple "thank you" note can go a long way in encouraging employees and making them feel valued, which, in any organisation, is a key part of recognition (Fair & Wright, 2016:7).

Employees often criticise managers for lack of recognition. This lack of recognition makes employees feel as though managers have little interest in them or attach no value to them. Grawitch and Ballard (2016:12) aver that employees who feel appreciated will often go the extra mile for the employer, are more productive and motivated and are more likely to stay in an organisation.

According to Kamboh et al. (2019:29), employee recognition is an effective communication tool that assists and strengthens employee performance to reach common goals. Kamboh et al. (2019) further explain that when you effectively recognise your employees, you want to boost their self-esteem and maintain their good work performance. Recognition and rewards

programmes are instruments that enhance employee-motivation to perform better than they usually do. Although there is a positive link between employee recognition, rewards and performance, Bayraktar et al. (2016:45) stress the importance and awareness of diversity that must be considered in our communities. Therefore, it is important to recognise that not all employees want the same things and that individuals are motivated differently. Sources of motivation could be monetary, job security, employee involvement or performing challenging tasks. Managers should consider diversity when deciding how to motivate their employees.

Bayraktar et al. (2016:45) further express that rewarding employees brings a sense of job satisfaction and encourages them to change their behaviours to be more in line with organisational goals. Employees respond positively to two types of motivation—intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is “the satisfaction received in the process of performing an action”; extrinsic motivation is “given by another person, typically a manager and includes promotions, pay increases and bonuses” (Bayraktar et al., 2016:46).

2.3.8 Employee involvement

Research done by Grawitch and Ballard (2016:12) suggests that employee involvement is possibly the most popular of all healthy work practices because it enables multiple ways in which employees can contribute to solving organisational problems and increase organisational effectiveness. When employees are involved in the decision-making of the organisation, there is greater employee participation and contribution to the development of the organisation. Employee involvement initiatives support the development of a teamwork-oriented environment that empowers employees to take initiatives and to be innovative. In support, Obiekwe, Zeb-Obipi and Ejo-Orusa (2019:2) see employee involvement as a programme where organisations value employee input in management decisions and activities, in line with their ranks in organisations. Bennett et al. (2017:578) identify employee involvement as a positive tool that fosters improved employee attitudes, increased job satisfaction, employee well-being and happiness at work.

Maslow (cited by Robbins & Judge, 2019:7) states that people need to belong to feel motivated. When they feel their contribution is valued and they are seen as a vital part of a team, this recognition boosts co-operation and morale. This leads to increased productivity and more employees feeling comfortable with each other and the organisation.

Notwithstanding that employee-involvement may be an effective programme in enhancing performance, it has its own drawbacks. Obiekwe et al. (2019:7) note that the challenges experienced could be a lack of management support in involving employees in decision-making processes, due to superiority complexes. Some managers tend to undermine their subordinates, labelling them as lazy or not being qualified to make decisions. Other challenges

include the lack of trust in thinking employee's may share information with its competitors and a lack of a qualified workforce. Therefore, the success of an employee-involvement programme is determined by the support of top management. A good and well-structured programme may be costly but long-term benefits may supersede the short-term financial costs.

2.3.9 Team building

Harris and Harris (2012, cited by Ikon et al., 2018:15) define team building as:

“... creating a work group with a common purpose for the achievement of goals or tasks. It implies that individuals work in a co-operative environment in the interest of a common goal by sharing knowledge, skills and being flexible enough to serve multiple roles”.

Team building enhances collaboration and teamwork, enables better communication and planning and facilitates problem solving and conflict resolution, cultural exchange and builds trust and loyalty among employees. According to Bayley et al. (2007:188), team building is an essential tool for the delivery of care and organisational development. When teams do not work effectively, this leads to negative repercussions on individual well-being and the work being done, which is why it is important to promote team-building initiatives in the organisation. Another factor that can have a negative impact on poor teamwork is stress.

Fair and Wright (2016:8) believe that a team-oriented organisation, which also empowers employees to take initiatives, is a good start in enhancing well-being in an organisation. They note that this approach promotes and strengthens participation, which is good for the improvement of performance for organisations as it helps to build strong relationships and a spirit of togetherness, thus enhancing employee well-being. Despite having rewards and recognition for individual employees, Ikon et al. (2018:15) state that a good team-building programme unites employees towards reaching a common goal to achieve good performance objectives.

2.3.10 Work conditions, safety and equity

Buble (2006, cited by Bakotic & Babic, 2013:207) defines working conditions as “... the conditions under which a job is performed ... (from) completely comfortable to very difficult and dangerous to employees 'life and health”.

Difficult working conditions may be defined as external factors that include ambient environmental temperature, lighting, noise and interference, dust, smoke and other harmful factors. Subjective factors include gender and age of the worker, fatigue, monotony, unfavourable posture during work and lastly, factors related to production of the organisation such as duration of the work shift, work schedule or work pace.

Similarly, Ali, Abdiaziz, and Abdiqani. (2013:69) define working conditions as both psychological and physical working conditions. This involves all existing circumstances that affect labour in the workplace, including job hours, physical aspects, legal rights, responsibility and the organisational climate and workload.

In considering employee wellness, it is therefore important for an organisation to take measures to eliminate uncomfortable working conditions or if this is not possible, to take appropriate safety measures. Kapur (2018:2) notes how an efficient organisation should promote policies and programmes on creating working environments that are comfortable, safe, clean and secure with minimal distraction. Safety measures at work are carried out to ensure working conditions are without danger to life or health, or to avoid accidents, injuries, occupational diseases or at least to mitigate their consequences.

Working conditions can be identified as the 'type 'of hours worked during the week, flexibility with the work, place of work and vocation time (Hsiao & Lin, 2018:248) and organisations need to understand the importance of having positive work conditions and environment to influence increased performance.

South African legislation defines the Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998 as the use of hiring policies that encourage representation of designated groups (black people, women and people with disabilities) (RSA, 1998a). The aim of the Act is to achieve equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunities and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination and implementing affirmative action measures. The purpose of the Act is to introduce and create awareness of the requirements of the Act and its effects on operations with the company. The policy is there to assist and provide guidance for employers in treating each employee in their employ fairly and equally, depending on the occupational level and work experience. When employees notice disparities in salaries, job tasks, trainings opportunities, or any other type of discrimination due to their race, gender, disability, disease or sickness, their well-being will be low, thereby leading to a decrease in performance in their duties and also may lead to high staff turnover. Most organisations in South Africa (depending on the industry and turnover) have to comply with the Employment Equity Act (EEA), which gives organisations an opportunity to identify these barriers and affirmative action measures that need to be implemented. When employees notice a positive change in how they are treated (equally and fairly), organisations may enjoy improved employee well-being which will influence high performance and staff retention.

2.3.11 Aligned values and ethical behaviour

Organisational values help guide behaviour, give purpose and direction and provide some feeling of mission. The organisation may revise its values from time to time but ultimately

values of the organisation should be consistent (Krames, 2005:139-141). The organisation's values will be the "bedrock" (Krames, 2005:139) of any HR policies or EWPs.

It may be exceedingly difficult to reach organisational goals if there is a gap between values and ethics of the employer and the employee. Taylor (2017:4) stresses the importance of building an ethical culture that protects and empowers all employees, from the top level to unskilled levels, to express their concerns and grievances. Should an individual's values and the organisation's values not be aligned, then the employee may have to make the difficult decision to stay or not. If the employee perceives that there is a conflict in values, then this will also affect the individual's job performance.

A particularly common problem in organisations is the question of ethical behaviour of employees as regards reasons cited for absenteeism. Absenteeism is an employee's deliberate intent to be absent from work, which creates problems for employers (Kanjere, Thaba and Makgato 2014:1287). Culbertson (2009:77) notes that excessive workplace absenteeism can be costly to organisations as it equates to decreased productivity, which affects the organisations finances, morale and other factors. Organisations, therefore, need to create healthy environments that minimise absenteeism or its related problem, presenteeism, which is when an employee comes to work but does very little work.

Legislation that governs absenteeism in South Africa are the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (75 of 1997) (RSA, 1997) and the Labour Relations Act (66 of 1995) (RSA, 1995). As noted by Claassen (2019) in the South African Labour Guide, the correct recording of leave is of paramount importance so that should an employee abuse his leave entitlement, the employer has the evidence that it needs to exercise its right to address the matter in a fair and practical manner. The legislation also notes arriving late, or leaving early from work, being off sick regularly, or taking extended lunch and smoke breaks as forms of absenteeism. It is therefore necessary for organisations to have an absenteeism policy in place to assist in reducing absenteeism and its negative impact on productivity.

The aim of the Labour Relations Act of 1995 is promote a favourable working environment for the employer, employee and any representative union. It is a fair labour practice that also aims to enhance a productive work environment and consistently fair treatment of staff. When applied appropriately, this Act serves as a guide in monitoring absenteeism and which procedures to follow in addressing this phenomenon (Nel et al., 2016:167).

2.3.12 Employee performance

Employee performance is an integral part of an organisation. According to Mullen, Kelloway, and Teed,. (2017:410), the performance of employees determines the productivity and

success of an organisation. In this context, it is essential that organisations are able to manage the performance of their employees efficiently. Mullen et al. (2017:407) state that periodic review and evaluation of employee performance is also an integral part of ensuring that employees reach desirable outcomes. Ying (2012:16) defines employee performance as “the extent to which an organisational member contributes to achieving the goals of the organisation”. Employees are an important resource to an organisation and their performance plays an integral part in achieving organisational goals (Ying, 2012:16).

The role of an employee in the process of achieving organisational goals is indispensable. According to Ramdhani, Ramdhani and Ainissyifa (2017:828), successful employees are able to meet deadlines and achieve expected outcomes of their assigned tasks. Moreover, employee performance plays a crucial role in the process of ensuring that a positive work environment is promoted within the organisation. South African organisations are required to ensure that their employees find the motivation to meet their performance targets (Evans, Anderson and Gilliland, 2018:267). This can be attained through providing adequate training about the processes used for completion of tasks.

Insufficient quality performance of employees leads to negative impacts on the team’s morale and performance. As suggested by Lau et al. (2017:24), the performance of employees plays a crucial role in setting trends within a team. For instance, a high performer motivates team members to work towards meeting all deadlines in a collaborative manner. On the other hand, a negative performer would allow tardiness and an undesirable attitude towards work, which would significantly affect the quality of performance of the entire team. Efficient management of the performance of employees boosts morale and performance leading to the appropriate achievement of organisational goals.

2.3.13 Benefits of performance

According to Cochrane and Starfield (1992:898), the essential functions of an organisation include the HR process, leadership activities, financial control and employee performance. Furthermore, it can be stated that proper business performance always produces benefits for both management as well as the workers. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the potential benefits that business performance can produce.

EWPs can be undertaken for generating internal performance in an operation by adapting the three theories of self-determination, contingency and goal-setting. For developing performance, continuous processes of generating and monitoring planning, reviewing goals and objectives and sharing regular feedback from workers can be done (Taylor & Harris, 2004:74; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009:469; Yurtkoru et al., 2017:796). As opined by Samuel and Chipunza, (2009:410), all these are beneficial as the process enables workers to increase

their skills and knowledge. As stated by Cloete (2015:29), it may culminate in fair actions such as staff promotion, verbal and non-verbal performance appraisal and transfer of knowledge. It must be beneficial as it helps management to maintain their work structure along with performance policies. Thus, good performance management systems also enhance staff morale and improve retention, thereby leading to productivity (Rostam, 2019:1).

The review of theoretical and conceptual literature highlights the importance of employee well-being in the workplace, its positive impact on performance and its role in lessening absenteeism and attrition. However, the literature review also reveals that organisations typically face a number of practical challenges that negatively impact on employee well-being and hinder the achievement of the positive goals and aims of EWPs.

2.4 Challenges to successful implementation of employee well-being programmes

Although EWPs are highly beneficial for increasing employee morale and performance, Sieberhagen et al. (2011:6) argue that the implementation of the same on a larger scale has its own drawbacks. The literature reviewed identifies a number of challenges which are frequently experienced by organisations when implementing EWPs and suggests measures that could ameliorate these challenges.

2.4.1 Historical challenges

Because at the time of the research (2018), Company X had not as yet introduced a EWP, it is useful to refer to the literature for a historical overview of the successes and failures of previously introduced programmes and how these challenges have been addressed over time.

Several researchers (Manganyi, 2015:1; Mojapelo, 2018:29; Attridge, 2019:626), EWPs were first established in the USA as Occupational Alcoholism Programmes (OAPs) in the 1940s during the Second World War, to assist employees with alcohol problems that resulted in high absenteeism and low performance. The focus on OAPs expanded as new workplace challenges such as depression, mental health, parent/child issues, trauma and family issues arose. As it emerged that alcoholism was not the only workplace problem affecting performance and absenteeism, the move was towards creating EWPs that addressed the overall personal welfare of the employees. Employee wellness services were gradually expanded to identify a wider range of personal issues and problems that affected job performance (Masi, 2011:8; Rakepa, 2012:9; Maiden et al., 2005, cited by Manganyi, 2015:1). Examples of such problems included depression, family difficulties, stress and marital problems.

Against this background, EWP's gained a bad name among the majority of employees who saw these programmes as little more than interventions for alcoholics and those suffering from mental illnesses. This stigma meant that EWP's were treated with suspicion and this hindered the successful implementation of more varied programmes designed to serve a broader range of organisational interests and needs. Terblanche (1992, cited by Sieberhagen et al., 2011:2) indicates that EWP's were first introduced in the USA and emerged in South Africa in the early 1980s with the Chamber of Mines as one of the first organisations to introduce such programmes. One of the major reasons for the implementation of EWP's was to find ways to manage poor performance. According to Sieberhagen et al. (2011:7), there was a strong resistance to the programmes initially because of employees' lack of trust in their confidentiality.

Although the South African discriminatory political history continues to present challenges in the Black community, Govender and Vandayar (2018:12) argue that EWP's have had a positive influence on national organisational and societal culture by encouraging the development of HIV/AIDS policies and legislation into labour laws, leading to further development of more responsive employee well-being policies. Govender and Vandayar (2018:12) further report this enabled EWP's to grow holistically for employees by the show of appreciation for diversity and multi-cultural tolerance, empowerment of previously disadvantaged groups, transparency, inclusivity, ownership and belonging. This helped employees to experience real benefits from EWP's and to view these programmes in an increasingly positive light in more recent times (since 2001). While much of the literature reviewed highlighted the positive impact of EWP's, Mtapuri, Levers and Rangongo. (2014:262) note that having well-being policies in place serves little purpose if employees are not made aware of such policies. This lack of knowledge means that employee well-being or assistance policies and programmes cannot be utilised properly by employees. It is, therefore, important for management to include discussions on the policy during their meetings with employees and unions and to afford employees the opportunity to have a say in what should be included. However, despite the challenges of belonging, transparency, inclusivity and diversity, EWP's have shown a significant growth in South Africa (Mashiane, 2017:10).

2.4.2 Lack of staff member interest

One factor that may negatively influence employee interest in EWP's is the lack of incentives provided for in the programmes (Rono, 2011:20; Kolacz, 2015:32; Renard & Snelgar, 2016:8; Baloshi, 2018:148). As reported by Henry (2015:52), Renard and Snelgar (2016:8) and Baloshi, 2018:148), the prevailing work culture indicated that employees enjoyed financial incentives more than non-financial incentives, hence the decrease in participation. However, Kolacz (2015:32) and Wein (2018:23) found that offering onsite fitness centres and onsite

exercise classes, gift cards, once-a-month chair massages, exciting wellness days, healthy vending machines, awards or prizes tailored according to the organisation's culture and employee interests, was a step towards achieving increased participation from employees. This flexibility ensured that they were able to attract all employees to participate in the EWPs, which could also yield long-term benefits.

Spence (2015:114) identified a number of possible challenges to the interest of staff in EWP, namely, time and work pressure, individual readiness for change and balance of responsibility to change. Dickson-Swift et al. (2014:146) and Rouse (2016:15) agree that time and work pressures could negatively influence the interest of employees in EWP. Wein (2018:22) also notes lack of time as a barrier to employee participation in EWPs, possibly influenced by employees' commitments outside of work, such as family commitments or part-time studies, thereby leading to less interested employees.

A third possible challenge to employee interest indicated in the literature reviewed on EWP is employee readiness for change (Madsen, 2003:46; Spence, 2015:114). Nielsen and Noblet (2018:9) are of the view that employees may not realise the benefits of an EWP and feel that the implementation of the programme is being forced upon them. Carnethon (2009:1) and Hannon et al. (2012:1338) note that employers must, where possible, take into account that behaviour change must be tailored according to an individual's interest.

A fourth possible challenge to employee interest suggested in the literature review is balance of responsibility to change (Spence, 2015:114). According to Ammendolia et al. (2016:2), due to their age, some employees may experience physical changes, such as loss of muscular strength and range of joint movement, decreased ability to maintain good posture and balance, reduced ability to regulate sleep, depression, diabetes and back pain. These changes have a negative impact on ageing employees. For increased participation in the programmes, Ammendolia et al. (2016:12) encourage a focus on healthy strategies that are tailored to meet the requirements of older employees, which should be implemented to help maintain a healthy and productive workforce.

The literature also reveals that employees may be reluctant to forfeit their lunch-breaks to participate in the programmes. In addition, when they return from annual/sick leave their focus will be on catching up with their work because of their absence, which may limit participation in well-being programmes. To overcome these challenges and create heightened interest from all staff, it is important for employers to understand the needs of their employees and the programmes need to be dynamic and varied. Employees want to be heard and effective mechanisms should be put in place to allow for employee input and feedback on EWPs.

2.4.3 Insufficient resources

Mabuza (2018:158) reports that lack of funds and failure to engage employees who are at high risk has a significant impact on the success of an EWP. Organisations are required to maintain a separate fund for implementing appropriate EWPs for employees to ensure that the EWPs are implemented in an efficient manner. The issue of managing employees who are considered high risk has a significant impact on the personnel and financial resources of organisations. Mulaudzi et al. (2016:4) and Shields-Zeeman et al. (2017:8) believe it is essential that high-risk employees are approached in a sensitive manner. Through the utilisation of EWPs, increased participation of high-risk employees is needed to reduce the chances of staff turnover. However, Lee, Blake and Lloyd (2010:60) argue that top management, especially in the private sector, are mostly concerned with profit rather than spending on well-being programmes. Lee et al. (2010) further state that management rarely considers the long-term benefits of EWPs and tend to be short-sighted.

Taylor et al. (2016:2) and Mabuza (2018:158) also identify lack of financial resources as a problem in supporting an EWP programme. Though the programmes offer a variety of benefits, Goetzel and Ozminkowski (2008:305) are of the view that employers simply do not fund EWPs because they are considered a luxury that is not included in an organisation's vision. The lack of financial certainty may result in reduced employee morale and increased employee stress, which could result in decreased employee participation (Heslop et al., 2018:2).

Ambikile and Iseselo (2017:2) report lack of human resources, poor training and poorly skilled EWP providers as further challenges in essential resources.

2.4.4 Inability to elicit the support of upper management

Passey et al. (2018:5) note that in South Africa, senior management are of the opinion that promoting well-being programmes is not part of their job description and that they should not be responsible for ensuring awareness of the programme. Instead, managers feel annual salary increments or adjustments are their way of supporting the well-being of employees.

However, Bennett et al. (2017:581) argue that when upper management fully supports a well-being programme and understands the long-term financial investment it has in an organisation, the successful implementation of a well-being programme is guaranteed. The success of the implementation should not be limited to medical costs, annual salary increases or promotions but must include employee involvement, growth and development, work-life balance, employee recognition and health and safety. Passey et al. (2018:9) further indicate that when managers promote and create an organisational culture that supports well-being programmes, a fully engaged working environment is ensured. This is confirmed by Nielsen and Noblet

(2018:8) who state that support from upper management will positively influence employee and supervisor engagement. Success in implementation may not always be guaranteed, which may be due to a lack of knowledge on change management processes. Notwithstanding, Nielsen and Noblet (2018:8) emphasise the importance of line management support in the successful implementation of an EWP. They note that support from line management could assist in mitigating any detrimental effects, such as not having work-life balance in place.

2.5 Chapter summary

The reviewed literature underscores the positive correlation between EWPs and productivity in the workplace and the potential benefits of introducing EWPs. The chapter also covered some of the historical challenges to organisations when implementing EWPs.

The literature indicates that organisations that take employee well-being seriously have a competitive advantage over other organisations, as they will have healthy employees and a healthy work environment that is conducive to productivity. It is evident from the literature that the promotion of employee well-being in organisations is an essential tool in enhancing and sustaining good employee performance.

Based on supportive evidence from the literature, it is therefore hoped that the introduction and promotion of an EWP in organisations, including Company X, will bring about change in the organisational climate and create an environment where trust and healthy mutual relationships are created, resulting in positive work attitudes and behaviours. Positive attitudes and behaviours are needed in an organisation to decrease absenteeism and presenteeism, increase staff-retention and deal with all the other challenges that have a bearing on employee performance and the organisation's ability to achieve its objectives and improve productivity.

Chapter three will provide details on the research methodology and method, describe the research design used to address the research problem. The chapter will also provide details on the case study approach, research design, sample population, unit of analysis and data collection method utilized. The quality of the methods applied will also be discussed and how the ethical consideration process was followed.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a description and discussion of the research methodology, the research methods applied in this study, as well as the research design. The chapter discusses the semi-structured interviews and case studies as data collection methods, the unit of analysis, the sample and the population. The chapter concludes with a description of how the data were analysed and considers the issues of validity and reliability.

3.2 Methodology

According to Rajasekar, Pitchai and Veerapadran (2006:5), research methodology is a scientific plan of how to collect and analyse data so that the researcher can answer the research question. An interpretive methodology “foregrounds the meaning that individuals or communities assign to their experiences” (Maree, 2016:22). Based on this epistemological position, the research adopted a qualitative approach and utilised open-ended interviews and a case study as the data collection instrument. Van Maanen (1979, cited by Welman et al., 2005:188) defines qualitative research as:

... an ‘umbrella’ phrase covering an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate and otherwise come to terms with the meaning of natural phenomena in the social world.

This research used a qualitative method and employed an interpretive methodology to explore the issues surrounding the low employee performance at Company X. The study sought to understand a particular phenomenon and address the research questions in respect of the respondents’ personal lived experiences and their perceptions on employee well-being. The research adopted a qualitative approach as the research took place “within real-world settings and in which the researcher [did] not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest” (Patton, 2002, cited by Asano, Finlayson and Turpin 2015:55).

The following section presents the methodology applied in this study.

3.3 Research method

3.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

Staar (2004:240) states that in qualitative studies, to gain a detailed insight into the phenomenon of interest, the approach to information gathering should be based on relatively flexible discussions with participants. The qualitative method used in this study entailed semi-

structured face-to-face and telephonic interviews. Oltmann (2016:6) and Farooq and de Villiers (2017:3) identify the face-to-face approach as the preferred method of conducting interviews because it allows the researcher to observe participant body language. However, for this research, it was not possible to conduct all interviews face-to-face because of geographical constraints. At the time of collecting the data, online meetings were not in use at Company X and participants were not familiar with this approach, or did not have experience with or easy access to the relevant technologies. The researcher therefore conducted some of the interviews telephonically.

Irvine (2011:204) further explains that qualitative interviews can take many forms and are used in many different contexts, for a wide variety of purposes. Irvine argues that there is no conclusive answer to the question of whether telephone interviews are more or less suitable forms of qualitative research but rather that the effectiveness of the method will depend on the research aims, the types of questions asked and the nature of the participants. Farooq and de Villiers (2017:4) assert that telephone interviews are not the best method in qualitative research because the absence of visual cues can limit deeper understanding of the message conveyed and can pose restrictions where in-depth data are needed. In this research, however, telephone interviews proved useful in saving time and money, as travelling was not required and there was less disruption to participants' work schedules. The researcher's observation was that the participants who were interviewed telephonically spoke more freely than those in face-face interviews and that they appeared more comfortable and relaxed.

Thus, based on the quality of the data generated in this research, and the positive correlations between data generated from both face-to-face and telephonic interviews conducted for this study, it was clear that both face-face and telephone interview methods provided the researcher with meaningful responses from all participants.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010:148) and Maree (2016:93), interviews are the preferred method where the researcher wishes to receive honest responses and allow participants space to communicate their own thoughts in their own way, either verbally or non-verbally, such as through body language.

Maree (2016) notes that the value of a semi-structured interview is that open-ended questions can be followed up by further probing and clarification. Maree further notes that semi-structured interviews make it easier for the researcher to be attentive to the responses of participants so that new emerging lines of enquiry can be explored. Bless. Higson-Smith and Sithole (2013:215) add that open-ended questions and semi-structured interviews which foreground the respondents own words are useful as they show respect and retain the interviewee's own meaning frames. In this study, it was critically important to get open and honest responses that

accurately reflected employees' experiences and perceptions to gain a comprehensive and deep understanding of both the practical and psychological factors influencing productivity in Company X. As the intended application of the research findings was to put interventions in place in Company X to improve productivity, the more comprehensive and accurate the employees' responses, the more likely the interventions are to succeed.

Thus, using open-ended questions during individual interviews was a useful method as it afforded employees anonymity and encouraged freedom of expression. As many participants gave similar responses, this further indicated that the one-on-one open-ended interview method definitely generated valid and reliable data.

3.3.2 Case study approach

The case study approach was adopted for this study as the aim was to foreground the specific needs and challenges facing both individual employees and the company as a unique entity within a specific context, that is, the construction industry in the Eastern Cape during an economic recession. As opined by Yin (2009:66) case study approach requires careful attention to yield a high-quality result. This includes asking good questions, listening, flexibility and avoiding bias. It was important to gain detailed, in-depth knowledge relevant to this unique context so that a framework could be devised for an intervention that is specifically tailored to meet the needs of Company X.

Rule and John (2011:4) note, however, that possible constraints of case studies include:

- being time-consuming to conduct;
- posing difficulties in drawing cause-effect conclusions;
- producing findings that may have limited generalisability; and
- possible bias in data collection and interpretation (since a single person gathers and analyses the information).

This research specifically intended to explore the issues related to productivity in Company X, therefore possible lack of generalisability was not seen as a significant obstacle. As many respondents gave similar answers and a sample population of 24 employees allowed for a degree of triangulation, this mitigated possible bias in the data interpretation.

3.4 Research design

Theory adopted for this research was exploratory research design. According to Kumar (2014:122), Akhtar (2016:68) and Peniel (2016:1), research design can be defined as the plan

and structure of a study, which methods will be used in collecting and analysing the data and how the research participants will be determined. Yin (2009:26) notes that a research design is a detailed plan and process for collecting, analysing and interpreting the data to achieve the desired outcome of the research. Tobi and Kampen (2017:1211) argue that the research design comprises two terms, namely “the conceptual design” and “the technical design”. The conceptual design identifies the “why” and “what” of the research, while the technical design discusses the “how” of the research. Once this has been successfully explicated, the execution of the research may begin.

The research design employed in this study was determined by the research problem, research aim and research questions which required a linear, step-by-step process to set up the data collection procedure and allowed the researcher to make recommendations at the end of the process. However, the researcher was guided by relevant literature throughout the research process.

Figure 3.1 Summarises the design and structure of this research, which is briefly discussed relative to the study topic.

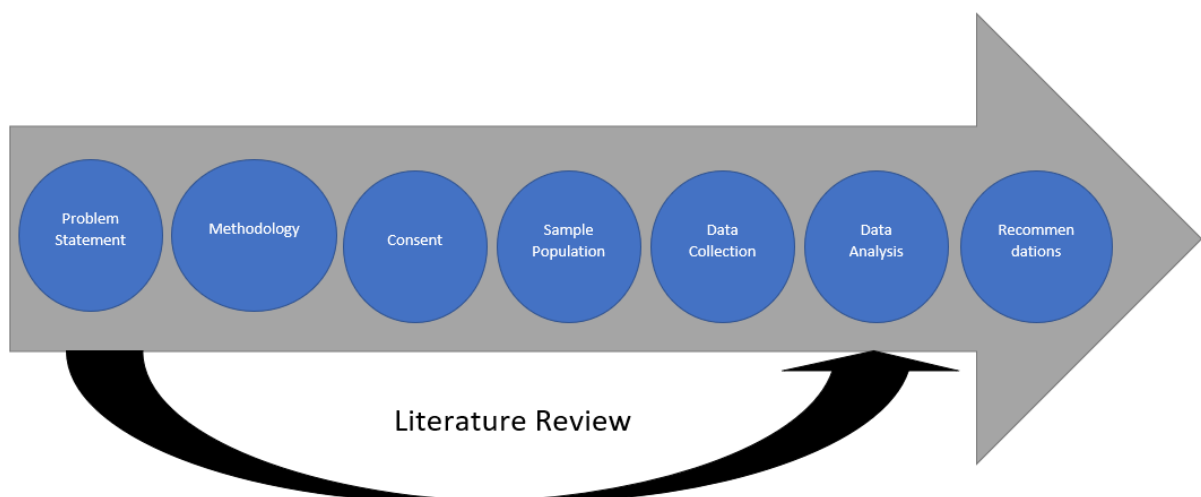


Figure 3.1: Research design

- a) Research problem: The research aimed to establish staff perceptions on EWP and how they could influence performance.
- b) Literature review: The researcher reviewed theories from useful websites, books and journals, to understand the background of the study

- c) **Methodology:** This research followed a qualitative approach and used open-ended questions as a data collection instrument.
- d) **Consent:** The researcher obtained approval from CPUT's Business and Management Sciences Faculty Ethics Committee before the research commenced (see Appendix A). Compliance for this study was achieved through permission requested from the Managing Director (MD) of the selected construction company to conduct the research (see Appendix B).
- e) **The sample:** The sample comprised 24 permanently employed salaried staff members of a medium-sized construction company, Company X.
- f) **Data collection:** Semi-structured interviews were used in this research. The design employed by the researcher was to increase the accuracy of the data collected by mitigating any bias and inconsistency from the participants. Therefore, it was necessary to conduct in-depth interviews. Permission was granted by participants to audio record the interviews. Throughout the interviews, participants' responses were consistent, honest and based on their own experiences and perceptions.
- g) **Data analysis:** In analysing the responses, the researcher colour-coded the participants' responses and categorised them into sub-themes which were similar.

3.5 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis for this case study was a medium-enterprise construction company in the Eastern Cape. Information given on the company's website at the time the research was conducted (in 2018) noted that it had a current turnover of R225 million per annum. The company has an administrative office located in East London and operational offices in Port Elizabeth, Mthatha, Dimbaza and Bhisho. All their secured contracts were in the Eastern Cape region, with a special emphasis on the former Transkei region. The company is registered with the CIDB as a Grade 9 General Builder (GB).

The company was formed in 1997 and initially experienced rapid expansion. However, in the three years prior to the commencement of this research, the company had struggled to remain profitable and to meet financial targets as the global and national economic downturn had resulted in less work being available. In addition, the company had become less successful in winning tenders and had not met employee performance targets for the preceding three years (2015, 2016 and 2017). This resulted in delays in project completion on timelines set by the clients. Evidence from the HR office suggests that this was possibly due to low staff morale,

high absenteeism and attrition rates, as employees were leaving the company to work in other businesses or in other sectors where there were better opportunities.

3.6 Object of analysis: Sample population

3.6.1 Sample population description

There are many definitions of a population. Polit and Hungler (1999:155) define a population as "... a collection of all the objects, themes or people that will contribute towards the study". De Vos (2005:199) defines population as "... units of persons, units of events or case records, or organisation units". For this study, the company population was 57 salaried staff, from which 24 employees were selected to participate in this research. The participants selected comprised 12 male and 12 female employees from different occupational levels, with different job descriptions and with varying periods of employment with the company. This spread was regarded as important to get a multi-faceted view of the possible reasons for low productivity in the company and because employees at all levels would participate in the envisaged EWP.

3.6.2 Sample population selection

How a sample is selected governs the quality of the conclusion that researchers make and influences the general outcomes presented to other individuals, groups, or situations (Collins et al., 2007, cited by Brown et al., 2016:445). However, Starr (2004: 243) argues that the collection and analysis of qualitative data is resource-intensive and sample sizes are therefore typically much smaller than in standard close-ended surveys. These sample populations also tend to be constructed to achieve a certain purpose, rather than being drawn randomly from a sample frame. For this reason, this research used a purposive sampling method, by selecting 24 only salaried staff to participate in the study. Starr (2004: 245) notes that:

... purposive sampling covers a wide variety of practices; to name a few (total population sampling, typical case sample and critical case sampling) referring to the construction of the sample in some way that facilitates satisfaction of the research objective.

The selection of the sample of 12 male and 12 female participants was determined by their years of experience at Company X and their job description.

The staff complement of Company X is approximately 350 (57 salaried and 293 wage earners). The sample used in this research was limited to 24 salaried staff members. The decision to select only 24 salaried staff was based on the service level agreements of employment of the staff at Company X and to those willing to participate in the research. This research was limited to staff with more than two years' employment at Company X, who would have had sufficient experience to make a meaningful contribution. Participants in the study are represented in the table below in terms of race, gender, years of service and occupational levels.

Table 3.1: Breakdown of sample population

The table below provides insight on the number of participants that were selected from different occupational levels and racial groups.

Occupational levels	Male				Female				Totals
	A	C	I	W	A	C	I	W	
Senior management	2	2	0	3	1	1	0	1	10
Professionally qualified and experienced specialists and mid-management	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	6
Skilled technical and academically qualified workers, junior management, supervisors, foremen and administrators	1	1	0	0	2	2	0	2	8
TOTAL EMPLOYEES	4	4		4	4	4		4	24

The sample as depicted in Table 3.1 above, comprised 24 permanently employed skilled and qualified workers up to senior management level. Due to their limited experience at Company X and not being easily accessible due to different site locations, 33 permanently employed staff at different occupational levels were not included in the sample. The research did not include labourers who are fixed-term workers on the construction sites since the conditions of employment are different to salaried staff and they would not be included in any well-being programme. Most employee's perception is that they experience a "them and us" relationship with top management and that top management does not listen to or respect their needs. This study, therefore, sought to gain knowledge of and background to employee opinions.

Permission to conduct this research was obtained from the Managing Director (MD) of the selected construction company. A meeting was set between the MD and the researcher on 10 June 2016 and permission to conduct the research was received. The MD supported the idea and wished to discuss the outcomes of the survey with the employees. A letter of approval was e-mailed to the researcher to formalise that permission that was granted to conduct research at the company (see Appendix B).

3.7 Data collection method: semi-structured interviews

The interviewer was granted permission from senior management to obtain information from the HR office. The researcher conducted 22 individual face-to-face interviews and two telephonic interviews, based on an interview schedule that was distributed to all participants prior to the interview (see Appendix D).

Semi-structured interviews were used because they allowed participants to discuss and raise issues that the researcher had not previously considered or were not reflected in the interview schedule. An interview schedule was used and each participant was invited telephonically for the interview where the purpose and scope of the research was explained to them. One advantage of choosing this method was the time constraints, as employees had to take time out of their workday activities to participate in the interviews. A disadvantage was that not all participants were located in one place and travelling to the various offices in East London, Mthatha, Bhisho, Port Elizabeth and Dimbaza was costly and time-consuming. Interviews were not feasible in all cases. However, the face-to-face interviews afforded the researcher an opportunity to engage the participants, obtain valuable information such as in-depth responses and to understand their views on well-being. Face-to-face interviews also allowed the researcher to study the participant's attitudes, body language and perceptions. The interviews were audio taped, except for one participant who wished not to be recorded. This participant's responses were recorded manually and verbatim by the researcher. Perales et al. (2015:3) explain that the quality of the interview process (QotIP) is determined by how conducive the interview process is to gathering high-quality information from the participant. In line with recommendations of Perales et al. (2015:3), the researcher conducted face-to-face and telephonic interviews with the interviewees, with whom she had a strong relationship of trust, mutual understanding and mutual cooperation. Perales et al. (2015:3) note that when such a relationship does not exist, the quality of the interview outcomes tends to be low. The researcher decided to conduct one-on-one interviews because, as Perales et al. (2015:3) suggests, the presence of others may influence the interviewees' responses.

3.8 Validity and reliability

3.8.1 Validity

Taherdoost (2016:28) and Maree (2016:169) define valid research as trustworthy research that measures what it is intended to measure. A valid study should demonstrate what actually exists, with appropriate instruments used to measure what is supposed to be measured.

This research intended to measure employee perceptions of what was negatively affecting productivity in the company. Furthermore, this research intended to measure if employees felt positively about an EWP's ability to improve productivity. To improve internal validity, sample of employees from junior to senior management level was interviewed. All office-based

salaries staff were included in the research population, from which the sample of 24 employees was selected. This helped to reduce selection bias. However, in research of this nature it is difficult to ascertain external validity because not all findings may be generalisable to other studies (Maree, 2016:169).

Taherdoost (2016:28) and Maree (2016:169) further note that valid research employs suitable data-collection instruments. This research used semi-structured interviews, which allowed employees anonymity and the freedom to state their opinions and beliefs openly in their own words, not limited by a fully structured interview or group interviews where they felt pressured to be honest. Finally, the researcher upheld an objective view during the data collection process and accurately recorded the responses of each participant verbatim. The findings were therefore drawn from a true representation of the respondents' perceptions.

Bezuidenhout et al. (2014:253) indicate that in qualitative research, trustworthiness is not directed at finding causal relationships but rather aims to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon. In this study, the researcher sought to ascertain employees' perceptions of a possible EWP, even though they had no prior experience of such. While it could be argued that responses to some of the questions were at best speculative, the counter-argument is that the very nature of this research was exploratory and its aim was to gain employee opinions on possible future changes in the company. Therefore, in this research, enabling employees to speak openly in semi-structured interviews and accurately recording their perceptions, is viewed as having carefully considered the issues of validity.

3.8.2 Reliability

Reliability relates to the consistency of the measuring instrument (Maree, 2016:238-239). The same instrument must be able to produce the same data under similar conditions (Mohajan, 2017:68). To improve the internal consistency of the research, all participants were asked the same questions under similar circumstances. When the data were analysed, strong correlations were found in employee responses from junior to senior management. This suggests that the data are trustworthy as regards internal reliability. According to Zikmund et al. (2010:65), the use of a pilot study helps to improve the reliability of research. After the first five interviews were conducted, the researcher reviewed the interview questions in the light of the quality and quantity of data generated. The researcher was satisfied that the data collection instrument in its original format was fit for the purpose and no changes were necessary to the interview questions.

3.9 Process analysis

The possible benefits and challenges of introducing a EWP were already known to the researcher prior to commencing the study and these were confirmed by the literature reviewed. This prior knowledge enabled the researcher to construct the questions for the interviews.

Participant responses to each question were audio-recorded and then transcribed verbatim onto an Excel spreadsheet. The researcher then proceeded to identify “the over-arching themes and typologies that could in some way address ... the research questions” (Matthews & Ross, 2010:284).

The interview questions themselves initially provided some guidelines for very broad categorisation of the data. After several readings, the researcher moved away from a question-by-question approach for data capturing. Instead, a number of emergent key themes were identified under which data segments were grouped with a focus on each of the research questions. From further scrutiny of the data, a number of sub-themes emerged and each of these was listed and colour-coded.

The data was then analysed and responses split into smaller segments with each segment coloured-coded according to the sub-theme(s) to which they had the strongest relationship. Once a data segment was used in the analysis, it was crossed out. Segments coded with two or more colours were marked for later re-consideration.

Throughout the process of writing up the discussions, the researcher referred back and re-coded or further segmented data where necessary. This re-checking process also allowed the researcher to ensure that small data fragments were not taken out of their original context and that the intention of each of the original longer responses was retained.

Approximately all of the primary data were reported in the discussion. Fragments that were excluded were either irrelevant to the discussion or could not be accurately interpreted.

3.10 Ethical considerations

According to Resnik (2015:2), ethics is concerned with compliance to certain required or recommended standards of good practice. Resnik (2015) contends that ‘ethics’ distinguishes between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. In research, these standards have reference to, *inter alia*, the aims of research, the forms of knowledge and truth promoted by the research outcomes, avoidance of error and the protection of data and people or entities involved in or impacted by the research (Maree, 2016:44)

To protect the rights of people and entities involved in this research, the following steps were taken:

- Written consent to conduct the research was obtained from the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences Ethics Committee at CPUT where the researcher is a student.
- Written consent to obtain relevant information and to conduct the research interviews, as well as to publish the research findings, was obtained from the MD of the Company X, with the provision that the names of employees who participated would be withheld. This letter of approval is attached as Appendix A.
- All participants were fully informed of the scope and aim of the research and that participation was voluntary. Signed acceptance of the conditions of the research was obtained from employees prior to their interviews being conducted.
- All data were recorded anonymously and used only for the stated purposes and stored securely in electronic format by the researcher on a private laptop.
- Employee responses were recorded verbatim and care was taken to represent employee input accurately.
- Care was taken to not pressurise employees by interrupting their working hours for extensive periods and to ensure that participation in the research did not in any way disrespect human dignity and rights.

3.11 Chapter summary

This chapter described all the elements employed in the research design for this study. The chapter considered the affordances and constraints of the research methods and outlined the steps taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the study. Adherence to ethical research principles, including the protection of the integrity of the participants and the data collected, concluded the chapter.

Chapter 4 presents the analysis and discussion of the primary data and the research findings.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 addressed the first research objective for this study. The literature described how well-being influences staff performance. Furthermore, the literature described the positive effects an EWP may have on staff-retention, reduced absenteeism and presenteeism, greater work efficiency and better performance in the workplace (Culbertson, 2009:77; Bayley et al. 2014:188; Kanjere, 2014:1287; Bayraktar et al., 2016:45; Grawitch & Ballard, 2016:132; Javid & Sana-ur, 2018:25). The possible benefits in introducing EWPs were identified as well as a number of challenges that should be considered when developing EWPs to meet organisational needs and to address critical issues relating to retention and performance.

This chapter analyses the primary data gathered from the research. The chapter also provides a detailed discussion of participants' experiences of what factors impact performance and productivity at the selected company and their perceptions of how the introduction of an EWP could positively influence performance. Finally, the chapter addresses the possible challenges that may be experienced in implementing an EWP.

4.2 Data collection analysis overview

The primary data in this study were gathered from a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews conducted with 24 salaried staff at Company X.

The participants held various positions at different levels within the company and their length of service ranged from 2 to 20 years. The sample population is described in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Sample population

Participant no.	Position	Gender	Race	Years of experience
1	Personal assistant	Female	White	18
2	Receptionist	Female	White	8
3	Junior quantity surveyor	Female	African	2
4	Contracts manager	Male	African	9
5	IT manager	Male	African	2
6	Junior plumbing site agent	Male	African	4
7	HR & payroll administrator	Female	African	2
8	Senior site foreman	Male	Coloured	18
9	Receptionist	Female	Coloured	20
10	Personal assistant	Female	Coloured	17
11	Senior site foreman	Male	African	18
12	Office administrator	Female	Coloured	2
13	Senior site foreman	Male	Coloured	11
14	Quantity surveyor	Male	White	6
15	Legal advisor	Female	African	2
16	Site agent	Male	White	4
17	Bookkeeper	Female	White	4
18	General manager	Male	White	6
19	Site agent	Male	White	5
20	Creditors clerk	Female	White	8
21	Senior administrator	Female	African	4
22	Project manager	Male	Coloured	5
23	Safety officer	Female	Coloured	2
24	Safety officer	Male	Coloured	2

4.2.1 Themes and sub-themes

The data from the interviews were transcribed into Excel, codified and analysed thematically as described in Section 3.9 of Chapter 3. Three major themes and a number of sub-themes with relevance to the research questions for this study were identified from the data analysis. These themes and sub-themes are depicted in Table 4.2 below. This section reports, analyses and discusses the primary data under these three major themes to address the research objectives that was formulated in section 1, in the introductory chapter.

Table 4.2: Summary of research themes

Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3
Factors influencing staff performance	Possible benefits of introducing of an EWP	Possible challenges of introducing an EWP
Organisational culture, structures and operating procedures	Positive impact on health and well-being	Lack of managerial commitment and support
Interpersonal communication and relationships with colleagues	Positive impact on absenteeism, presenteeism and retention	Cost implications
Managerial efficacy	Improved systems for rewards and recognition	Employee diversity
	Training and development opportunities	Long-term follow through
		Policy development and reform

- i. Theme 1 in Table 4.2 above describes the factors emergent from the data that participants described as influencing their performance. Participants were specifically asked to reflect on both the day-to-day challenges and the broader, longer-term company organisational culture, structures and operating procedures that influenced their performance and well-being in the company. Theme 1 also describes employees' reflections on how they coped with perceived organisational weaknesses and challenges, whether they were able to manage problems effectively themselves and where assistance and intervention were considered desirable. Theme 1 further describes how interpersonal communication and relationships with colleagues and managerial efficacy impacted participants' performance.

- ii. The discussion on Theme 2 in Table 4.2 above complements the findings from Theme 1 and triangulates with the literature to further explore the extent to which EWPs may positively influence performance, retention, presenteeism and absenteeism, within the real-world context of Company X. Themes 1 and 2 thus address the first research objective for this study, namely to describe from the literature how the proposed EWP could positively influence performance.

Theme 2 describes employee responses to the perceived possible benefits of introducing of an EWP at Company X. It identifies specific key elements that employees would like to see included in an EWP and what they perceive the benefits of an EWP would be to both the employees and the company, especially as regards improved performance. This discussion addresses the second research objective for this research.

- iii. Theme 3 discusses the challenges that employees at Company X identified as possible obstacles to the success of the proposed introduction of an EWP. This discussion addresses the third objective and research question for this study. The five major challenges identified from the data analysis were managerial commitment and support, cost implications, employee diversity, long-term follow through and policy development and reform.

Emergent from the data analysis in Themes 1, 2 and 3 are a number of factors that should be considered by the management and the HR department of Company X to assist them with the formulation of a framework for the proposed EWP at Company X.

- iv. **Theme 1: Factors that influence performance at Company X**

The initial broad thematic codification of the primary data identified three dominant factors that impact employee performance at Company X, namely:

- Organisational culture, structures and operating procedures
- Interpersonal communication and relationships with colleagues
- Managerial efficacy

Each of these factors is discussed here as a separate sub-theme. It is important, however, to note that in practice the multiple factors influencing employee performance and well-being are closely inter-connected. While thematic analysis is very helpful in identifying broad categories for the proposed EWP, precise boundaries for each sub-theme are difficult to establish and some degree of repetition or overlap between the sections is unavoidable.

In this research the approach is that organisational culture, positive or negative, is also something observed, “felt” or perceived on a more intuitive, affective level beyond the restrictions of the spoken word (O’Donnell & Boyle, 2008:12; Owoyemi & Ekwoaba, 2014:169; Tianya, 2015:7; Morcos, 2018:576). So while the verbatim reporting of data has been done as objectively as possible so as to limit researcher bias and to establish employees’ real-world experiences, the researcher also, at times, draws on her own lived experiences and observations as an HR officer at Company X, where this provides clearer insight or elucidates discussion.

4.2.1 Sub-theme: Organisational culture, structure and operating procedures

Renard and Snelgar (2016:8) note that the prevailing work culture in South Africa is that employees respond to financial incentives more than other non-financial incentives, such as developmental programmes. This can make it challenging for organisations to attract employees to participate in EWPs that offer non-financial benefits. However, the findings of this research show that while employees were concerned with remuneration and financial rewards in the company, they also felt positive about participation in an EWP that might promote other benefits such as training, flexi-time and improved working conditions, they believed will offer more than just financial benefit.

From the interviews conducted for this research, it was strongly evident that there were a number of very specific aspects of company policy and strategy at Company X that employees felt very negatively about and which negatively impacted the general mood of the company. All participants in this research reported challenges arising from the unique and complex structural make-up of the construction industry, where administrative staff sit in one office, serving multiple and varied projects and operations on any number of building sites, while site managers and workers are located out-of-office. Gauche et al. (2017:322) note that within an organisation, to create a positive impact on employee well-being, it is beneficial to have and maintain uniform operating procedures within the workspace. The physical distance between the various work sites and the administration office commonly results in misunderstandings, communication breakdowns, frustrations, delays and different points of view, compounded by cultural and language differences.

Cultural tensions between office and site staff resulted mostly from differences in employment status, levels of education, language and ethnicity, as seen in Chapter 3 in Section 3.6.2. Labourers were usually contract workers with little vested interest in the company and mostly poorly educated with low levels of literacy, especially in English. More specifically, these barriers included issues such as office staff being permanent employees, usually with long service in the company, most had a formal education and were literate in English as well as

an African language (Festus et al., 2016:588; Ferreira & Rossouw, 2016:814; Mollo & Emuze, 2017:178)

Participant 14 noted "... the huge gap between office staff and site staff (culture and language barrier)".

Of the 24 participants, majority reported that frustrations regarding time management were exacerbated by differences in attitudes, responses and responsibilities between site staff and office staff. Participant 14 summed it up as:

"... in a construction industry on its own it is a little different to any conventional industry. We face challenges every day, you can plan your days and then come to work and your whole day gets thrown out".

Tensions arising from these differences negatively affected office staff morale and productivity. Participant 5, a new employee, noted, "I'm never sure who to report to". Participant 11 noted the difficulty in keeping up with different problems coming from different sites and Participant 7 stated, "... the attitude of the site managers. They don't want to obey what you find here at the office".

Participant 15, a legal advisor, echoed the sentiments of many in her detailed response to the role of a positive organisational culture. She expressed the need for:

"... well-being programmes [to] promote and build a culture of value and recognition between the organisation and its employees. When employees are aware that the organisation is concerned and cares about its employees it builds a culture of trust and encourages employees to continue working for the organisation and towards production as well".

Participant 4, a contracts manager with nine years 'experience, noted that having "two different cultures in the company negatively affected company enthusiasm or spirit":

"The other dynamic that you have with the enthusiasm/spirit in the company is that we've got two different cultures who don't really understand each other. Within that, you need to find something that balances both cultures [so that] both cultures feel the company is doing something for us employees to build spirit or whatever it is we need to build".

Participant 3, a junior quantity surveyor, experienced a culture of gender inequality, "... gender issues. Because it's such a male dominated industry" but he did not elaborate on what he perceived these "issues" to be. Participant 10, a personal assistant with 17 years 'experience, reported experiencing racial discrimination as a problem in the company, "Money, we that are black/coloured don't earn enough money. This company is white orientated".

Though salary details were not freely available from the HR office, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, No. 75 of 1997 (BCEA), section 79, a new amendment, allows an employee

to discuss his or her conditions of employment with his or her fellow employees. Salary is one of these conditions. The organisational culture at Company X was not perceived by participants to be open to discussion of such matters.

Several participants in more senior positions reported that the tendency of site workers to be ill-disciplined was a challenge to productivity and good working relationships. Participant 22 referred to problems with “labour” and Participant 23, a safety officer, reported his job was made difficult by “rude employees who resisted compliance with safety regulations. He explained his concerns, noting further that disciplining staff according to Company X’s rules often caused problems for him in labour forums:

“Discipline on site, because it's a community project everything goes through the steering committee, CLO and workers (sic) forum. When I have to discipline (sic) someone because they came to work drunk, I have to discipline (sic) according to the company's rules. [Then] I'm always left in a position where the CLO/workers forum to defend this person. Non-compliance to PPE”.

The participants’ responses strongly suggest that the culture, structure and operating procedures of the company significantly affected the work environment, staff morale and performance. There was also concern among staff that these key areas are not properly managed, resulting in dissatisfaction, stress and reduced efficiency. Participant 18 summed it up as, “All of them, culture, policy, leadership, need to click. I don’t even know if we do have a culture here”.

Of even greater concern to participants were the challenges relating to operational procedures in the construction industry. Participants reported that the most significant challenge to working efficiently was the day-to-day operational requirement to procure and manage materials and equipment, get these materials and pieces of equipment to the correct sites at the right times and to complete the copious related paperwork.

The unique nature of the construction industry means that it is both extremely varied and highly regulated. This means that office staff have to manage frequent interruptions, such as unavailability or delayed delivery of materials, delays in getting paperwork completed correctly, signed and delivered through the various chains of management. Having to stop work to phone or mail clients and colleagues to deal with these matters was noted by respondents as particularly problematic. Participant 1 noted that “I can’t get my tenders done because I get interrupted all the time”.

Participants reported that these delays and interruptions were further exacerbated by having to wait for responses from stakeholders in different roles in many different physical sites and locations and at very different levels of management or professional status. The constant

delays and interruptions and the need to always ensure compliance with frequently changing or ambiguous regulations contributed to what participants experienced as a fractured and stressful working environment that negatively impacted morale and productivity. This made time-management and planning work schedules particularly difficult. Participant 21 mentioned:

“Red tapes. You asked to do a certain task and you do it, then you have to do it again because there is no budget. People on site always taking their time to deliver especially when I have a deadline”.

Participant 10 also noted the stress caused by inability to manage time effectively, “I can’t plan my day ‘cause every day is different, different tasks all the time it’s what makes it difficult”.

From the primary data, it emerged that one of the biggest challenges and frustrations for staff was getting paperwork completed correctly and on time. Many specific examples were given. Participant 7 commented, “Timesheets that are done and submitted by site administrators, then I have to rectify them which puts double work for me” and Participant 20 reported:

“Paperwork delays from the sites because if I don’t get them in time and it’s incorrect it then affects how I need to proceed with invoices etc”.

Participant 13 referred to “Ordering materials, delays in response to materials, which causes a backlog in the workplace”.

Bakotic and Babic, (2013:207) note that not having the right tools and support systems may have a negative effect on the individual’s performance, which can discourage, stress and frustrate employees and make them feel they are not valued enough and unappreciated by the organisation when it does not invest sufficiently in them.

However, minority of the participants were pragmatic about an organisational culture where processing paperwork and planning one’s working day are constant problems that create stress and lower productivity. These staff reported that they enjoyed learning new things, were patient and accepting or had enough experience to cope with the stress of working in a fractured environment. Participant 2 noted that:

“It’s a learning curve, with tenders. There’s always a new thing each time and that’s a challenge because I don’t do the same thing every day”.

Participant 4, who has nine years’ experience in the company, stated that:

“Each day has its own challenges. In construction, each day is a different challenge. Anything can happen, you just need to be prepared for it”.

Participant 10, who has 17 years’ experience, felt that, “I don’t have challenges really. I think I’m experienced enough to sort all my challenges out”.

Participant 14 (six years 'experience) noted "you just got to adapt" and Participant 3, the least experienced staff member at less than 2 years, noted "there's nothing you can really do but just have to man up and accept it".

Another factor that negatively influenced effective time-scheduling was delays on-site, over which office staff had little control. Participant 9 noted that while management needed to accept the inevitability of delays on site, this did not preclude the responsibility of management to put systems in place to guide daily activities:

"They should have a programme that guides you and that programme governs you. But they must also bear in mind that there will be delays obviously on site".

Some participants (least) felt less negatively about the constant challenges, noting, "I have a lot of patience" (Participant 1); "I just continue working. If a certain task can't get finished, then I just leave it and move on to the next one" (Participant 8); "one thing at a time" (Participant 17) and "best way possible. Take it as it comes" (Participant 10).

However, both Participants 1 (18 years 'experience) and 2 (eight years 'experience), despite indicating a degree of pragmatism about the organisational culture in a construction company, noted the "constant interruptions" as a major problem that significantly contributed to what the less experienced staff perceived as a challenge. Participant 17 (four years 'experience) referred to the "general stress" of working under these conditions and the inability to work as productively as employees would wish.

The primary data therefore suggests that even among experienced, long-serving staff there are factors beyond their control that make the company environment highly stressful. Furthermore, employees less able to find ways to cope with this conflicting environment felt demoralised and found it difficult to work productively. This aligned with the data from the HR office which showed that the stressful work environment significantly contributed to high absenteeism, lower productivity, presenteeism and high attrition rates that the company had experienced over the past few years (Verma & Chaubey, 2016:2341). As Participant 3 noted, "If people are happy at work then they are going to perform better in the company".

From the interview responses (Participants 1, 2, 4, 8,10 and 17), it also emerged that longevity in the company was to some extent linked to a personal ability to accept the fractured nature of the workplace, being self-sufficient in putting strategies in place to cope and being able to see the problems more positively as challenges and learning opportunities. This would imply that staff need a healthy self-esteem, the ability to self-regulate strong emotions and have a generally upbeat view of life in general. In developing a framework for an EWP, consideration should be given to programmes designed to help staff to develop positive self-esteem. This

should include equipping staff with effective vocational, emotionally intelligent, self-management skills and a creative, solution-focused attitude towards life and work (Veerasamy et al., 2013:2; Białecka-Pikul, 2019:1606).

Some participants noted that having personal attributes such as patience, adaptability, flexibility, objectivity, tolerance, diligence and the ability to solve problems was critical for coping in the company's fractured and often stressful organisational climate.

Participants referred specifically to the need to self-regulate their emotions effectively. Participant 4 stated "Calm yourself down and rethink ..." and Participant 16 responded:

"Very important to keep a level head and remain calm. If you tackle issues in a more cool, calm and collected manner you are going to be more effective than losing your temper. Always try to be objective".

Of the 24 participants, minority indicated that the provision of practical skills 'training that would facilitate learning the job as quickly as possible, would enhance performance by lessening the "general stress". Participant 18, a general manager in the company, referred to the "skills shortage in the Eastern Cape" and further stated that:

"... there seems to be a big GAP as to what is expected and what is delivered. From site manager, to foremen to administrative staff, they lack basic crucial skills".

Participant 6 noted that "training on what abilities one can do, will boost confidence in the employees and be motivated to work even better".

Almost all staff who reported better coping skills attributed this to experience, which had helped them develop both vocational knowledge and interpersonal skills. Participant 2 noted that she managed in the workplace "by learning. Working well with my superior". Participant 4 provided a useful summation:

"Experience helps because you know that this has happened before. It might not be the same but you know that you need to calm yourself down and rethink what steps you've taken before and that's where the experience comes in I guess".

Participant 15, a legal advisor to employees on day-to-day work issues, noted that:

"I ensure that all the advice and recommendations and legal opinions I give are properly documented so that staff have these on hand to refer to when necessary to facilitate quality decision-making".

Participant 14, a quantity surveyor, noted that "having assistance in carrying out your tasks ... that will make a big difference ... [and] having the right tools".

Participant 6 noted frustration at not having the right tools and that he could not perform his duties as he could not get to site because of management constantly delaying in allocating him a vehicle. The need to have the right tools or information to work is well documented in the literature reviewed and is supported by Bakotic and Babic (2013:207).

Another major area of concern for Company X employees was inflexible work hours and, at times, what participants considered to be unfair demands on their time outside of normal work hours to accommodate management's need to push staff to produce more to increase revenues. Participants noted that they felt they were "being pushed to the limit and now we must take on more and they [management] getting nothing else in return for it" (Participant 1). Participants reported this constant pressure as having a negative effect on their health and well-being. Participant 1 further stated:

"What I have noticed is that people that are leaving are not being replaced they [management] just putting more workload on the existing staff and that brings staff down".

Research conducted by Baptiste (2007:293) and Grawitch and Ballard (2016:132) indicates that employees favour organisations that offer flexible working hours. Flexible working hours boost employee morale, reduce the absenteeism rate, reduce staff turnover and have a noticeable improvement on the employer's image as being an employer of choice, which would immediately lead to better performance as employees are able to balance work and family roles (Baptiste, 2007:293). Shagvaliyeva and Yazdanifard (2014:21) report that flexible work arrangements reduce stress because employees working flexibly are more satisfied with their jobs, more satisfied with their lives and experience better work-life balance.

Most of the participants reported that they would like to leave early on Fridays, as is common in the construction industry. Of this, half were senior level staff and it appeared from the data that only top management were opposed to more flexible work arrangements. Participants noted that senior management failed to take into account that staff were not necessarily more productive when working standard office hours and that staff morale had suffered as a result of inflexible, draconian and at times unfair policies regarding work hours.

Participant 3 noted that working till 17:00 every day did not translate to increased productivity, "Take for example our hours on a Friday, after 1 pm we are already on weekend mode". Participant 14 noted that "... a lot of companies have adopted (closing at 15:00 on Fridays) but we haven't", while Participant 19 commented, "getting every month end [off] on Fridays getting half day, could assist with staff morale..".

Participant 8 commented:

“They used to give Fridays off on pay-week but have since changed, now we must work every weekdays of the month including Saturdays which is totally unfair”.

Participant 16 claimed that he worked from 6:00 till 20:00 and that he did not “enjoy it” but had to accept it “because of high unemployment in the Eastern Cape and I may not find suitable employment elsewhere”.

Participants also complained that the working hours were not flexible enough to enable them to balance work and family responsibilities. Participant 23 noted that while he had no problem with eight hours a day, there were no flexible arrangements where employees could work from home. She commented that the company did not know the value of the well-being of its employees, as it insisted on working hours that were not flexible enough to accommodate personal responsibilities outside of the workplace.

Minority of the participants argued that it was very difficult to get time off work to attend to personal matters but that the company had no qualms in calling on employees to put in extra time when it deemed this necessary, often with no recognition or reward.

Participant 10 commented:

“It can be infuriating because the hours extend to when I’m on leave, I’m called on to sort something out or even attend to phone calls at 2 a.m”.

Participant 22 felt:

“... aggravated that when an employee decides to leave an hour or two earlier it becomes a huge issue but the long hours put in become unnoticed”.

Participant 24 agreed that Company X did not have flexible times and that hours were strictly 8:00 to 17:00. This participant noted that “In winter it is a problem for site workers because it gets dark quickly and people have to walk far to get to their homes”.

The data indicate a number of factors that support the implementation of an effective EWP to enhance productivity and improve morale. These include skills training, mentorship programmes and support structures such as having an EWP committee. The programmes would need to go hand-in hand with provision of the right tools for staff to carry out their daily duties and ensuring that these tools were always available.

4.2.2 Sub-theme: Interpersonal communication and relationships with colleagues

All participants agreed that in the construction industry, work is all about projects where one has to meet tight deadlines and targets. As indicated in Section 4.2.1 above, participants reported delays in getting the right tools to sites, delays with paperwork and time delays because of lack of transport. These were all challenges that negatively impacted productivity.

The participants noted that these delays resulted in frustration and stress as they were unable to perform their duties on time. Even where delays were routine in the company and were comparatively minor, participants noted that this nevertheless caused ongoing irritation. To manage these weaknesses and challenges more efficiently, participants indicated very strongly that they felt management needed to find ways of assisting them to enable communication to flow more smoothly and efficiently to reduce unnecessary delays. Participant 18, a general manager, concurred with the sentiments of over half of the sample population when he commented that the biggest challenge they faced in the execution of their daily tasks was “communication, clarity, transparency”.

Participants 5, 6, 12, 18 and 23 all reported that a significant problem that caused employees a lot of distress was the company’s prevailing top-down communication style, lack of transparency and no clear channels of communication up the line. Participant 20 noted that “there is no two-way communication between us and management”. Participant 18 also commented that “communication measures should be agreed upon between both the employer and the employees”.

Participants 5, 6 and 18 felt that this lack of transparency and unclear lines of communication meant that employees did not always know to whom they should report and that they did not fully understand their roles and functions in the company. Lack of open communication was reported as making it very difficult to communicate with management to get clarity on a variety of issues. Participant 15 referred specifically to “no proper structure in terms of leadership and reporting lines”. This lack of knowing exactly what tasks they were expected to carry out, or who carried responsibility for specific functions, was reported as hindering efficiency and causing conflict, confusion and distress among employees. In some cases, participants reported that they simply did not carry out certain tasks which colleagues expected them to perform and that this exacerbated conflict and negatively impacted motivation and emotional well-being.

When communication is top-down it means that employees are not involved in decision-making and are not empowered to get their message up the line safely and effectively (Şimşek, 2016:198). Participants also reported a sense that the communication cycle was compromised when there was no feedback from management, showing that they had understood the messages sent by participants, such as to indicate that they did not understand their roles. Participant 18 noted “It starts from top management. They have their own vision for how they want things and for employees to follow that line is critical”.

Participant 15, a legal advisor, commented:

“Due to lack of leadership and (open communication) culture it is very difficult to advise the seniors and when I do, it is not taken seriously”.

According to Sabah (2012:12), Shannon and Weaver’s 1948 model was designed to promote the development of effective communication between the sender and the receiver. The model highlights the need for feedback from the receiver showing empathic understanding of the message relayed. Several participants complained that this is lacking in Company X. Participants were of the opinion that the lack of open and two-way communication in Company X negatively affected their well-being. Some participants felt that they were not valued enough to contribute towards the organisational issues and they were not able to contribute or perform as effectively as they would like to (Participants 14 & 15).

Participants 7, 20 and 24 perceived top management as having their own vision, which was not shared with all employees. They also commented that they were not involved in the decision-making at Company X. Proctor (2014:1) notes that effective two-way communication in organisations provides effective avenues through which management can recognise contributions made by employees and that this recognition “builds employee satisfaction and commitment”. However, Participant 12 notes that since the company “does not have a proper (communication) structure it is difficult to make (management) understand the value it would bring ... to employees in terms of their well-being”.

For two-way communication to be effective, it must be of high frequency, honest and accurate in its provision of performance feedback. This encourages a positive attitude, employee well-being, feelings of happiness at work and improved performance (Proctor, 2014:1). Another feature of effective two-way communication is the willingness to listen to others (Shannon & Weaver, 1948, cited by Sabah, 2012:2).

Participant 3 noted:

“Make it a more happy environment, listening to your employees if there's complaints in the company. That will affect everybody in a good manner because to me that builds a strong relationship if you keep your staff happy”.

Participant 20 also commented on the importance of “(J)ust getting people to listen and getting them to do what they are supposed to do”.

Participant 13, a site manager with 11 years 'experience concurred and supported creating good relationships between managers and staff:

“... be interested in your staff and their well-being. To make the workplace more enjoyable and conducive to good relations and understanding the different personalities that present itself in people”.

While participants reported that there was a cohort of middle managers at Company X who did strive to build good relationships with staff, there remained, in general, a lack of open and two-way communication in the company. Participants reported that this negatively affected employees' attitudes and happiness. Employees felt that they were not valued sufficiently to contribute towards decision-making where decisions directly affected their work. This made it more difficult to perform as effectively as they would like to.

Participant 8 noted the demoralising effect of the lack of open communication and respect for employees' ideas and input from top management ("bosses"):

"Even if we come up with suggestions here, it just dies in the air and doesn't go anywhere. They are the bosses, they should decide what actions should be taken when we raise those suggestions to make us feel that our ideas are also of value".

Participant 10 concurred, noting that, "(I)t's (two-way communication) very important, as an employee we do need to feel valued in the company". Participant 2 also noted the need for inclusive, empathetic communication in the company, "Top management needs to communicate more with its employees and understand the people".

Of the 24 participants, the majority made suggestions for improvements to organisational communication. Participant 7 called for "weekly meetings with your supervisor and managers". Participant 5, an IT manager, noted that in his job, in particular, he often feels excluded from interpersonal, face-to-face communication. He referred to this exclusion as "communication breakdown and lack of leadership". He felt strongly that an EWP could be one way to create opportunities for staff to "interact with each other, in the more social and also work environment" as "they are very important, it boosts the morale of the company and it boosts the morale of the staff member". He suggested that one way to achieve this would be "with the interaction, you have to group people accordingly to their division or department and get them to interact with the rest of the company".

All of the 24 participants called for more teamwork and more social interaction between staff to build better relationships. The participants responded extremely positively to the role that an EWP could play in creating opportunities for enhancing communication and building better relationships between colleagues. Fair and Wright (2016:7) believe that a teamwork oriented organisation that also empowers employees to take the initiative is a good start in enhancing well-being in an organisation. Participants noted a broad range of benefits to productivity and morale that they believed would be derived from improved interaction.

Participant 4 noted that "They (sic) need to have more group activities with staff, allow mentorship which obviously helps transferring knowledge to others in the company".

Participant 11 stated that having “a staff canteen” would help to promote open communication and relationship building among staff in a relaxed, informal context.

Participant 16, a site manager with over three years 'experience, shared the view that management would derive significant long-term benefit from “spending a lot of time with your employees, grooming and building them up. That individual passes (sic) it on, they will stay ...”

Participants 2 and 14 noted the benefits for management of “taking your time to know your staff” and “getting to know your staff and understand their background ... goes a long way in getting the best out of your staff”. This would enable management to “easily pick up on their (staff) traits, their emotions and their body language” and “what you can get people to step up to”. Many participants used the word “understand” in their calls for improved communication and interaction between staff at various levels.

Participant 4, a contracts manager with nine years 'experience, was strongly in favour of:

“Staff gatherings more often, I mean positive staff gathering where we can talk about how we can move the company forward and bad things that the company does do or improving things for the benefit of each employee working for the company”.

Participant 1 also felt positively about staff working together for the benefit of all:

“... almost need to form a team that is going to build a well-being team and that team will come up with stuff like creating wellness and on a monthly basis they could monitor how it has been improved by asking the staff. Communication is the key”.

Participant 24, a safety officer, had a more cautious approach to open communication but still acknowledged the positive role of open communication if management established a “rapport of trust” and respected confidentiality:

“Establish a rapport of trust, people need to trust the employer because sometimes we as employees may feel talking about issues can affect the relationship between you and the employee, i.e. dismissal or non-promotions. So if the company deals with it fairly and constantly then I think workers would benefit greatly. Confidentiality as well is important”.

He noted his own style of communication as open, direct, honest and unambiguous:

“I'm very straightforward, I deal with it head on. I go to the person responsible, tell them my story and get them to comply. I talk to the people and explain why this, safety, is important”.

Participant 20 agreed that management needed to take the initiative and set the tone for open, empathic communication in an environment of trust:

“The managers could be more involved; they could communicate with the staff more. Also have someone we can go to when we have problems or even have things for the staff like braais, team buildings etc”.

The goal-setting theory refers to setting clear and transparent individual and organisational goals that enable effective engagement between the employee and employer that motivates employees (Yurtkoru et al., 2017:796). The primary data thus strongly suggest that participants believed that Company X would benefit from programmes to improve the communication flow. This would help to create an atmosphere of trust in which employees felt respected and valued. Participants reported that they believed that workflow and dissemination of vocational knowledge would improve through better understanding of job roles and sharing of information. This would improve teamwork and co-operation between staff at all levels, reduce confusion and stress, positively impact performance and create safe spaces for creative problem-solving.

Participants all supported the notion of an EWP that would facilitate the introduction of social events and team-building programmes. Most participants showed a keen interest in participating in events that would build interpersonal relationships and help overcome cultural barriers, which they felt impeded effective working relationships. Participants indicated that they believed that social interaction with colleagues would also assist staff to feel happy in the workplace environment, to de-stress and to improve buy-in and a sense of belonging to the company. It would also be beneficial for Company X to adopt the contingency theory, as it speaks about identifying effective strategies in forming cordial relationships, guiding and providing appropriate feedback. This creates harmony in the workplace and could contribute to better performance results (Cameron et al., 2007; Smit et al., 2005). The goal-setting theory is another important aspect Company X should consider in team-building as theory enforces interaction between employer and employee, commitment and feedback (Bush, 2007:397; Heslin et al., 2016:90; Yurtkoru et al., 2017:796).

4.2.3 Sub-theme: Managerial efficacy

Hanna et al. (2008:2) and Ergün (2015:59) define managerial efficacy as a manager's ability to achieve effective and sustainable performance and resolve task-specific challenges. The four managerial pillars of production, planning, coordination and controlling contribute to managerial efficacy by influencing the managers' own work and influence relations with subordinates (Ergün, 2015:59). According to Fast et al. (2014:1013), research shows that when employees are encouraged by management to voice their opinions on ways to improve the working environment, working conditions or any policy changes in the organisation, it promotes learning, success in the implementation of change and ensures superior individual and group performance. When top and senior managers are open and responsive to the suggestions of employees from all levels of the organisation, increased performance and better working relations are ensured. The goal-setting theory is considered an effective motivational tool that allows employees to perform at their optimal level, driven by continuous engagement between the employee and employer (Yurtkoru et al., 2017:796). Warr and Nielsen (2018:1)

argue that the well-being and performance of an employee plays a significant role in leading an organisation to success, while Popp and Hadwich (2018:46) and Smit et al. (2005:55) note that the contingency theory has an effective and positive impact on an organisation in managing conflicts. The theory specifically applies to effective managerial behaviour between employers and employees. Through the help of the theory, an organisation is able to form a cordial relationship between the managers and employees leading to an optimised performance. Through the contingency theory, the leaders are matched to appropriate situations in context to the well-being of the employees. Taylor and Harris (2004:74) note that through effective leadership within the organisation, team members are able to contribute better results with constant guidance and appropriate feedback.

It is strongly suggested from the participants' responses recorded in sub-themes in Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 that participants at Company X have had some negative experiences with the management style and corporate structure of Company X, which has affected their morale, well-being and productivity. It has already been noted that participants were unhappy with, *inter alia*, the authoritarian approach, lack of practical support, lack of empathy and understanding, poorly defined reporting lines, poorly defined work-roles and inconsistent and ineffective communication.

Of the participants, the majority were of the opinion that the policies, leadership and culture at Company X at times had a negative impact on the participants' motivation and productivity. The increase in turnover over the last five years (up to 2018) was reported by HR as being a major problem in Company X. There was much anecdotal evidence from participants to indicate that this was directly linked to what they perceived as incidents of ineffective management at the company. Participant 23 noted, "No culture. Leadership is poor." Participant 15, a legal advisor, concurred, explaining what she believes to be particular areas of managerial weakness, "Lack of good corporate governance and extreme unethical business ethics and conduct. No proper structure in terms of leadership and reporting lines". Participant 11, a senior site foreman with 18 years' experience, commented that "site administration is very poor here, would be nice to see that change".

Coupled with what participants perceived as unresponsive management, rapid changes in both the construction industry and in Company X itself have led to many employees feeling insecure and the lack of transparent communication and effective support structures has exacerbated this feeling. The downturn in the economy from 2014 to 2018 resulted in layoffs and cutbacks and reports from the company's HR department indicated that some staff had left for positions in other industries rather than face constant job insecurity at Company X. According to the participants' perceptions, management had done little to create a more positive or transparent culture to allay job-loss fears or to improve conditions for existing staff.

Ninety-two percent of the participants perceived the constant changes in internal policies, almost always directed only at trying to save money, as particularly stressful, as this almost always resulted in more work and fewer benefits for remaining staff.

Participant 5 reported that within Company X:

“... culture has in fact dissolved, basically no culture. Same as the policies, a lot of policies we don't agree with gets put in place that actually makes people feel they being pushed out of the company. You going to start losing loyal people that have been in the company for long and start getting fresh people that don't even know the culture of the company and will lose substance”.

Participant 2 concurred, saying that “policies keep changing and people are not happy, therefore Company X will end up losing good staff”.

Participant 11 reported that “as an employee [we] feel uneasy about our future and stability in the company” and Participant 12 noted that “the workplace culture and policies makes employees unhappy to work at Company X”. Participant 13 agreed, noting that “constant changes in policies and it doesn't make you feel comfortable, you end up thinking about your future and stability in the company”.

Participant 1 provided a useful summation of general staff attitudes towards how creating a more positive work culture through the introduction on an EWP would reduce presenteeism and absenteeism and positively influence productivity and morale:

“If there isn't a well-being programme in place, this will have a negative effect on the staff and in turn will have negative effect on the company's ROI because what's going to happen is they are not going to be as productive as they should. Instead of being excited to go to work in the mornings, they arrive there and are miserable and therefore not doing their job, which brings down the morale of everyone else as well”.

The primary data thus reflects a clear call from employees for management to be more responsive to the negative effects of constant change and employee insecurity in the company. They were equally clear in their beliefs that introducing an EWP to help manage change and create more transparent communication structures would positively impact retention and productivity.

Gangwar (2018:3) and Chakraborty (2018:189) agree that managerial efficacy can boost employee engagement and organisational behaviour through various components, namely, open and clear communication, mutual trust, recognition, reducing stress, strong positive relationships and clear goals. The contribution of communication, trust and positive relationships has already been discussed under sub-themes 1 and 2 in sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2.

Another factor that participants noted as an example of ineffective management was the lack of clear goals and shared vision and values. Goal-setting highlights the importance of setting clear goals (Yurtkoru et al., 2017:796). According to Lunenburg (2011:3) and Yurtkoru et al. (2017:796), if the goals set are not clear, then work performance will decrease.

Participant 15, a legal advisor, noted the importance for management and employees to have shared goals and a common vision:

“It’s one of the main factors, in the sense where you are not aligned with the vision, ethics of your directors ... and don’t share the same vision then you never gonna (sic) get anything. If there’s a big gap between employees and their leaders, then you never going to achieve the same goal”.

Participant 13, a senior site foreman, also spoke of the need for management to align vision, policy and strategy with staff needs and aspirations to build a more motivated, productive workforce:

“Company policy and strategy is for the benefit of the company and for the worker, because if the worker is not properly motivated and dedicated then the whole company suffers”.

Participant 18 agreed that:

“Employees are the heartbeat of any company. Important ... to align the well-being of the individual and well-being of the company and getting it right”.

According to Bennett et al. (2017:576-580), having a low engaged, resistant workforce leads to a negative workplace that can significantly influence an employee’s health and lead to a low profit for the company. Bennett et al. (2017:579) determined that the mood and culture set by the leadership of a company would significantly impact on the organisation’s ability to attract and retain talent and promote employee engagement. These are important factors that will determine the overall success of a company. Bennett et al. (2017:579) further note that for organisational success, it is important that everyone, from low level employees to top management of Company X, work together in developing high levels of loyalty and alignment with organisational goals, to help improve the workplace culture and reduce the risk of underperformance.

Participant 11, a senior site foreman, felt strongly that management needed to rethink its policies on working hours and overtime to reduce the risk of staff taking time off to attend to personal matters or because they felt overworked and stressed. He noted:

“Yes, they should (rethink working hours), absenteeism is a serious factor. It really sets us back here on site when we have a lot of people absent”.

Participant 1, a long-serving administration assistant, made a positive suggestion for incentivising staff not to take days off work unnecessarily:

“Afternoons or days off due to good record of attendance, i.e. employee of the month. It doesn’t have to be a monetary incentive, just being acknowledged and recognised for what you do. Some sort of incentive because you’ve had a good track record”.

All the participants agreed that improved physical and mental health for employees would translate into positive financial impacts for Company X. Participant 1 noted that:

“... it definitely does, because it also affects your life. Your health is very important; stress as well makes you not want to come to work”.

Participant 6 concurred, noting that “when people are healthy, they come to work and will result to better performance for the company”.

Participant 15 commented:

“Yes, if employees have improved health and are functioning well emotionally, spiritually and physically that will definitely translate to improved return on investment for organisation because that would mean the employees are not only present at work but they are able to perform exceedingly”.

Participant 18 noted:

“Managing your employees’ health is important, because if they stressed out you need to find out why they stressed and also have a support structure from management”.

The data also showed that participants felt that management needed to understand that staff had to use public transport to travel long distances into unsafe residential areas, they had family lives and were individuals with activities and aspirations outside of their working lives.

Participant 14 noted that:

“Management should understand the individuals that you working with, give encouragement in their personal lives in the sense to motivate them to work efficiently and enjoy what they do and the company will notice better results in performance”.

An EWP at Company X could thus deliver value through training and skills development for negotiating improved working conditions to protect staff and to give them a platform to raise their concerns with management, so that both the employer and the employee are compliant with the conditions of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, No. 75 of 1997.

Another major area of concern and dissatisfaction among staff was poor performance management procedures and lack of recognition and reward for good performance. Participant 1, who has been with the company for 18 years, noted management’s:

“... lack of interest ... a feeling that you are getting paid a salary so you are there to work and not try and make things better”.

She felt that better structures needed to be put in place for:

“... management to show more interest in staff by treating them not as a number but as person and letting them know that they have value in the company”.

Amoatema and Kyeremeh (2016:46-47) note that employee recognition is an effective motivational tool that reinforces and rewards accomplishment of organisational goals and objectives that people want for an organisation. These achievements can be work-related performance or their own personal dedication and engagement. They further explain that when an employee is recognised, a favourable working environment is built. The employer's recognition reinforces the employees' understanding of how the organisation would like to see him or her contributing in the workplace. Sheldon et al. (2009:460) define self-determination as being able to make your own choices and manage your functions within an operation. As described by the self-determination theory where an employee feels rewarded in some way for performing in the workplace, the employee will be motivated sufficiently to complete tasks effectively, thereby resulting in higher levels of well-being when the employee's need for successful task accomplishment is met (Taris & Schaufeli, 2015:23). Fair and Wright (2016:7) aver that being rewarded for good behaviour or performance can be separate from the individual's normal salary but may be monetary in nature or otherwise have a cost to the company and that recognition is more of a psychological tool. For example, showing gratitude or appreciation to the employee with a simple “thank you” note can go a long way to encouraging an employee to perform and making them feel valued, which may in turn enhance increased performance.

In contrast to the more pragmatic responses from longer-serving staff, close reading of the data indicates that the minority of the employees at junior management level had lost interest in the work, were largely disengaged when it came to finding solutions to problems and were under-performing. This aligns with information coming from the company's HR department, that just letting things slide and doing the minimum without putting themselves out seems to be the daily norm for newer employees. These employees do not demonstrate the same urgency and effort as longer serving members in dealing with the challenges that affect productivity.

The self-determination theory also talks about the need for autonomy, which refers to the need for being acknowledged for the work done, having a choice and being determined. When these needs are met, this leads to enhanced motivation, well-being and performance (Jeno et al., 2019:671). Participant 11, a site foreman with 18 years' experience, commented on proper performance management and incentives:

“Very important. For instance, there is no recognition of foremans (sic), where as we deal with so much pressure and stress but feel that management overlooks that. They must come to site at least quarterly and do check-ups/assessments if we still doing fine”.

Participants were in agreement that incentives could be used to change an individual’s behaviour. They agreed that they would perform better or change certain behaviours if they were offered incentives and that this behavioural change would result in increased work-performance in Company X.

Participant 5, an IT technician with one years ’experience, noted:

“People work better when they incentivised. They do feel like there is a reward at the end of the day so they come in very handy and it boosts the morale of the company, that’s why the people feel neglected by the company if there aren’t any incentives”.

More than half of the participants concurred Participant 6 commented that “Must be rewarded if you perform or reach a specific goal ... whether it’s monetary or promotion”, while Participant 8 noted “When a goal is reached, after being assessed, they should offer performance bonuses”. Participant 11 mentioned that “Monetary incentives or a small present for a job well done to say thank you” and Participant 18 noted “Create rewards that are meaningful to employees”.

Participant 13 added that:

“To bring about completion of a project. Being a catalyst in performance to induce productivity. Also to make sure the person feels motivated by the incentives and enhances his/her performance”.

And participant 15 noted:

“If manager or team member understands that there is a reward or incentive for reaching a target or project, then that would encourage them to work very well and promote teamwork to finish the task”.

It is evident from the data that employees at all levels below senior management in Company X wanted more recognition from management in the form of rewards and incentives for good performance. They also called for a fair and transparent evaluation and performance-linked bonuses and incentives. Participants concurred that this would contribute significantly to improved productivity in the company. They also wanted to be recognised by management as individuals with lives and responsibilities outside of work time and there was a call for senior management to be more aware and more empathetic towards employees ’needs for flexible working hours and conditions that are conducive to a better work-life balance. Participants expressed concern about inadequate policy-making, unfairness, frequent changes to existing policies and failure to be transparent or to include employees in policy-making. All participants

agreed that they would welcome an EWP that could address issues of work hours, incentives and proper performance management.

Given the varied and rapidly changing nature of the construction industry, all participants agreed that they would welcome an EWP that facilitated the sort of leadership, which Joy (2017:54) defines as thought-leadership:

“... the possession of an innate ability to contribute to the conversations happening today, while also being able to speculate on what is going to happen tomorrow”.

4.3 Theme 2: Employee responses to perceived impact of EWP on performance and productivity

This theme describes employee responses to the possible introduction of an EWP at Company X and what they perceived the potential benefits and constraints of such an EWP to be.

The section is arranged into a number of sub-themes identified from the data as being key areas where employees indicated they believed an EWP could deliver value and improve productivity.

These sub-themes are:

- impact of improved health;
- effects of well-being programmes on absenteeism and presenteeism;
- effects of well-being programmes on staff retention;
- the benefits of fair performance evaluation, employee rewards and incentive programmes; and
- training and development.

v. Impact of improved health

Yu and Bang (2013:5) report that:

“... efforts for employee health are a first step to building foundation for business success as successful health and productivity management programmes are linked to improved business outcomes, including reductions in lost time, improved employee effectiveness, lower medical trends and, ultimately, superior financial returns...”

All of the participants agreed that improved health for employees would translate into positive financial impacts for Company X. When asked “Does improved health for employees translate into improved financial impacts for employers?” (Question 15), all participants answered along

the lines of “Yes” or “Definitely”, “I guess so” or “For sure”. Some participants gave detailed answers:

Participant 1 noted, “It definitely does, because it also affects your life. Your health is very important; stress as well makes you not want to come to work”.

Participant 6 concurred, noting that “When people are healthy, they come to work and will result into better company performance”.

Participant 3 noted that paying attention to employee health does make a difference, “Yes it does, because the more a person is sick, the more higher the absenteeism”.

Participant 15 commented in a similar vein, noting that employees saw health as referring to physical, mental and spiritual well-being:

“Yes, if employees have improved health and are functioning well emotionally, spiritually and physically that will definitely translate to improved return on investment for organisation because that would mean the employees are not only present at work but they are able to perform exceedingly”.

Participant 18 commented on the possible benefits of putting structures in place to facilitate good mental health, “Managing your people properly is important. If they stressed you need to find out why they stressed. Also have a supportive structure from management”.

Participants noted specific aspects of health that they wanted to see receive attention through an EWP. Participants 7 and 10 commented “medicals here at the office”. Participant 14 noted “Health services to be aware of ... areas ... with a high risk element to it”. Participant 16 mentioned “Life coaching”, while Participants 23 and 24 noted “HIV/Aids” and “Health hygiene talks”. Participant 25 commented:

“More awareness on the policy of substance abuse, a number available where people could call and speak their issues. HIV/AIDS awareness ... where people get an opportunity to talk about issues affecting their work”.

Participants 1, 5, 14 and 19 expressed appreciation for having access to a gym at work. “We very fortunate for the gym”. (Participant 14). Participant 1 concurred, noting that:

“The gym at work is a huge thing, no other companies have that benefit, exercise make people feel better, it makes them feel healthier. It forces them to break to go and do something else, e.g. corporate company”.

Participant 15 showed an interest in being involved in community health issues outside the daily work environment of the company, calling for “Participation in social-economic causes like visiting orphanage homes (sic) or those living with chronic disease etc”.

A significant majority of the participants expressed a desire for more social activities where they could take time off to de-stress, talk about issues of shared interest and concern and build positive relationships, all of which they believed would contribute to a healthier work environment. Participants 2, 6, 8, 11, 18, 19, 23 and 24 expressed a wish for “Team-building with exercises to understand different cultures in the company”. Participant 1 elaborated:

“Team-building is very important. People are forced to communicate and work with somebody that they don't normally deal with on a daily basis. Upliftment of staff morale is also needed”.

On the subject of social activities, further comments included “Time-off would help a lot. 8-5 every day is very stressful” (Participant 3); “Last Friday of the month off for social gatherings (braai)” (Participant 14); and “Employees get together outside the company, half a day a month” (Participant 18).

It was thus evident from the primary data that many participants were struggling with long, inflexible working hours and that they were experiencing stress and unhappiness at work as a result. Responses indicated that participants felt strongly that management should create more flexible and realistic working hours to protect staff members’ physical and mental health and to facilitate better work-life balance.

Most of the participants felt that this should be one of the issues that could be addressed through EWP interventions. Participant 15 noted, “It (well-being programmes) plays a part in retaining staff because happy staff will stay and less stressed”. Participant 11, a senior site foreman, also felt strongly that management needed to rethink its policies on working hours and overtime to reduce the risk of staff taking time off to attend to personal matters, or because they felt overworked and stressed. He noted:

“Yes, they should (rethink working hours), absenteeism is a serious factor. It really sets us back here on site when we have a lot of people absent”.

Participant 1, a long-serving administration assistant, also made a positive suggestion for incentivising staff not to take days off work unnecessarily:

“Afternoons or days off due to good record of attendance, i.e. employee of the month. It doesn't have to be a monetary incentive, just being acknowledged and recognised for what you do. Some sort of incentive because you've had a good track record”.

All the participants agreed that improved physical and mental health for employees would translate into positive financial impacts for Company X. Participant 1 noted that:

“It definitely does, because it also affects your life. Your health is very important; stress as well makes you not want to come to work”.

Participant 6 concurred, noting that, “When people are healthy, they come to work and will result to better performance for the company”.

Participants 15 and 18 agreed. Participant 15 commented:

“Yes, if employees have improved health and are functioning well emotionally, spiritually and physically that will definitely translate to improved return on investment for organisation because that would mean the employees are not only present at work but they are able to perform exceedingly”.

and Participant 18 noted:

“Managing your employee’s health is important, because if they stressed out you need to find out why they stressed and also have a support structure from management”.

Participant 9 noted that:

“Absenteeism and presenteeism play a major role in performance because when you are frequently absent it will negatively affect your performance, then leads to loss in productivity”.

Participant 11 agreed, stating that “if you are not coming to work it will definitely affect the production of the company”.

Participant 1 reported that she did not get paid for overtime and only did it because she had to, otherwise her work would not be submitted on time. She further stated that:

“Company X would benefit if someone is working overtime and it would reduce absenteeism if people are always present and are happy, they won't be sick all the time, therefore it should be included”.

She specifically noted the role that an EWP could play in helping staff and management to negotiate working hours to reduce absenteeism “because there is no staff wellness policy in place, employees will continue staying at home”. Participant 12 was also in favour of staff coming together in a forum such as an EWP, “It's very important, we need to support each other”.

In terms of legislation, the South African Constitution Act, (No. 108 of 1996) states the right of all citizens to quality of life. The two pieces of legislation that govern absenteeism in South Africa are the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (No. 75 of 1997) and the Labour Relations Act (No. 66 of 1995). As noted by Claassen (2019:3) in the South African Labour Guide, the correct recording of leave is of paramount importance so that, should an employee abuse his leave entitlement, the employer has the evidence that s/he needs to exercise his right to address the matter in a fair and practical method. Data received from the HR office indicate that Company X is currently experiencing situations where employees do not follow set

guidelines when taking leave and in many cases employees are on leave without approval, which results in high absenteeism, where absenteeism is seen as "... an employee's intentional or habitual absence from work which creates problems for employers" (Kanjere et al., 2014:1287).

Participants from skilled levels to senior management level in Company X generally agreed that improved health would translate to a positive financial impact. Comments made by all these participants indicated that healthy employees were more productive and that this was a benefit to Company X. They noted further their experience that healthy employees were always present and functioned well, which resulted in increased organisational performance. The risks attached to having unhealthy employees in Company X were considered costly, as they often led to reduced morale, absenteeism, presenteeism and turnover increase.

4.3.2 Effect of well-being programmes on absenteeism, presenteeism and retention

A study by Cloete (2015:75) concluded that well-being programmes reduce the number of sick days, which resulted in low absenteeism when employees were aware that they would be provided with relevant support by the employer. Similarly, Sieberhagen et al. (2011:3) noted that "... when well-being programmes are available, employees are capable of managing their illness and well-being, which results in decreased absenteeism".

Participant 1 echoed this notion, commenting that where employee well-being was respected by management, staff would "... become more enthusiastic to come to work. It's positive in the sense that you coming to a place where it's looking after you".

All participants in this research concurred that having an EWP at Company X would have a positive outcome when it came to work attendance. Majority of the responses reflected the same views, that when well-being programmes are in place, employees will look forward to the rewards and come to work regularly and that this would positively impact productivity.

Participant 9 noted that he felt:

"Positively, if people feel there is a well-being programme they will come to work. Absenteeism is huge here. They should consider implementing such a programme. It will benefit the company".

Participants 8, 10, 20 and 25 agreed that reducing high levels of absenteeism would positively impact productivity. Participant 8 stated: "Yes ... if you always absent then it means production will be less" and Participant 10 commented, "Definitely, absenteeism and presenteeism play a major role in productivity. When frequently absent it affects it negatively, which then leads to loss in productivity".

Participant 20 noted, “Yes, again a happy staff member is not sick all the time, he's going to be present because he wants to get his job done” and Participant 25 mentioned, “Of course. If you are present you can do more and if you are absent you can't”.

All the participants indicated that if well-being programmes were present, they would expect a decrease in absenteeism and presenteeism. They all agreed that a high rate of absenteeism is an indicator of reduced well-being among employees. The participants' perception was that if a well-being programme was present, employees would feel valued and view the company as being concerned about them. The data strongly suggested that the employees believed that happier employees would be more motivated and more enthusiastic to come to work. All participants felt similarly about the potential positive impact of an EWP on staff retention, should Company X decide on the implementation of a well-being programme.

4.3.3 Effect of well-being programmes on job-retention

Cloete (2015:31) reports that staff retention increases when employee well-being programmes are present, as employees have the perception that the organisation cares and supports them when needed. Jackson and Fransman (2018:3) concur, reporting that employee well-being programmes, such as having flexible working hours, improve staff retention as employees feel they are in a reliable and committed work environment. They will therefore experience higher levels of motivation, job satisfaction and job performance.

Participants in this study concurred with the literature cited above, noting that having an EWP in place would improve employee retention, which would have positive financial benefits for the company.

Participant 1 commented on flexible working hours:

“... reduces absenteeism. People wouldn't complain as much for working overtime. It definitely plays a part in retaining staff because a happy staff will stay and as soon as they become unhappy/miserable they start looking elsewhere”.

Participant 4 commented that “They help drastically, if a place doesn't have well-being then you clearly see the reduction of staff”.

Participant 15 agreed:

“If an organisation lacks a well-being programme, that could potentially increase more resignations than retention. It is difficult for employees to work for organisations that do not have well-being programmes”.

Participant 22, a senior administrator, concurred, noting that he felt that the introduction of an EWP would be “Good, you won't always have to pay out packages for people always leaving”.

All participants noted several benefits of employee retention. Participant 1 noted the both the potential financial benefits and the impact of the productivity of existing staff:

“It basically reduces costs, because if you have got a staff member that is going to stay with you forever, you going to give them their annual increase, if you having to replace that staff member you generally have to bring them in on a higher salary and what I have noticed is that people that are leaving are not being replaced they just putting more workload on the existing staff and that brings that staff down, because they feel already they being pushed to the limits now they must take on more and they are getting nothing else in return for it”.

Participant 24, a safety officer, complained about being expected to take on duties outside his job role and that it caused him significant stress “having to do both safety officer duties and administrative duties”.

Participant 3 noted that introducing initiatives to improve staff retention would have a:

“Positive impact, time consuming getting another person. Also pressure is put on us since now when someone leaves, then that workload of that employee leaving is divided amongst the staff”.

Participants 2 and 5 concurred, noting that “... the work pressure is put on the employees because when someone leaves, then that workload of that employee leaving is divided amongst the other staff” (Participant 2) and “[t]here are costs aligned ... because you retained staff that you’ve trained and will produce more, therefore it's positive” (Participant 5).

Participant 3 mentioned that the benefits of retaining staff included being able to build understanding and better interpersonal relationships that contributed towards a “happy environment”:

“They won’t leave so much, if we have well-being programmes. It will make it a happy environment if we would have team-buildings, interactions with one another so we can each know each other’s personalities”.

When asked about how employee well-being programmes could affect employee retention, all of the participants indicated that they believed that a positive association existed between well-being programmes and employee retention. Participants felt that EWP’s could contribute to building strong relationships with employees based on trust, thereby increasing retention. Faction of the participants argued that the more they felt they were being valued and supported by the employer, the more they were willing to reciprocate by staying longer in Company X.

Participant 13 noted:

“When the company shows interest in its workforce, you find a more responsible reaction to work and gives the worker a sense of security because no worker can work effectively being insecure”.

Participant 20 also recognised the value of a supportive environment in which there was mutual trust, noting that his feelings about this were:

“Positive ... because people would be happy in their workplace, they would know who to go to if they were unhappy otherwise you are going to look for all of that elsewhere”.

Participant 16 summed up the benefits of retaining staff:

“Continuity; this is done by spending a lot of time with your employees, grooming and building them up. That individual passes it on, they will stay and avoid spending time on new employees”.

Participant 14 commented, “Best production guaranteed! Financially it may kill you hiring another person”.

It is evident from the findings that employees believe that Company X will continue to feel the financial impact of high staff-turnover until management puts interventions in place to retain dedicated workers. Based on the comments provided by the participants, there was agreement that retention could improve if an EWP was implemented. This would reduce the financial costs associated with hiring and replacement and lessen the burden on existing staff so that they would experience less stress and be happier and more productive.

4.3.4 Possible benefits of fair performance evaluation and employee rewards and incentive programmes

Theme 2 in Section 4.2.1 discussed the failure of top management to implement fair and efficient performance evaluation and incentive programmes and that employees reported that this as a major stumbling block to morale, productivity and managerial efficacy in Company X.

When asked what they would like to see included in an EWP, participants once again made extensive reference to their need to feel valued by management. Fair and Wright (2016:7) report that feeling valued in an organisation is a key part of recognition. Creating a culture where employees are recognised and rewarded will make employees feel happier in their jobs and it promotes social cohesion, which then results in better performance (Fair & Wright, 2016:7).

One of the most common criticisms from the participants about top management was the lack of recognition, from the simplest ‘thanks’ for a job well done (Participant 6) to managers not taking an interest in them as people (Participant 18). There was also a strong call reflected in the study data for “managerial change, support system, recognition rewards, incentives” (Participant 20).

The vast majority of participants called for the introduction of what they severally termed “performance target incentives”, “recognition programmes”, “award systems”, “quarterly rewards systems”, “more recognition rewards”, “performance appraisals”, “incentive programmes” and “reward systems” (Participants 9, 10, 8, 4, 11, 13, 15 and 18 respectively). All the participants agreed that offering recognition and rewards was an effective strategy that Company X could implement to boost productivity and morale and that this could be co-ordinated via well-being programmes, as the “someone who will monitor these things in the company” (Participant 22).

Participant 3 noted that having a quarterly rewards system would “drive people to come to work”. Participant 17 agreed that a reward system would be effective, “even if its small things like what I said on the previous question about half days leave a month”.

Participant 9 called for the company to “... put in place programmes that will make employees feel they add value in the company like recognition programmes and follow through with them”.

Participant 4 concurred, acknowledging the value of rewards and incentives:

“... they not the end of it all but they do assist and actually someone can then set targets and levels to reach better quality and levels of work instead of working on a certain level which is just acceptable”.

Participants’ frequent and repeated requests for better incentives, recognition and rewards were the most prominent theme that emanated from the data analysis. Participants clearly do not feel valued in the company and would welcome and support an EWP that addressed this critical need. Participant 10 provided a succinct summation on this point, noting that:

“Employees are the biggest asset to any organisation (big or small) and they are the ones looking after your business; therefore, if you look after your employees, they will look after your assets”.

However, participants were clear in their contention that while rewards and incentives could take a variety of forms, they also wanted some form of performance-linked monetary bonus system. They were adamant that consistent and transparent structures needed to be put in place to measure performance.

A significant majority of participants agreed that employees should be incentivised when performance targets are reached and should have financial incentives such as a performance bonus.

Participant 4 agreed that fair financial compensation is an incentive to employees, “Definitely, being paid what you really deserve does motivate you to work harder”.

Participant 21 commented that performance incentives “will create a bit of competition in the company and also create some sense of motivation to push yourself”.

Participant 3 noted the critical importance of having an equitable performance measurement system to support employee happiness and wellness:

“Very important, you've got to keep everybody happy. That system needs to be taken seriously for each individual, because right now no well-being is happening”.

Despite the very evident need and call by participants for fair reward and incentive programmes, Participant 16 echoed the majority of responses that the system was not taken seriously by management. He noted that while some staff got year-end performance-related bonuses, the rationale behind these bonuses was vague and needed more clarification, for example, through an EWP intervention. He believed that the 13th cheque should be based on performance and commitment, including good attendance and not a blanket percentage paid to all employees irrespective of their attitudes and behaviours at work.

Participant 21 concurred, noting that “our bonus structure is very vague” and Participant 3 warned that while there must be a reward for a goal reached, “favouritism may also affect (sic), because someone doesn't like you”.

Participant 5's comment gave critical insight into why rewards and performance-linked financial bonuses are such a flashpoint for employees at Company X:

“They are very important. If the staff is not well-off then you bound (sic) to get less work done, the staff are actually dealing with situations that if the company was also assisting then the time spent on them will actually go to providing production. It also gives the employee's the enthusiasm to come to work, they look forward to work, you find that the company retains their staff longer when the staff are happy”.

Participants also complained about the fact that some employees seemed to be receiving preference when it comes to financial bonuses. Participant 22 noted that:

“Money is a motivating factor ... with incentives ... try not have a big discrepancy between managers and general workers ... so everyone feels they are equally valued”.

Participant 14, a personal assistant with 17 years 'experience, also noted that she believed there were differences in remuneration based on race. She also commented on other aspects of managerial failure to meet employee needs:

“Money, we that are black/coloured don't earn enough money. This company is white orientated, they also don't have any workshops or training and also team buildings”.

The majority of the participants agreed that to determine a fair bonus structure, performance appraisals should be done.

Participant 15, a legal advisor, noted that:

“... performance should be monitored by keeping track of employee’s performance and include trainings to help employees achieve good results thus must note if improvement is achieved based on the findings”.

Participant 19, a site manager, commented:

“... there should be a programme from a site management basis that’s literally the benchmark for the entire project, that programme must be your contractual agreement to your client where you have said how you are going to reach that end date or goal and that should be your daily, weekly, monthly benchmarking to what actions should be taken to speed things up”.

Participant 19 further noted that while “incentivising your employees is a very good thing”, he was concerned about “how Company X applies it (incentives and bonuses)”.

This concern was shared by Participant 20 who echoed the sentiments of many staff, saying that “the company should instil a system (KPI) because the employees at Company X don’t know how their bonuses are calculated” and that “we don’t sit with our managers and note where one needs development areas”.

Similarly, Participant 5 stated that Company X should have a proper reporting structure first and then create a KPI system. Participant 4 noted “... an attendance register and performance appraisals” as factors that should inform performance-linked bonuses.

In addition, Participant 3 recommended “having a database to actually see that people are working. Having a logging system”.

Almost all of the participants were in agreement that performance management should be used in Company X to monitor individual productivity and organisational performance. To monitor employee performance, key performance indicators should be used in Company X, as indicated by the majority of the participants. Participants’ comments clearly indicated that they believed job performance was one of the key variables that affected organisational success and it was necessary to pay close attention to it to address the negative impact of lowered productivity on organisational performance.

There was also a clear indication from the participants, from junior level to senior management, that incentives helped improve employee morale and work attitudes. Participant 8, a senior site foreman with 18 years’ experience, noted the positive benefits of fair, transparent performance appraisal:

“... this will help us to know where our weaknesses are and where we are strong. Will serve as a motivating tool to do better when we are recognized”.

Participant 12, an office administrator with only two years 'experience, felt similarly, calling for "meetings with supervisors to plan our quarterly or yearly key performance indicators (KPIs). It will be motivational for you to improve yourself".

Performance appraisal or evaluation provides an opportunity for management to extend the kind of support and encouragement that drives employees to perform even better than they have been performing (Idowu, 2017:15; Keegan & den Hartog, 2019:219-220). Participants believed that being recognised and valued for their work, as well as being paid what they really deserved, would motivate them to work harder and keep them from stagnating as they would work to better themselves because they have an incentive to which they can look forward.

4.3.5 Training and development

In their comments about key performance indicators and performance appraisal, participants demonstrated awareness of a multiplicity of factors that influenced their work performance, *inter alia*, the nature of the work, salary, stress, working conditions, colleagues, superiors, working hours, managerial support and adequate training and development opportunities. Some staff expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of training and development opportunities in the company, noting that since the financial downturn in 2015, 2016 and 2017 at Company X, there was a greater reluctance from management to make time and funding available for training.

Participant 10, a personal assistant with 17 years 'experience, noted, "this company ... they also don't have any workshops or training and also team buildings".

Participant 6, a junior plumbing site agent, called on the company to "... find out from each person their concerns and [to offer] training according to their skill". He noted the benefits of training on work performance as "Training on what abilities one can do will boost confidence of the employees and they will [be] motivated to work even better".

In her position as an HR officer in Company X, the researcher has endeavoured to support training requests from staff by pointing out to management that employers have at their disposal resources such as Skills Development Training as prescribed by the Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998) (RSA, 1998b), which gives employers an opportunity to up-skill their workforce through legislated training.

Participant 12, a senior site foreman with 18 years 'experience, explained the critical need for ongoing training, given the dynamic nature of the construction industry, "We constantly need to be updated on what is happening in construction that is why we need to attend these workshops".

Participant 18, a general manager, explained the need for training from his point of view, noting both the “dynamic” nature of the industry and the inherent lack of basic requisite skills on site, as reasons for the need for ongoing training:

“Operational point of view is site challenges, basic management skills on site are fundamental. From site manager, foreman to admin clerk, they lack basic crucial skills. The environment that we work in is very dynamic, no fundamental aspects of planning”.

Some participants observed that given the scarcity of skills and labour in South Africa and the financial constraints on the part of the employee, being developed presented the employee with opportunities for growth within the organisation, resulting in a more motivated employee whose productivity and loyalty to the employer was strengthened.

Participant 22 concurred, noting that the company could promote retention and improved performance by “integrating your employees ... to uplift them, train them and promote inside when necessary”.

Participant 23, a project manager with four years’ experience, also responded positively to the notion of an EWP that would promote a culture of learning in the organisation. He commented that he coped with daily challenges brought about by skills gaps by “being positive (sic). Because I enjoy teaching people and that's very important to me”.

Responses from participants from skilled level to senior management level of experience and seniority in the company, indicated that they clearly recognised the benefits of upskilling, training and development in growing their careers and in managing everyday tasks. Thus, it is clear that Company X could incorporate both up-skilling and growth and development training initiatives when implementing well-being programmes.

4.4 Theme 3: Possible challenges in implementing an EWP

This section responds to the second research question of the study and records employee perceptions of possible challenges to EWP implementation.

As most staff working at Company X, from junior positions to top management, had little or no experience of working in an organisation with an EWP in place or of developing and implementing such programmes, their comments highlighted the fact that it was not easy for them to foresee a comprehensive range of possible challenges. Participants thus tended in general to give comparatively short, perfunctory responses to this question.

Nevertheless, their responses were extremely important as the success of an EWP at Company X would no doubt be influenced by whatever challenges were immediately obvious

to staff. The company would need to ensure that it structured and implemented any proposed EWP in such a way as to avoid or to minimise these challenges.

4.4.1 Managerial commitment and support

One of the most important challenges to successful implementation of an EWP is the facilitation of staff trust and belief in the benefits of the programme (Rakepa, 2012:31). Rakepa notes historical mistrust in such programmes when employees are not convinced that they are in place to promote employee interests, or are suspicious that the programme will prove to be only corrective rather than also developmental in intent.

Participant 24's response echoed a common theme among staff, that they did not necessarily trust management and were not convinced that management was genuinely concerned about staff. He noted that management needed to:

“... establish a rapport of trust, people need to trust the employer because sometimes we as employees may feel talking about issues can affect the relationship between you and the employer, i.e. dismissal or non-promotions. So if the company deals with it fairly and consistently then I think workers would benefit greatly”.

Participant 3 noted that:

“... coming up with them (EWPs) here means nothing, it's very hard to say since they don't put effort in showing us that we are in fact valuable and recognised by the company”.

Participant 4 concurred, commenting that:

“They (management) need to be supportive. Embrace it. They also need to understand they not merely putting it in place for the benefit of employees but the whole company ... if the employees (sic) more enthusiastic then the well-being of the whole company is in good standing”.

Participant 21 agreed, noting the need for managerial change to support well-being systems as a pre-requisite for implementation of an EWP.

Participant 19 noted the need for “participative management” and that “top management needs to communicate more with employees and understand the people”.

While all of the participants supported the introduction of an EWP, there was also a sense of scepticism about the extent to which management would participate in good faith in an EWP and whether the intentions of management could be trusted. Participant 12 noted, “(L)ike I said, people may not want to open up because of trust issues”.

Participant 18 supported the notion that employees do not currently experience management as being really interested in them and that this would impact on EWP implementation:

“If you not interested in your employees then it does affect quite a lot of people so spending on employee well-being programmes for employees is positive”.

Participant 13 also commented that currently, management itself does not seem to understand the possible value of an EWP:

“Since the company does not have proper structure, it will be difficult to make them understand the value it would bring and the tone of the company's culture is that employees are paid to do the job and company is not indebted to employees in terms of their well-being”.

The inability to elicit support of upper management was identified from the literature review (Thibau et al., 2018:41) as a common cause for the failure of successful EWP implementation and thus employee concerns about this challenge at Company X are justified.

4.4.2 Cost implications

The literature reviewed identified insufficient resources as a significant common challenge when introducing an EWP (Maletzky, 2017:34; Thibau et al., 2018:47).

Small amount of the participants expressed concerns about the possible financial implications that could face the company. This was particularly significant, given the difficult financial position of the company from 2015 to 2017 and the climate in which it was pushing employees to be more productive but with no incentives or rewards. Participants' comments reflected their scepticism that management would agree to implement an EWP as “they (management) are not prepared to spend money” (Participant 10) and “it will cost money, financial impact” (Participant 8).

However, all of the participants who commented on the cost implication felt that this would be a worthwhile long-term investment. “We don't know that unless they try, because I think it will make more money than lose money” (Participant 16) and “maybe a little costly to start up but will be worth it in the end” (Participant 10).

4.4.3 Employee diversity

Another challenge that participants commented on was a concern about whether an EWP would meet everyone's needs in such a diverse environment. Some participants indicated that the success of an EWP would depend on responsiveness to, *inter alia*, differences in culture and interests.

Participant 4 (nine years' experience) noted that:

“... you need to find something that would suit the different cultures. In fact, it might not suit everyone but the most people you are trying to do (it) for”.

Participant 5 (two years 'experience) shared the same concern, noting that:

“If the culture does not accept it then it will affect everyone negatively. If people don't feel they are part of a team, then it affects the whole investment”.

Participant 2 (eight years 'experience) commented:

“...very important ... to keep everybody happy. That system needs to be taken seriously for each individual, because right now no well-being is happening”.

Participant 13 had a similar concern, stating that:

... the fact that not everyone will be happy because what makes you happy might not make the other person happy. Challenge would be trying to fit everybody to the change.

Participant 6 mentioned, “Some people may be less interested on (sic) some of the training”.

Participant 12 noted:

“Stubbornness, some people may purely not want to engage out of habit or discomfort. Some people don't enjoy being put out of their comfort zone”.

Participants 'concerns were in line with the literature reviewed (Maletzky, 2017:34; Thibau et al., 2018:47), which notes lack of staff member interest as a common reason for the failure of EWPs to meet their goals.

4.4.4 Long-term commitment and follow through

A small amount of the participants stressed the importance of follow through if an EWP were initiated. Participant 1, a personal assistant with 18 years 'experience, cautioned that “... if you are going to put something in place, follow through. Don't start something and let it dwindle”. Participant 10 shared the sentiment, “Put in place programmes that will make employees feel they add value ... then follow through”. Participant 2 also expressed concern about follow through and suggested how this could be addressed:

“You need to form a team that is a well-being team. On a monthly basis, they would monitor how it has improved by asking the staff. Communication is the key”.

4.4.5 Policy development and reform

Embedded in almost all the responses to possible challenges was the realisation among participants that there were no specific policies in place to underpin any proposed EWP programme. Additionally, several existing policies would need to be reformed to effect organisational changes that would support employee well-being, such as introducing more effective performance management and incentives and allowing employees to work flexi-time.

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) framework for EWP (SAQA, 2011) notes that an EWP policy is meant to provide general guidelines and should be used as a reference point for staff and management on all related issues. The scope and purpose of an EWP encompasses confidentiality, participation, whether programmes are compulsory or voluntary, health, incentives, work hours, work conditions and fitness for work. A wellness programme should be tailored to meet the needs of the specific organisation.

The creation of responsive policies would need to precede the design and implementation of an EWP and is thus perhaps the most critical challenge facing this initiative. The creation of these policies or changes would ideally need to be inclusive and participative as several participants expressed concern and mistrust about the company's design and implementation of existing policies. Participant 25 pointed out that:

“... policies are not very clear and there's distance between top managers, senior managers and workers. Workers practically force managers to be more consultative, decisions are made with resistance and there's trust issues”.

Participant 15 noted:

“It's one of the main factors, in the sense where if you are not aligned with the vision, ethics of your directors in the company and don't share the same vision then you never gonna (sic) get anything. If there's a big gap between employee's and their leaders, then you never going to achieve the same goal”.

The implementation of any additional policies at Company X, including a wellness programme, would need to be carefully considered, given the generally negative perceptions expressed by employees regarding existing policies. Participant 23 commented that he felt “... very much negative” about the management of existing company policies which “keeps changing all the time”. Participant 16 concurred, noting that “policies are too many and makes you unhappy to work here”.

Participant 21 also expressed concern about the fair and equal application of policies in the company, noting, “... it affects everyone here because ... top management doesn't follow the policies and always contradicting themselves there's also a problem there”.

Participant 20 commented that the attitude of leadership would impact implementation of new policies or programmes:

“... [m]assively. Huge problem currently with the company. Leaders should be leading by example, they should be encouraging and pulling everyone along with them and taking them up rather than taking themselves up”.

Participant 22 concurred, noting that management needed to accept that:

“Company policy and strategy is for the benefit of the company and for the worker, because if the worker is not properly motivated and dedicated then the company suffers”.

It is clear from the participants' responses that they were not sure how management would find ways to work with employees to put equitable policies in place that would enable good governance of the proposed EWP. This emerged as one of the most serious of the perceived challenges to the implementation of an EWP at Company X.

4.5 Chapter summary

This chapter revisited the three research objectives of this study. From the analysis of the interviews, three main themes were identified. The first theme focused on the impact well-being has on performance. This theme aimed at addressing the first objective, which sought to explore to what extent EWPs may influence performance in the workplace. The findings presented in this chapter were that most of the participants opined that having an EWP at Company X would yield a positive impact on employee performance.

The second main theme identified the possible benefits an EWP could have at Company X. All participants were of the opinion that having an EWP would offer numerous benefits at Company X. These benefits included staff retention, reduced absenteeism and presenteeism and improved health. Though participants had not previously participated in an EWP, they felt very confident about the possible benefits.

The last main theme sought to explore and address the possible challenges of implementing an EWP at Company X. Some participants reported financial constraints as a possible stumbling block. Other possible challenges were noted as employee diversity, long-term commitment, follow through and policy development and reform.

Despite these possible challenges, it is clear from the findings of this study that participants were overwhelmingly in support of the proposed initiative. When asked how they felt about the expected impact of an EWP on the company, most of the participants, from skilled to senior management levels in the organisation, indicated that they felt “Positively” or “Greatly positive” or “It affects well big time”.

The data and discussion under Themes 1 and 2 provided detailed reasons why participants felt that an EWP would make a positive impact and listed a number of specific benefits and improvements that participants anticipated would be enabled by the introduction of an EWP. The data and discussion under Theme 3 presented participants' concerns about possible problems in implementing an EWP. The discussion also identified interventions that top management and the HR department should put in place to limit possible stumbling blocks to an effective implementation of an EWP.

In concurrence with research findings from the literature review (for example, Sieberhagen et al., 2011:3; Bakotic & Babic, 2013:207; Yu & Bang, 2013:5; Cloete, 2015:75; Renard & Snelgar, 2016:8; Gauche et al., 2017:322; Jackson & Fransman, 2018:3; Krekel et al., 2019:5), this study confirms that having an EWP in an organisation may yield a positive impact towards performance. It should thus be viewed not just as perks for employees but also as offering a number of benefits for the employer. This study has shown that having EWPs may improve the way in which employees behave in the organisation. These behaviours include reduced absenteeism and presenteeism, health, turnover, motivation and engagement. However, Keeman et al. (2017:1) argue that organisations should not invest their energy only in stress interventions because this alone does not produce long-term results or yield improved organisational results. They suggest also investing in promoting general well-being, as this has many other benefits, the most important of which is increased productivity.

The next chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations drawn from this research and offers suggestions for further related research.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 provided a comprehensive literature review that focused on responding to the first objective of this research, namely to describe from the literature how employee well-being influences performance.

Chapter 4 provided an analysis and detailed discussions of the findings from the qualitative data collected from 24 employee interviews conducted in a construction company in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The data were then grouped thematically to construct responses to the three research objectives for this study, namely to explore the relationship between employee well-being and performance, possible benefits of introducing an EWP at Company X and the possible challenges to implementing an EWP at Company X.

This chapter provides the conclusions of this research, followed by recommendations drawn from the findings in Chapters 2 and 4.

The conclusions from this research are, in brief:

- Evidence from the literature and from the primary data suggests that EWPs can positively impact employee performance.
- Participants responded positively to the idea of introducing an EWP. They saw possible benefits of an EWP at Company X as having a positive impact on health and well-being, reduced absenteeism and presenteeism, improved retention systems with rewards and recognition and additional training and development opportunities.
- Data from the interviews identified a number of possible challenges that participants believed may negatively impact successful implementation of an EWP at Company X. These challenges are a lack of managerial support and commitment, cost implications, long-term follow through, employee diversity, supporting policy development and reforms.

Finally, this chapter states the limitations of this study and make recommendations for further study in this field.

5.2 Conclusions

The first research objective as formulated in Section 1.5 was to determine how employee well-being influences performance. Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the creation of a positive workplace culture through the implementation of an EWP could positively influence employees' attitudes and behaviours and result in improved performance.

i. How employee well-being influences staff performance

This research sought to explore how an EWP influences staff performance.

The literature has consistently shown that employee well-being influences attitudes and job performance (Richard et al., 2009; Sheldon et al., 2009; Avey et al., 2010; Mazantsana, 2013; Armitage & Keeble-Ramsay, 2015; Nzozzo, 2017).

As noted by Gangwar (2018:1), positive organisational culture can be described as a culture that has a healthy and supportive working environment that celebrates healthy competition, employee success and views failure as a learning curve. In addition, where employees come from culturally diverse backgrounds, organisations need to be considerate of the different needs, beliefs, practices and values of culturally different individuals. It is important for organisations to create an empathetic organisational culture and atmosphere of mutual respect. This will help to foster better understanding of individual aspirations and encourage sharing of different ideas to help grow a high-performing organisation. Organisations that support a positive work culture will build an environment that provides rewards and recognition, growth and development opportunities, employee retention and increased loyalty. This will in turn improve employee well-being and ultimately affect performance (Mburugu, 2017; Gangwar, 2018).

Top-down communication means that employees are often not sufficiently involved in decision-making and are not empowered to get their message up the line safely and effectively (Proctor, 2014:1). For effective communication to be possible, Shannon and Weaver's (1948) theory of effective interpersonal communication highlights the need for feedback from the receiver, showing empathic understanding of the message relayed. Proctor (2014:1) further argues that two-way communication creates a positive attitude, employee well-being, feelings of happiness at work and improved performance.

Research by Fast et al. (2014:1013) reveals that when employees are encouraged by management to voice their opinions on ways to improve the working environment, working conditions or any policy changes in the organisation, it promotes learning, success in the implementation of the changes and ensures superior individual and group performance

The findings from the literature were supported by the findings from the primary data.

The research participants were all in agreement that the implementation of EWPs at Company X would significantly improve employee well-being, by increasing morale and enhancing positive employee attitudes and behaviour. Participants identified three major factors that

strongly impacted their performance, namely organisational culture, structures and operating procedures, interpersonal communication and relationships with colleagues and finally, managerial efficacy.

The first factor reported from the literature and interview data was organisational culture, structures and operating procedures. Many of the participants were frustrated with administration processes which involved a lot of paperwork that was not completed correctly. This process had a significant impact in their work performance which deteriorated. Studies by Bakotic and Babic, (2013:207) and Ali et al., (2013:69), stress the importance of having the right tools and support systems at work, which help to create a supportive organisational climate and reduce workload.

A significant high number of participants in this research expressed their frustrations in the lack of time management due to (mainly) cultural differences. Differences in attitudes, responses and responsibilities were reported as causing tension which negatively impacted performance and staff morale. The literature supports the importance of understanding diverse work surroundings and being able to interact with each other at work (Dlamini, 2015; Mburugu, 2017). This shows that creating a work environment where employees can cooperate and work together stimulates employee engagement and improves performance. For a diverse organisation like Company X, it is therefore critical to develop a workplace where employees from diverse backgrounds are able to interact with one another.

Over half of the participants expressed feelings of not feeling valued enough to contribute to organisational policy and structures. They found this frustrating as they could not contribute to improvements and changes that would help them to perform as effectively as they would have liked.

The second factor emergent from the literature and interview data as influencing performance, was interpersonal communication and relationships with colleagues. The self-determination theory, contingency theory and goal-setting theory all support a work culture that has open and clear lines of communication between management and employees, good leadership where employees are empowered and involved in organisational matters (Taylor & Harris, 2004; Sheldon et al., 2009; Yurtkoru et al., 2017; Jeno et al., 2019). Participants indicated how the company's ineffective communication style, lack of transparency and no clear channels of communication up the line negatively impacted their performance and decreased their morale. Shannon and Weaver's (1948) model shows that two-way communication is an important tool that organisations can use to recognise and better understand their employees. Grawitch and Ballard (2016:12) and Obiekwe et al. (2019:2) concur that having a leader who allows employees to contribute ideas results in increased in employee motivation, as employees feel

that their contributions are valued and appreciated. Participants concurred that having transparent leadership develops trust and builds positive relationships. They further noted that employee engagement was increased when they perceived leadership as treating them with respect and that this created a mood that positively impacted their work outputs. Fair and Wright (2016:7) also reported that a teamwork-oriented organisation empowers employees to take initiatives. Participants concurred that improved morale resulted from successful group interactions. The results therefore suggest that Company X should adopt a positive communication style and implement programmes that will foster interpersonal relationships. The results concluded that a workplace that enables employees to create and maintain good relationships with both the employer and colleagues, has the potential to improve employee well-being and increase work performance.

The third factor emergent from the data that impacted employee performance was managerial efficacy. The goal-setting theory is considered an effective motivational tool that allows employees to perform at their optimal level, driven by continuous engagement between the employee and employer (Yurtkoru et al., 2017:796). Smit et al. (2005:55) and Popp and Hadwich (2018:46), further noted how the contingency theory has an effective impact on an organisation in managing conflicting behaviours. This theory specifically applies to effective managerial behaviour between the employers and employees. With the help of the theory, an organisation is able to form cordial relationships between managers and employees, leading to an optimised work performance. Most participants indicated that staff were unhappy with, *inter alia*, the authoritarian approach, lack of practical support, lack of empathy and understanding, poorly defined reporting lines, poorly defined work roles and inconsistent and ineffective communication experienced from time-to-time at work.

Sudden changes in Company X were reported by participants as having led to many of the participants feeling insecure. The lack of transparent communication and effective support structures exacerbated this feeling. Research by Gangwar (2018:3) confirms that a positive work culture can boost employee engagement and organisational behaviour through various elements such as open and clear communication, mutual trust, recognition, reduced stress, strong positive relationships and clear goals. Participants agreed that this would result in increased employee performance. Participant perceptions indicated that Company X's management would continue to receive negative responses from employees in terms of performance if the company did not consider the introduction of EWPs. Participants also noted that when employees are aware that the organisation is concerned and cares about their well-being as employees, a culture of trust, improved structures and good managerial conduct is built and that this encourages employees to continue working for the organisation and also to work more productively.

ii. Possible benefits of introducing EWP at Company X.

This research sought to explore possible benefits of introducing an EWP at Company X.

The first benefit that participants suggested an EWP could offer was improved employee health. All of the participants agreed that improved health of employees would translate into positive financial impacts for Company X. A significant majority of the participants indicated that they were struggling with long, inflexible working hours and that they were experiencing stress and unhappiness at work as a result. Supported by the self-determination theory (Sheldon et al., 2009:460) that could help balance employees' work and personal lives, is having flexibility to make your own choices that provide for job security. In addition, Shagvaliyeva and Yazdanifard (2014) and Bennett et al. (2017) report that flexible work arrangements reduce stress because employees working flexibly are more satisfied with their jobs, more satisfied with their lives and experience better work-life balance.

A second possible benefit of introducing an EWP suggested from the data was decreased absenteeism and presenteeism and improved staff-retention. Based on the study results, all participants concurred that by having an EWP in place in the company, employees would look forward to the rewards and come to work regularly. They indicated that it would reduce absenteeism and people would not complain as much about working overtime if there was some sort of reward or incentive in return. The level of sick leave within the organisation would probably be reduced and the decrease in absenteeism and presenteeism would play a significant role towards improved employee performance. Employees would be more likely to be present at work under healthy circumstances and be more goal-oriented and focused. There would be reduced absenteeism, fewer delays in production and less likelihood of increased workloads, which could result in burnout. These findings from the primary data are consistent with Cloete (2015:31), who reported that well-being programmes reduce the number of sick days which results in low absenteeism as employees are aware they will be provided with support by the employer. Similarly, Sieberhagen et al. (2011:3) noted that when well-being programmes are available employees are capable of managing their illness and well-being, which results in decreased absenteeism. In addition, flexible working hours were reported to boost employee morale and reduce absenteeism rates, which will immediately lead to better performance as employees are able to balance work and family roles (Baptiste, 2007:293).

Thirdly, staff retention was reported as another possible benefit if an EWP were implemented at Company X. Over the past three years (up to 2018), Company X had had a very high staff turnover which suggests that staff were not happy. Participants indicated that in any organisation, when the employees are happy, employers will definitely notice an increase in retention. Sheldon et al. (2009:460) and Krause et al. (2019:2) concur with the primary data

finding that if EWPs can ensure a more positive work-environment that creates an atmosphere of belonging and comfort, productivity will increase. Staff will remain in the organisation and strive towards achieving organisational goals through improved performance. The study findings are consistent with the findings of Cloete (2015:26) who reported that staff-retention increases when employee well-being programmes are operational, as employees perceive the organisation to care and support them when needed. Furthermore, it can be concluded that employee well-being programmes improve retention as employees feel they are in a reliable work environment where they can trust the employer and fellow employees (Mburugu, 2017:1). Employee retention refers to the policies that are implemented by an organisation to try to prevent valuable employees from leaving the organisation. Based on the study results, it is evident that EWP implementation is one strategy that can be adopted in influencing employees' decisions to stay or leave an organisation. When such programmes are implemented, employees feel happy and engaged and increase their performance levels.

The data identified a fourth benefit of an EWP at Company X as improved systems for rewards and recognition. All participants agreed that incentives could be used to change an individual's behaviour. They reported feeling that the company did not adequately recognise or value them as not enough encouragement was given when an individual performed well. Participants noted that the rewards did not have to be monetary. Company X could offer rewards such as a half-day's leave, year-end rewards or have a quarterly rewards programme. Rewarding employees for work performed, as well as recognising their work or personal achievements, creates a sense of being valued by the employer, which positively impacts performance. EWPs often result in performance incentives that on their own stimulate increased employee performance (Kamboh et al., 2019:29; Taris & Schaufeli, 2015:23). Kamboh et al. (2019:29) are also of the opinion that employee recognition is an effective communication tool that reinforces and rewards the most important outcomes that people create for an organisation. Fair and Wright (2016:7) elaborate that effective employee recognition reinforces the actions and behaviours organisations want to see employees repeat. Thus, an EWP that offered better recognition and reward programmes at Company X would have a positive impact on productivity.

The fifth possible benefit of introducing an EWP at Company X was noted as training and development. Most respondents concurred that training and development opportunities would stimulate overall performance within Company X. The participants noted that Company X should emphasise growth and development programmes so that employees could enjoy promotional opportunities rather than absorbing skills from outside. Not only would this assist in retaining employees but would also significantly contribute towards employee motivation and satisfaction, knowing that the company was looking after their careers. Participants were

of the opinion that training initiatives would boost the employees' confidence and they would be motivated to perform better. Consistent with the current study's findings, the self-determination theory and the goal-setting theory hold that an organisation that provides employees with opportunities to grow and learn, progress and contribute towards the development of the organisation through training, facilitates learning. Employees become more effective, challenged and stimulated in carrying out aspects of their work (Krause et al., 2019:2; Yurtkoru et al., 2017:796). Grawitch and Ballard (2016:6) support the notion that training and development opportunities are highly advantageous in organisations to employee well-being, organisational commitment and organisational performance. Grawitch and Ballard further state that these programmes may include additional on-the-job training, leadership development, continuing educational classes and provision of internal career opportunities. This allows employees to develop their knowledge and skills and these newly-found competencies will result in improved performance.

5.2.3 Possible challenges in implementing EWP in Company X

The previous section highlighted the importance of implementing EWPs as they significantly influence employee performance. However, implementation of such programmes is never easy as challenges are often encountered. From an analysis of the primary data, this research further concluded that there were five major possible challenges to the successful implementation of an EWP at Company X. Most participants felt that if these challenges were addressed proactively, the EWP would be successful. These challenges are identified in the following sections.

5.2.3.1 Lack of managerial commitment and support

Top management's unwillingness to invest in EWPs may be a clear indication that Company X lacks an interest in employee well-being. It shows that top management is not concerned about the needs of employees, which results in employees having a negative perception of the implementation of these programmes. There was concern among participants that if these programmes were implemented, they would be there to benefit the organisation and not to address employee needs and problems. Research shows that top management feel that promoting well-being programmes is not part of their job description and they should not be responsible for ensuring awareness of the programme (Passey et al., 2018:5).

5.2.3.2 Cost implications

As with any programme that is implemented in any organisation, finances are required to make such a programme a success. Programmes such as team-building workshops, social gatherings and training and development often place strain on an organisation's budget, causing employers to resist their implementation. Participants felt that the company might lack

commitment towards the implementation of EWPs because of financial concerns. Taylor et al. (2016:2) and Mabuza (2018:158) confirm that a lack of appropriate funding for EWPs may pose challenges to their implementation. Financial concerns could result in management lacking interest in investing in such programmes, which often drain a company's budget.

5.2.3.3 Employee diversity

When organisations contemplate implementing a programme in the workplace, it is important to consider the employees' diverse backgrounds. In a country like South Africa, it is very important to identify and understand the diverse and cultural backgrounds to successfully implement an EWP. Dlamini (2015:4) emphasises the importance of adapting to the diverse work surroundings and satisfying one's basic needs. Mburugu (2017:1) adds that organisational culture is determined by the values, principles and beliefs which influence how employees interact with each other at work and ultimately affect the performance and productivity of employees. Participants concurred that having an EWP may help to support an inclusive, empathetic organisational culture and atmosphere of mutual respect. This would help to foster a better understanding of individual aspirations and encourage sharing of ideas to help grow a high-performing organisation.

5.2.3.4 Long-term commitment and follow through

Participants noted the importance of a long-term commitment from top management and follow through to win trust from employees, which must be emphasised for the successful implementation of the programme. Participants concluded that creating an environment of trust and management caring about the programmes, could result in positive work attitudes and behaviours. This was seen as important because managers' commitment to ensuring the long-term success of the programme would engender employee interest and commitment to the programme.

5.2.3.5 Policy development and reform

A significant challenge to the implementation of an EWP is that there is no EWP currently in place at Company X. Most participants were concerned about whether management would put equitable policies in place that would enable good governance of the proposed EWP. Already employees feel sidelined and not included in sharing ideas. The implementation of an EWP policy at Company X would need to be carefully considered, given the generally negative perceptions expressed by employees regarding existing policies. The SAQA framework for EWP notes that an EWP policy is meant to provide general guidelines and should be used as a reference point for staff and management on all related issues (SAQA, 2011).

Considering the conclusions drawn in section 5.2, the following recommendations are made:

5.3 Recommendations

The conclusions drawn from this research highlighted the possible benefits and potential challenges of introducing an EWP at Company X. From the discussion and conclusions, the following recommendations are suggested:

- a) Company X should implement an EWP programme that fosters an environment where employees feel valued and appreciated. This would include re-evaluating organisational policies and structures, such as flexi-time, systems of rewards and recognition and providing relevant training opportunities.
- b) Company X should implement an EWP that fosters open, transparent, communication and engagement across all organisational levels.
- c) Company X should implement an EWP that will that promote interaction between employees from diverse backgrounds so aid in creating trusting relationships and better understanding.
- d) The management of Company X should consider the long-term financial benefits of an EWP and commit to financial buy-in and practical support for such a programme.
- e) Company X should implement all platforms necessary to communicate and inform its employees about these well-being programmes and their objectives, to encourage employee buy-in and participation in any future EWP at the company.

5.5 Limitations of the study

This study investigated the employee perceptions of the impact of the implementation of an EWP on staff performance using a case study set in a construction company in the Eastern Cape. As each company is unique, a case study approach means that findings from one company may not be generalisable to all companies in the same sector.

The study was qualitative, which meant that for practical purposes, data could only be gathered from a small sample. In this study, data were gathered from 24 salaried employees at occupational levels ranging from skilled to senior management level. Wage-earning employees, who are unskilled and semi-skilled contract employees, were excluded as it was not practical, given time, language and resource constraints, to interview labourers on construction sites. This meant the exclusion of the very different insight and perspectives that this cohort of employees could bring to build a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of what EWPs could contribute to the increased productivity.

Detailed interviews with top management were not conducted during this research. Having top management included in the sample population would have provided more insight and outlook into this study. The study therefore sought to gain knowledge of and foreground employee

opinions, as perceptions of the participants was that they experience a “them and us” relationship with top management and that top management does not listen to or respect their needs.

Finally, this research was carried out at a particularly difficult time in the political and economic history of the region and of the company’s make-up. At another time, a different set of internal and external factors could have influenced participants’ perceptions and delivered a different data set from which alternative conclusions and recommendations could be drawn.

5.6 Recommendations for further research

1. The limitations of the current study included having a smaller sample, using one organisation for data collection and only using salaried staff members. Therefore, for future studies, attempts should be made to include a more diverse sample of employees at the company. Also, future studies with other companies within the same industry could facilitate triangulation of data and identify any similarities or differences. A study of construction companies across different regions in South Africa may also provide an interesting perspective, as would data used in comparative studies, which could be done with companies in different industries.
2. Another consideration is the development of well-being programmes in third-world countries, focusing on issues such as the environment, culture, monetary incentives and education.
3. Once the proposed EWP is implemented at Company X, ongoing studies should also be conducted to evaluate and monitor the success of the various aspects of the programme, to improve on current offerings and to identify possible new subjects for inclusion. Additionally, both quantitative and qualitative studies should be conducted to determine in which ways the programme has a positive influence on performance and productivity and how this translates to increased profitability for the company.

5.7 Chapter summary

Conclusions drawn from the empirical data based on the study findings were presented in this chapter. Recommendations to the management at Company X to develop a positive workplace culture by introducing EWPs to increase performance were discussed. Furthermore, the chapter outlined the limitations of the empirical study as well as the recommendations to solve such limitations when future research is conducted. Finally, the chapter suggested a number of possible avenues for further research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CPUT ETHICAL CLEARANCE



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Symphony Road Bellville 7535

Office of the Chairperson Research Ethics Committee	Faculty: BUSINESS
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At a meeting of the Research Ethics Committee on 17 August 2016, Ethics Approval
was granted Olwethu Ngcingi research activities

Related to the MTech/DTech: MTech Business Administration the Cape Peninsula University of
Technology

Title of dissertation/thesis:	THE ROLE OF EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING PROGRAMS IN STAFF PERFORMANCE IN A SELECTED DIVERSE ORGANISTAION IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA Supervisor: Dr M Darko
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Comments:

Decision: APPROVED

	17 AUGUST 2016
Signed: Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee	Date

Clearance Certificate No | 2016FBREC396

APPENDIX B: PERMISSION FROM COMPANY X TO CONDUCT STUDY



GRADUATE CENTER FOR MANAGEMENT
Faculty of Business | Commerce Building
Ground Floor | Cape Town Campus

Date: 13 June 2016

I, AJ Ward in my capacity as Managing Director give consent in principle to allow Olwethu Ngcingi, a student at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, to collect data in this company as part of his/her M Tech (BA) research. The student has explained to me the nature of his/her research and the nature of the data to be collected.

This consent in no way commits any individual staff member to participate in the research, and it is expected that the student will get explicit consent from any participants. I reserve the right to withdraw this permission at some future time. In addition, the company's name may or may not be used as indicated below. (Tick as appropriate).

	Thesis	Conference Paper	Journal article	Research poster
Yes				
No				



AJ Ward

13/06/2016
Date

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT



GRADUATE CENTRE FOR MANAGEMENT

Faculty of Business| Commerce Building Ground Floor| Cape Town Campus

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I, Olwethu Ngcingi, an MTech: Business Administration student at Cape Peninsula

University of Technology, kindly invite you to participate this postgraduate research that aims to explore the role well-being programs can have on employee's performance in a selected diverse organisation in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa.

Your participation in this interview is to share your experiences and opinions of well-being in the workplace. There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this study. I understand there are no direct benefits to me for participating in this study. However, the results may help to gain a better understanding of how we perceive and experience working conditions in a diverse company. You may withdraw from participating in the study at any time in the course of the interview and that my comments or inputs will be treated with confidentiality by the researcher. The results of the study may be published for professional purposes. I therefore consent to voluntarily participate in this study.

Participant's Name: _____

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Signature of researcher _____ Date _____

APPENDIX D: QUESTIONNAIRE

1 How long have you been working for the company?

2a What is your position in the company?

2b Please briefly describe your function

3a What are the positive attributes of your job?

3b Describe briefly any negative attributes (if any) of the job

4 What are the challenges that you experience in the execution of your daily tasks?

5 How do you deal with these weakness and challenges?

6 You did rep and sign a service contract. What did you find as a stumbling block to the contract, e.g. working hours?

7 Our company does not presently have an employee “well-being programme”

7.1 What do you understand by a “well-being programme”?

7.2 What would you wish to see in such a programme?

8 What employment changes would you hope the employers make to create a more supportive employment culture?

9 What strategies for integrating a well-being programmes into the employment criteria would you wish to follow?

10 What challenges do you anticipate should a new (reviewed) well-being programme be introduced?

11 What incentives should be used to align a mangers 'performance goals with their team members 'goals?

12 How would you hope any incentives introduced could improve employees work performance?

13.1 Should (i) absenteeism or (ii) attendance be addressed?

13.2 How should (i) and (ii) be addressed in a well-being programme?

14 Please explain how you suggest the following be monetised:

14.1 Measures to improve productivity

14.2 What data are needed?

15 Can you explain how a well-being programme to promote your health may have financial implications for you?

16 Can you suggest how the following could impact the company's return on investment of a well-being programme?

16.1 Workplace culture?

16.2 The workplace policies

16.3 Workplace leadership?

17 How could well-being programmes affect employee retention?

18 What is the financial impact for the employer of improved worker retention?

APPENDIX E: GRAMMARIAN CERTIFICATE

22 Krag Street

Napier

7270

Overberg

Western Cape

6th December 2020

LANGUAGE AND TECHNICAL EDITING

Cheryl M. Thomson

EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACT OF AN EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING PROGRAMME ON STAFF PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF A CONSTRUCTION COMPANY IN THE EASTERN CAPE

Supervisor: Ms Sonya Stephenson

Co-supervisor: Prof J P Spencer

This is to confirm that I, Cheryl Thomson, executed the language and technical editing of the above-titled Master's dissertation of OLWETHU NGCINGI, student number 208039244, at the CAPE PENINSULA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY in preparation for submission of this dissertation for assessment.

Yours faithfully



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