

Determining employee communication

satisfaction in a Utility.

A case study.

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**Determining employee communication satisfaction in a Utility.  
A case study.**

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**by**

**Ingrid Jensen  
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**30 September 2004**

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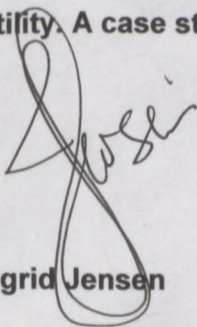
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The Utility, and especially the Director of the Strategic Communication Unit, for agreeing that the research that was conducted for The Utility, could be used for this study.

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I hereby declare that this dissertation 'Determining employee communication satisfaction in a Utility. A case study', is my own work.



Ingrid Jensen

## SYNOPSIS

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This case study set out to determine the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees of a Gauteng based utility. This is important firstly, because employees influence the quality of external relationships and secondly, employees are critical stakeholders in organisational goal achievement.

The Utility has a critical, strategic, public function in supplying potable water daily to about 12 million people in Gauteng. The Utility's Corporate Business Plan for the period 2003 to 2008 expressed the strategic intent to transform the organisation into a *customer orientated* organisation. This transformation is underpinned by, inter alia, Organisational Culture Change. The improvement of *internal communication* was amongst the initiatives undertaken by the Company to promote an organisational culture more reflective of its values. The management communication issue of not knowing whether communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees of The Utility militates against the effectiveness of The Utility's internal communication. In turn, the effectiveness of its internal communication impacts on the organisation's intentions of affecting an organisational culture change and transforming into a customer orientated organisation. To determine the extent to which communication satisfaction exists is therefore important in the facilitation of such a culture change.

The study was positioned in the communication domain, more specifically the sub-domain of management communication. The meta-theoretical framework of the study was the Excellence theory of public relations and communication management. The literature study clarified the major concept of communication satisfaction, as well as its constructs. The second concept of the study, relating to supervisory communication skills, was also described.

The main finding of the study is that insufficient communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees of The Utility. This was concluded after achieving three primary objectives in three distinct phases:

- In Phase 1, Primary Objective 1 was achieved, namely to qualitatively explore the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst a sample of 360 employees on job levels H, I and J of The Utility, by means of focus groups. Four propositions were set to explore this objective. It was deduced that employees, on job levels H, I and J of The Utility are, in most instances, not totally satisfied with communication.

- In Phase 2, Primary Objective 2 was achieved namely to determine quantitatively the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility. Eight hypotheses were set to achieve this objective. The research element of communication satisfaction was tested quantitatively amongst a sample of 1 380 employees from job levels K to P in The Utility. The measuring instrument was a questionnaire that operationalised the four selected constructs of communication satisfaction.

Data analysis tools included measurement of central tendency and dispersion, as well as the Cronbach Alpha correlation and paired samples T-test. The descriptive statistics indicated that employees are slightly satisfied with three of the four constructs of communication satisfaction, namely supervisory communication, organisational integration and media quality. They are, however, dissatisfied with the communication climate. Based on the inferential statistics, it is concluded that insufficient communication satisfaction exist amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.

- In Phase 3, Primary Objective 3 was achieved, namely to determine quantitatively the perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication of line managers according to The Utility's Top Management and Site Communication Officers as a group. One hypothesis was set to achieve this objective. The research element in Phase 3 was supervisory communication skills, tested amongst a sample of 18 respondents, comprising all members of Top Management and all Site Communication Officers. The data collection instrument was a computerised rank ordering tool. Relevant data analysis tools included Kendall's *W* consistency test, Spearman's Rho correlation tests and the Mann-Whitney *U* test to determine *statistical significance* between the variables of active listening and providing guidance.

The descriptive statistics rank ordered the perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication ability of line managers. The Utility's Top Management considered encouraging input, active listening, providing guidance and encouraging feedback as the most important skills, in that order. Site Communication Officers saw conducting effective meetings, acting on feedback, providing guidance and clarifying meaning as the most important supervisory communication skills.

Based on the inferential statistics, it was concluded that there is no significant difference between the importance of active listening or providing guidance in improving the communication skills of line managers, according to the perceptions of The Utility's Top Management and Communication Officers as a group.

It was recommended that further research on communication satisfaction be conducted, measuring all eight constructs of the standardised Downs-Hazen Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire. Not only will this ensure more complete findings, but it will also enable The Utility to correlate communication satisfaction with other concepts such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment. It is also recommended that research be conducted on communication expectations and issue identification.

Further recommendations are that learners and communication practitioners involved in empirical research should consult academic literature, including standardised measuring instruments, before embarking on research initiatives. A strong recommendation is also made to educational institutions to include references on standardised measurement instruments in communication learners' curricula.

The major limitation in this study relates to the planning and design of the questionnaire in Phase 2. Although a literature review originally directed the design of the questionnaire, the review comprised communication and communication satisfaction literature and not the research methodology associated with communication research.

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## SAMEVATTING

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Hierdie gevallestudie stel ten doel om die omvang van kommunikasietevredenheid onder die werknemers van 'n Gauteng-gebaseerde nutsmaatskappy vas te stel. Dit is belangrik eerstens, omdat werknemers 'n invloed uitoefen op die gehalte van eksterne verhoudings en tweedens, werknemers 'n kritiese belangegroep in organisatoriese doelbereiking is.

Die Nutsmaatskappy het 'n kritiese, strategiese, openbare funksie in die verskaffing van drinkwater daaglik aan sowat 12 miljoen mense in Gauteng. Die Nutsmaatskappy se Korporatiewe Besigheidsplan vir die periode 2003 tot 2008 het as strategiese oogmerk om die organisasie te transformeer na 'n *klient-georiënteerde organisasie*. Hierdie transformasie word gerugsteun deur, onder meer, 'n verandering in organisasiekultuur. Die verbetering van *interne kommunikasie* was onder die inisiatiewe wat deur die organisasie onderneem is ter bevordering van 'n organisasiekultuur wat meer verteenwoordigend is van die waardesisteem.

Die kommunikasiebestuurskwessie om nie die omvang van kommunikasietevredenheid onder werknemers van Die Nutsmaatskappy te weet nie, kan die effektiwiteit van Die Nutsmaatskappy se interne kommunikasie aan bande lê. Op sy beurt kan oneffektiwiteit van die interne kommunikasie die oogmerk van kultuursverandering na 'n klient-georiënteerde organisasie aansienlik beïnvloed. Om die mate van kommunikasietevredenheid vas te stel is derhalwe belangrik vir die fasilitering van so 'n kultuursverandering.

Die studie is geposisioneer in die kommunikasiedomein, meer spesifiek in die subdomein van bestuurskommunikasie. Die meta-teoretiese raamwerk van die studie was die Uitnemendheidsteorie van skakelwese en kommunikasiebestuur. Die literatuuroorsig het die hoofkonsep en konstrakte van kommunikasietevredenheid verklaar. Die tweede konsep van die studie, wat verband hou met kommunikasievaardighede van toesighouers, is ook verklaar.

Die hoofbevinding van die studie is dat onvoldoende kommunikasietevredenheid teenwoordig is onder werknemers van Die Nutsmaatskappy. Hierdie bevinding is gemaak aan die hand van drie primêre doelwite in drie verskillende fases:

- In Fase 1 is Primêre Doelwit 1 bereik, naamlik om kwalitatief die omvang van kommunikasietevredenheid onder 'n steekproef werknemers op posvlakke H, I en J van Die Nutsmaatskappy te ondersoek, deur middel van fokusgroepe. Vier stellings is geformuleer om hierdie oogmerk te bereik. Daar is afgelei dat die werknemers op posvlakke H, I en J van Die Nutsmaatskappy in meeste gevalle, nie heeltemal tevrede is met die kommunikasie nie.

- In Fase 2 is Primêre Doelwit 2 bereik, naamlik om kwantitatief die omvang van kommunikasietevredenheid onder werknemers op posvlakke K tot P van Die Nutsmaatskappy vas te stel. Agt hipoteses is gestel om hierdie oogmerk te bereik. Die navorsingselement van kommunikasietevredenheid is kwantitatief getoets onder 'n steekproef van 1 380 werknemers op posvlak K tot P in Die Nutsmaatskappy. Die meetinstrument was 'n vraelys wat die vier geselekteerde konstrunkte van kommunikasietevredenheid geoperasionaliseer het.

Die instrumente van data-ontleding het 'n maatstaf van sentrale geneigdheid en verspreiding, sowel as die Cronbach Alpha-korrelasie en T-toets ingesluit. Die beskrywende statistiek het aangedui dat werknemers op posvlak K tot P in Die Nutsmaatskappy slegs gedeeltelik tevrede is met drie van die vier konstrunkte van kommunikasietevredenheid, naamlik toesighouerkommunikasie, organisasie-integrasie en mediakwaliteit. Hulle was egter nie tevrede met kommunikasieklimaat nie. Gebaseer op die inferensiële statistiek is daar bevind dat daar onvoldoende kommunikasietevredenheid teenwoordig is onder werknemers op posvlak K tot P van Die Nutsmaatskappy.

- In Fase 3 is Primêre Doelwit 3 bereik, naamlik om kwantitatief vas te stel wat volgens Die Nutsmaatskappy se uitvoerende bestuur en die onderskeie aanlegte se kommunikasiebeamptes die waargenome belangrikheid was van spesifieke kommunikasievaardighede om die kommunikasie van lynbestuurders te verbeter. 'n Hipotese was gestel om hierdie oogmerk te bereik. Die navorsingselement wat in Fase 3 getoets was, is kommunikasievaardighede van toesighouers. Dit was getoets onder 'n steekproef werknemers op posvlakke P en K to O. Die steekproef het al die lede van Die Nutsmaatskappy se uitvoerende bestuur en die onderskeie aanlegte se kommunikasiebeamptes ingesluit. Data is ingesamel deur middel van 'n gerekenariseerde instrument om rangorde te bepaal. Relevante instrumente vir data-ontleding sluit in Kendall se W-toets vir konsekwentheid, Spearman se Rho korrelasie-toetse en die Mann-Whitney U-toets om statistiese beduidenheid te bepaal tussen die veranderlikes van daadwerklike luister en leiding gee.

Die beskrywende statistiek het die waargenome belangrikheid van spesifieke kommunikasievaardighede vir die verbetering van lynbestuurders se kommunikasievermoë in 'n rangorde geplaas. Die Nutsmaatskappy se uitvoerende bestuur het aanmoediging van insette, daadwerklike luister, leiding gee en aanmoediging van terugvoer as die belangrikste vaardighede beskou, in hierdie orde. Die kommunikasiebeamptes het die bedryf van effektiewe vergaderings, optrede na aanleiding van terugvoering, leiding gee en uitklaring van betekenis as die belangrikste vaardighede beskou.

Gebaseer op die inferensiële statistiek, is bevind dat, volgens die siening van uitvoerende bestuur en kommunikasiebeamptes as 'n groep, daar geen beduidende verskil is tussen die belangrikheid van daadwerklike luister of leiding gee in die verbetering van die kommunikasievaardighede van lynbestuurders nie.

Daar is aanbeveel dat verdere navorsing oor kommunikasietevredenheid gedoen word en dat al agt konstrunkte in die gestandaardiseerde Downs-Hazen kommunikasietevredenheidsvraelys gemeet word. Dit sal verseker dat bevindings meer volledig is en ook Die Nutsmaatskappy in staat stel om kommunikasietevredenheid te korreleer met ander konsepte soos werkstevredenheid en organisatoriese toewyding. Dit word ook aanbeveel dat navorsing onderneem word oor kommunikasieverwagtinge sowel as die identifisering van knelpunte.

Verdere voorstelle was dat studente en kommunikasiepraktisyns, betrokke by empiriese navorsing, die akademiese literatuur raadpleeg alvorens navorsing onderneem word, insluitende dié oor gestandaardiseerde meetinstrumente. 'n Sterk aanbeveling is gemaak dat akademiese instellings verwysings na gestandaardiseerde meetinstrumente insluit in kommunikasieleerders se leerplanne.

Die belangrikste beperking in hierdie studie was in die beplanning en ontwerp van die vraelys in Fase 2. Hoewel 'n literatuurstudie aanvanklik die ontwerp van die vraelys gerig het, was die literatuuroorsig gefokus op die kommunikasie- en kommunikasietevredenheidsliteratuur en nie soseer op navoringsmetodologie geassosieer met kommunikasienavorsing nie.

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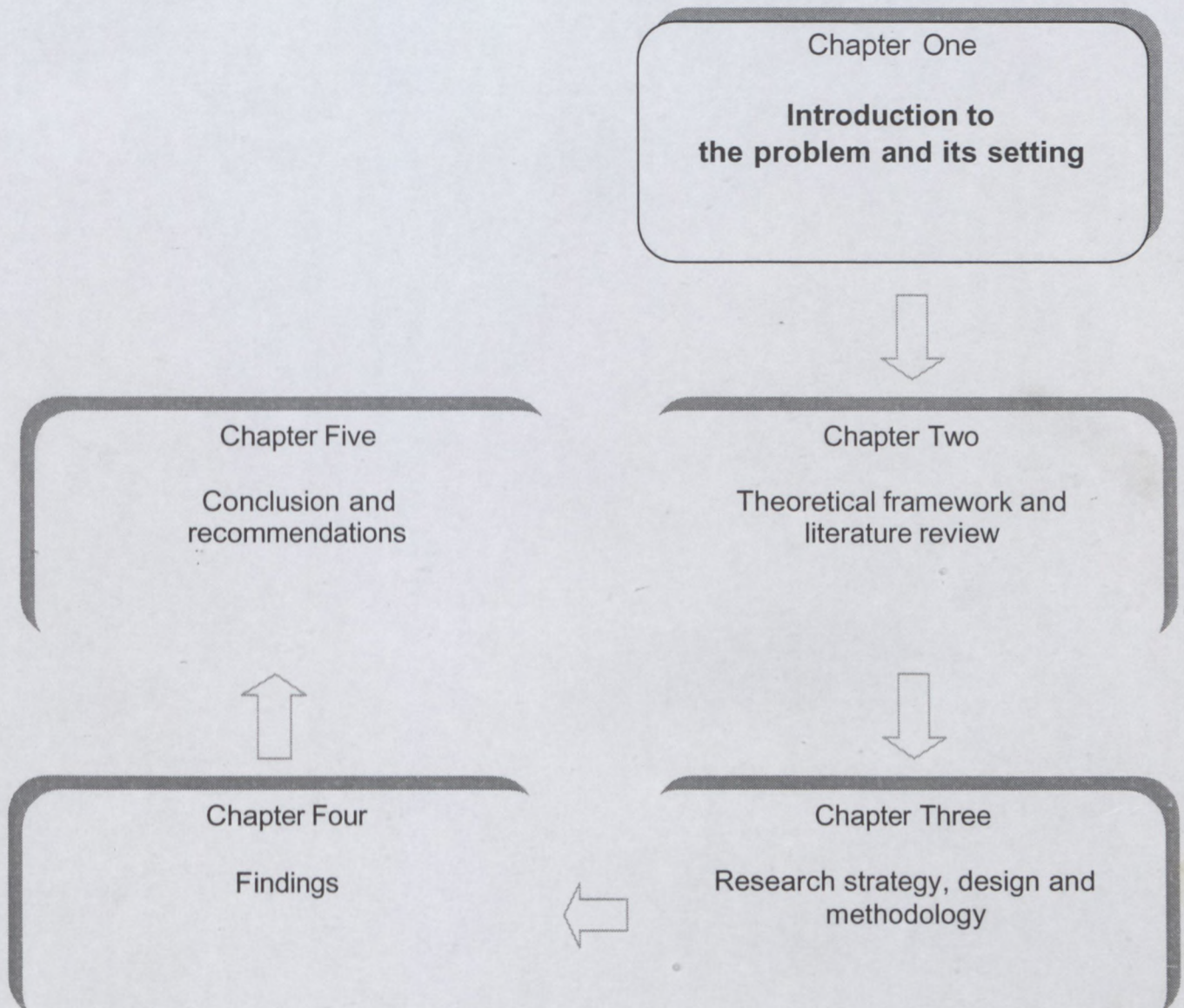
My mother who taught me the value of education. My father (in passim) for his genes. My sister, Barbara, who presented me with the space and opportunity to complete this study. Paul, for keeping me sane with his sense of humour of the academia. My cats, Nagai, Aleph and Ludwig who accompanied me through many hours behind my computer.

I hereby declare that this dissertation 'Determining employee communication satisfaction in a Utility. A case study', is my own work.

Ingrid Jensen

**INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING**

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**Outline of the research report**

*In Chapter One, the main problem of the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees of The Utility is briefly explained. Possible solutions to the problem are provided in the form of research objectives and hypotheses. The meta-theoretical framework is outlined and the concepts of the study, communication satisfaction and supervisory communication skills, are briefly clarified. A synopsis of the qualitative and quantitative research strategy and methodology is provided, together with an explanation of the study's importance and delimitations.*

## 1.1 Introduction

---

Communication satisfaction is an outcome of communication behaviours (Hecht, 1978a:47) of people in different communication contexts. An example of such communication behaviour is internal communication within an organisation. In turn, communication satisfaction, which can result from internal communication, has been found to be crucial to job satisfaction, productivity, commitment, task performance, loyalty and morale (Varona, 1996:1; Downs & Hazen; 1977:63; Pincus, 1986:395). An organisation's optimal performance and legitimacy is thus largely dependant on the degree of communication satisfaction amongst its employees. The vital roles of internal communication and communication satisfaction thus become apparent.

Effective internal communication is central to organisational effectiveness and should form an integral part of the strategic planning process of all organisations. This study addresses the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees of a Gauteng based utility.

## 1.2 Internal communication

---

AB  
Among the stakeholders who are most important to any organisation in achieving its vision are its own employees. Organisational survival largely depends on the support of the people who work for it. An organisational function that can contribute to such support is excellent internal communication (Dozier, *et al*, 1995:218). Various terms refer to the act of communicating with employees, e.g. internal communication (Dozier *et al*, 1995:229), organisational communication (Littlejohn, 1996:302; Mueller & Lee, 2002:1), internal liaison and employee communication (Puth, 2002:24). However, the same principles apply to all the different terms. The bottom line is that an organisation's communication efforts should always start with its own employees.

AB  
If organisations are to realise their visions efficiently and withstand competition or other external threats, it is essential to have continuous, relevant internal communication. The latter can make employees more satisfied (Mueller & Lee, 2002:3), highly motivated and committed (Varona, 1996:1). An employee who is satisfied defends the organisation against criticism and avoids conflict (Dozier *et al*, 1995:229), works harder, costs less, generates new ideas, performs other tasks beyond those required by his or her job description and speaks well of the company.  
AB x 2

Employees who are sufficiently informed accept change and transformation more readily. Hecht (1978a:350) confirmed that a person whose life is relatively devoid of satisfying communication is likely to experience difficulty adjusting. Quirke (*in* Strydom, 2002:7) affirmed that internal communication does not only have a role in the management of change, it has *the* role.

External relationships are influenced by employees (Dozier *et al*, 1995:229). They thus form an integral part of the organisational legitimacy. Their perceptions, attitude and behaviour play a major role in gaining the approval of the organisation's external stakeholders (Holmström, 2002). If stakeholders such as employees decide the organisation has no right to exist, it can influence the organisation negatively.

### **1.3 The case**

---

The Gauteng based utility is a 'wholesaler' of an average quantity of 3 400 million litres of drinkable water per day. It buys its untreated water from the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, drawing it from the Vaal Dam. It is then filtered and cleaned at two purification facilities. One of these facilities is one of the largest purification facilities in the southern hemisphere. After being cleaned and disinfected, the potable water is delivered to the reservoirs of The Utility and Local Authorities for domestic, industrial, mining and public use by about 12 million people in the Gauteng supply area. The Utility is thus an important player amongst stakeholders that range from water resources utilities, users of water services and consumers of water.

The Water Services Act of 1997 effected change in The Utility's mandate that has cascaded into its daily operation. The Act establishes assistance from The Utility to local government in meeting its Constitutional obligation. It is determined to achieve effective, efficient, sustainable and integrated water resource management, cost effective water use, regional efficiency and economies of scale.

Based on the Water Services Act of 1997, The Utility's revised Policy Statement was completed in mid-2003. In support of the new Policy Statement, a Corporate Business Plan for the period 2003 to 2008 was formulated.

## 1.4 Setting of the problem

### 1.4.1 Problem statement

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Res

The Utility's management is not informed as to the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst their employees. They also do not know which elements of communication satisfaction need to be improved. This is of significant concern as communication satisfaction affects organisational functioning, its effectiveness and more specifically, its productivity (Downs & Hazen, 1977:78; Pincus, 1986:395; Burhans, *in* Crino & White, 1981:832; Clampitt & Downs, 1993:7). The management of The Utility also do not know which communication skills of supervisors need to be improved. According to Downs and Hazen (1977:66), the principal aspects affecting supervisory communication are the extent to which supervisors pay attention and offer guidance to employees.

AB

To ensure more effective organisational functioning, The Utility's management thus has to ascertain the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees of The Utility. A further question that needs to be answered is which communication skills are important in improving the communication of line managers. Failure to do so will partly result in an asymmetric, imbalanced system of internal communication. According to Grunig (*in* Grunig, 1992c:559), this can make an organisation less effective as it will foster doled, suspicious relationships with the employees. Such relationships, which are not viewed as credible, impede the achievement of organisational goals and, in turn, threaten organisational survival.

AB

To achieve organisational goals through effective organisational functioning, successful management communication is crucial because of its focus on the internal communication process. If management communication is practised successfully, employees will experience increased satisfaction that, in turn, can have an impact on organisational effectiveness (Meintjes, 2003:8).

Based on their research, Downs and Hazen (1977:72) confirmed that the various dimensions of communication satisfaction could provide a barometer of organisation functioning. In this research they also standardised the constructs measuring communication satisfaction. The concept of communication satisfaction also proved to be a useful tool in an audit of organisational communication.

With an internal communication audit, an understanding of the extent to which communication satisfaction exists is initiated. The audit is also a first step towards The Utility developing two-way, symmetrical communication systems (Grunig, *in* Grunig, 1992a:531).

Taking note of the fact that The Utility has operated during almost a hundred years of service without a formal, internal communication structure, the research will provide valuable input in developing internal communication strategies. It will also take The Utility closer to their value aspirations of excellence and partnership.

#### **1.4.2 Background to the problem**

From the time of the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886, the supply of water had been entirely in the hands of private companies until 1903 when a Water Supply Board (The Utility) was established. It was only at the turn of the millennium, 97 years after its establishment, that a formal effort was made to facilitate internal communication within The Utility. The organisation has thus operated during almost a hundred years of service without an official, internal communication structure.

There are ongoing and dynamic changes in the business environment of The Utility's services sector. Consequently, the Board of The Utility has the strategic intent to transform and position the organisation as a *customer orientated* organisation, its new vision being 'The Utility is the industry leader and partner of choice in suitable water service' (The Utility, 2003:1,13). The vision is supported by the values of Equity, Integrity, the Spirit of Partnership, Excellence and Caring, which are to guide and direct all The Utility's interactions with internal and external stakeholders.

The Utility's transformation strategy is core to achieving its new strategic intent. Transformation is underpinned by three key pillars, namely Commercial Equity, Employment Equity and Organisational Culture Change (The Utility, 2003:11). The improvement of *internal communication* was amongst the initiatives undertaken to promote an organisational culture that is more reflective of its values (The Utility, 2003:12).

Mueller and Lee (2002:17) noted that communication systems and practices must be carefully designed and implemented. Accordingly, The Utility's organisational structure has been re-designed to facilitate achieving its newly agreed strategic positioning. Core to this structure is a single point of interface with the customer for primary activities and related water services that are driven by an ethos of customer service orientation (The Utility, 2003:6).

The organisation's structure currently comprises ten divisions that manage specific activities. Two of these are the Marketing & Communications Division and the Corporate Communications Division. The Marketing & Communications function focuses on brand management and the development, creation and adaptation of products and services together with the customer. The Corporate Communications Division, established in 2003, is responsible for internal communication, public relations, external communication and media liaison.

Two of the Corporate Communications Division's initial strategic tasks are to improve internal communication and to assist in the promotion of organisational culture change (The Utility, 2003:7).

Excellent communication (Dozier, Grunig & Grunig, 1995:19) is vital to all organisations, especially during transformation. Based on the above analysis of The Utility's Corporate Business Plan for the period 2003 to 2008, it becomes clear that The Utility is striving for excellence in communication through its focus on the improvement of internal communication – facilitated by conducting an internal communication audit.

The transformation to a customer orientated organisation and to a more effective internal communication strategy is based on a symmetrical communication approach (Grunig, *in* Grunig, 1992a:531). A characteristic of 'excellence practice' is that employees of excellent organisations share a strong, participative culture (Grunig, *in* Grunig, 1992a:17). The Utility's objective of transforming its organisational culture to be more reflective of, *inter alia*, 'The Spirit of Partnership' (The Utility, 2003:6), also points to the start of excellent practice in communication.

Leedy (1980:50) states that there is a problem at the heart of every research exercise. Such research problems are often derived from organisational problems. In this case, the management of The Utility is not sure of the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst their employees, which communication satisfaction elements need improvement or which communication skills are likely to improve supervisory communication. These management communication issues (Steyn & Puth, 2000:68) can thus hinder The Utility's intentions of organisational culture change and transformation into a more customer orientated organisation.

An organisation's strategic intentions can best be achieved if such intentions are understood and supported by employees (Grunig, *in* Grunig, 1992a:15). This can be brought about through, *inter alia*, excellent internal communication (Dozier *et al*, 1995:218). In turn, excellent communication programmes are reliant on, *inter alia*, shared expectations about communication and a participative organisational culture (Dozier *et al*, 1995:7).

If employees' communication expectations are met, it could lead to a degree of communication satisfaction (Hecht, 1978b:47). It is an assumption of this study that communication satisfaction, or the fulfilment of communication expectations, can contribute to communication excellence. Indirectly, the degree of communication satisfaction amongst employees thus influences their understanding and support of their organisation's strategic intentions.

And, as pointed out by Grunig, (*in* Grunig, 1992a:15), organisations' strategic intentions will not be achieved effectively if such intentions are not understood and supported by employees.

The Utility sees its employees as critical stakeholders in transforming the organisational culture. Likewise, employees are also seen as crucial in achieving The Utility's strategic intent of positioning itself as a customer orientated organisation. According to The Utility (2003:13), its management realised that it will have to provide a conducive, challenging and rewarding work environment where employees can excel in their contributions to achieving the organisation's objectives.

Employees will thus have to develop a mutual and shared understanding of the organisation's objectives, values and ethics. Management realises that the above would not be achieved without the development and implementation of an internal communication strategy that works towards transforming organisational culture.

As a first step in planning The Utility's internal communication strategy, the 2003 to 2008 Corporate Business Plan called for the assessment of the outcomes of past and current informal communication efforts (The Utility, 2003:47). This approach, to first assess the current communication situation before planning a strategy, supports Hargie, Tourish and Wilson's (2002:14) theory on the useful role which communication audits play in an organisation's communication strategies.

Currently, however, the management of The Utility is not informed about the extent to which communication satisfaction exists within the organisation. Taking guidance from Grunig's (*in* Grunig, 1992a:15) and Dozier *et al's* (1995:218) theories on the impact of fulfilling employees' communication expectations, the researcher deduces the following: As the Utility's management is not informed as to whether their employees' communication expectations are being met, they are also not sure that their employees understand and support The Utility's strategic intentions.

This case study should be seen as base-line research. The Utility's internal communication function has only been in operation formally for the last four years. No studies to determine this aspect of internal communication have been conducted thus far. This research is thus a method to observe and describe the extent to which communication satisfaction currently exists amongst the employees of The Utility. The results will be used to facilitate the formulation of effective internal communication strategies.

## 1.5 Research objectives

---

The statement of primary research objectives establishes the goal for the research effort. Secondary research objectives offer avenues of approaching the problem in a practical way (Leedy, 1980:50). Similarly, the multi-dimensionality of communication satisfaction implies that the primary objectives below set the goals for assessing the major concept of communication satisfaction (and its constructs) as well as the concept of supervisory communication skills.

**Primary Objective 1:** *'To explore qualitatively the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels H, I and J of The Utility.'*

The secondary objectives relevant to Primary Objective 1 are thus:

- 1.1 *To explore the extent to which employees on job levels H, I and J are satisfied with the communication climate within The Utility.*
- 1.2 *To explore the extent to which employees on job levels H, I and J are satisfied with supervisory communication within The Utility.*
- 1.3 *To explore the extent to which employees on job levels H, I and J are satisfied with organisational integration within The Utility.*
- 1.4 *To explore the extent to which employees on job levels H, I and J are satisfied with media quality.*

**Primary Objective 2:** *'To determine quantitatively the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.'*

The secondary objectives relevant to Primary Objective 2 are thus:

- 2.1 *To determine the extent to which employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are satisfied with the communication climate within The Utility.*
- 2.2 *To determine the extent to which employees on job levels K to P of The Utility J are satisfied with supervisory communication within The Utility.*
- 2.3 *To determine the extent to which employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are satisfied with organisational integration within The Utility.*
- 2.4 *To determine the extent to which employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are satisfied with media quality within The Utility.*

- 2.5 To determine whether employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are more satisfied with supervisory communication than with communication climate.
- 2.6 To determine whether employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are more satisfied with supervisory communication than with organisational integration.
- 2.7 To determine whether employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are more satisfied with supervisory communication than with media quality.

**Primary Objective 3:** 'To determine quantitatively the perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication of line managers, according to The Utility's Top Management and Site Communication Officers.'

The secondary objectives relevant to Primary Objective 3 are thus:

- 3.1 To determine the order of importance of the specific communication skills selected. The specific skills are:
  1. Active listening
  2. Encouraging feedback
  3. Acting on feedback
  4. Managing conflict
  5. Clarifying meaning
  6. Encouraging input
  7. Demonstrating empathy
  8. Motivating employees
  9. Providing guidance
  10. Channelling information to those accountable
  11. Conducting effective meetings
  12. Mentoring
  13. Facilitating cohesion
- 3.2 To determine whether active listening is perceived as being more important than providing guidance in improving the communication skills of line managers.

### 1.5.1 Propositions and hypotheses

Having stated the primary and secondary objectives of this study, they are now viewed through individual propositions and hypotheses.

#### 1.5.1.1 Propositions to achieve Primary Objective 1

Propositions are statements about concepts that may be judged as true or false if they refer to observable phenomenon (Cooper & Schindler, 2003:50).

The exploration of the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels H, I and J of The Utility is done through a qualitative approach. Therefore propositions have been set to address Primary Objective 1.

The exploration of propositions P<sub>1</sub> to P<sub>4</sub> below will lead to conclusions with regard to the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels H, I and J of The Utility.

The propositions to be explored with regard to Primary Objective 1 are the following:

• P <sub>1</sub>	Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with the <u>communication climate</u> within The Utility.
• P <sub>2</sub>	Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with <u>supervisory communication</u> within The Utility.
• P <sub>3</sub>	Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with <u>organisational integration</u> within The Utility.
• P <sub>4</sub>	Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with <u>media quality</u> within The Utility.

#### 1.5.1.2 Hypotheses for Primary Objective 2

Research seeks direction through appropriate hypotheses that are based on obvious assumptions (Leedy, 1980:5). A hypothesis is a statement regarding a population that may or may not be true (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 2000:130).

Descriptive hypotheses are propositions that typically state the existence, size, form or distribution of some variable in terms of values meaningful to the research task (Cooper & Schindler, 2003:53). The descriptive hypotheses below will give direction with regard to Primary Objective 2.

These directional hypotheses ascertaining the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are the following:

• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between the average response on <u>communication satisfaction</u> amongst employees on job levels K to P of The Utility and the benchmark of 70%.
• H <sub>1</sub>	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on <u>communication satisfaction</u> .
• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>communication climate</u> and the benchmark of 70%.
• H <sub>2</sub>	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>communication climate</u> .
• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and the benchmark of 70%.
• H <sub>3</sub>	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> .
• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>organisational integration</u> and the benchmark of 70%.
• H <sub>4</sub>	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>organisational integration</u> .
• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>media quality</u> and the benchmark of 70%.
• H <sub>5</sub>	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>media quality</u> .

As the researcher postulates some differences amongst the different variables, directional hypotheses (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 2000:131) are set to state the expected differences.

The directional hypotheses set to achieve Primary Objective 2 are the following:

• H <sub>0</sub>	On job levels K to P of the Utility, there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and their satisfaction with <u>communication climate</u> .
• H <sub>6</sub>	On job levels K to P of the Utility, employee satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> is significantly higher than with <u>communication climate</u> .
• H <sub>0</sub>	On job levels K to P of the Utility, there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and their satisfaction with <u>organisational integration</u> .
• H <sub>7</sub>	On job levels K to P of the Utility, employee satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> is significantly higher than with <u>organisational integration</u> .
• H <sub>0</sub>	On job levels K to P of the Utility, there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and their satisfaction with <u>media quality</u> .
• H <sub>8</sub>	On job levels K to P of the Utility, employee satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> is significantly higher than with <u>media quality</u> .

### 1.5.1.3 Hypotheses for Primary Objective 3

The directional hypotheses for Primary Objective 3 are the following:

• H <sub>0</sub> =	According to the perceptions of The Utility's Top Management and Site Communication Officers, there is no significant difference between the importance of <u>active listening</u> and <u>providing guidance</u> in improving the communication skills of line managers.
• H <sub>9</sub> =	According to the perceptions of The Utility's Top Management and Site Communication Officers, <u>active listening</u> is significantly more important than <u>providing guidance</u> in improving the communication skills of line managers.

According to Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch (2000:133), it is not possible to test an alternative hypothesis directly. The rejection of the null hypothesis will thus assume support for the corresponding alternative hypotheses.

## 1.6 Meta-theoretical framework and conceptualisation

### 1.6.1 Graphic presentation of the meta-theoretical framework and conceptualisation

To provide an overview of the meta-theoretical framework and conceptualisation of the study, it is presented in a graphic form below.

<b>Domain/ Discipline</b>	Communication			
<b>Sub domain</b>	Management communication			
<b>Meta-theoretical frame work</b>	Excellence theory of public relations and communication management			
<b>Theory</b>	Management communication theories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Classical management theory</li> <li>- Human relations theory</li> <li>- Human resources theory</li> </ul>			
<b>Major Concept</b>	Communication satisfaction			
<b>Constructs</b>	Communication climate	Supervisory communication	Organisational integration	Media quality
<b>Focus group items</b>	8 items explore this construct	2 items explore this construct	3 items explore this construct	4 items explore this construct
<b>Questionnaire items</b>	9 items test this construct	9 items test this construct	6 items test this construct	27 items test this construct
<b>Secondary Concept</b>	Communication skills of supervisors			
<b>Constructs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active listening</li> <li>- Encouraging feedback</li> <li>- Acting on feedback</li> <li>- Managing conflict</li> <li>- Clarifying meaning</li> <li>- Encouraging input</li> <li>- Demonstrating empathy</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Motivating employees</li> <li>- Providing guidance</li> <li>- Channelling info to those accountable</li> <li>- Conducting effective meetings</li> <li>- Mentoring</li> <li>- Facilitating cohesion</li> </ul>	
<b>FCA™ item</b>	Thirteen items tests the concept above			

## 1.6.2 Communication as the domain of the study

Shapere (*in* Heath & Bryant 1992:24) coined the term 'domain' and described it as a concept similar to 'discipline'. He defined domain as "*a body of related information about which there is a problem, well defined usually and raised on the basis of specific considerations.*" Mouton & Marais (1992:21-22) use the term 'intellectual climate' to refer to a variety of value systems and beliefs that are subscribed to at any given time within a specific discipline. This study is based on the value systems and beliefs found within the *communication* discipline or domain.

Communication is vital to all other management functions (Tubbs & Moss, 2000:419). As this study deals with communication in an organisational context, management communication is the sub domain within which this study is positioned. The meta-theoretical framework is Dozier *et al's* 1995 Excellence theory of public relations and communication management, which is *inter alia* based on the assumption that the communication function contributes to organisational effectiveness when its practitioners assist the organisation to align its goals with the expectations of its strategic stakeholders (Grunig & Repper, *in* Grunig, 1992:117).

The theoretical framework of the study has been shaped by the following management communication theories: classical management theory, human relations theory and the human resources theory. These organisational management theories describe the changes in managerial communication approaches over the last couple of decades.

## 1.6.3 Communication satisfaction as the major concept of the study

Communication satisfaction is the major concept of this study.

### 1.6.3.1 Satisfaction

According to Hecht (1978b:49-54), satisfaction typically refers to "*the affective response to the fulfilment of expectation type standards*". In an in-depth analysis, Hecht concluded that the expectation fulfilment position comes closest to providing a solid theoretical framework for the concept of satisfaction. Other perspectives which he also reviewed and analysed were need gratification; equivocally reduction; constraint reinforcement; and Herzberg's Two-Factor theory.

In the Skinnerian paradigm, discriminative stimuli make more probable the manifestation of certain behaviours. Skinner (*in* Hecht, 1978b:57) stated that a stimulus is the occasion upon which a response is followed by reinforcement. Within the communication process, a discriminative stimulus is communication behaviour which influences, or makes more likely other communication behaviour.

On those occasions upon which the learned discriminative stimulus evokes a behaviour that is reinforced, the link between the stimulus and the behaviour is also reinforced. The primary reinforcement of this link gives rise to the affect that is labelled as satisfaction.

In this perspective, reinforcement is seen as strengthening the link between the discriminative stimulus and the behaviour. At the same time this gives rise to satisfaction (Hecht, 1978b:58). This internal reinforcer, satisfaction, is then generalised as expectation fulfilment.

### **1.6.3.2 Communication satisfaction**

From a psychological point of view, satisfaction is easily conceived in expectation fulfilment terms. Within the expectation fulfilment position, communication satisfaction can be seen as an internal behaviour, tied to expectations for self, other, relationship and context (Hecht, 1978b:51, 54).

Expanding on his clarification of expectation fulfilment, Hecht (1978b:58-59) said that for expectation fulfilment to be reinforcing, one must expect a minimally positive outcome. When one's expectations are met, one is reinforced or validated. The validation of communication based on an anticipated process gives rise to the affect of communication satisfaction.

Seen from an organisational communication point of view, Downs, Hazen, Quiggens and Medley (*in* Downs & Hazen, 1977:68) defined communication satisfaction as a multi-dimensional, generalised feeling which employees have towards their total communication environment. The multi-dimensionality of communication satisfaction means that employees are not merely satisfied or dissatisfied with communication in general. Clampitt and Downs (1993:6) explain that employees can express varying degrees of satisfaction about definite dimensions and/or types of communication.

The eight distinct constructs of the Downs and Hazen Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire include communication climate, media quality, organisational integration, personal feedback, job information, supervisory communication, subordinate communication and horizontal communication. Hecht (1978a:362) indicates that the three strongest, relatively stable factors are communication climate, supervisory communication and organisational integration. For the purpose of this study, the researcher will follow Hecht's (1978a:362) indication and measure these three constructs. Resulting from a request from The Utility, the research will also measure satisfaction with media quality as the fourth construct. The constructs to be measured are clarified as follows:

- Communication climate is the general response to the communication environment on an organisational and personal level (Pincus, 1986:399).

- Supervisory communication refers to immediate supervisors' upward and downward communication. It includes supervisors' openness to ideas and willingness to listen (Pincus, 1986:399).
- Organisational integration refers to the degree to which individuals receive information relevant to the organisation and their jobs (Pincus, 1986:399).
- Media quality reflects the degree to which employees perceive major forms of organisational media as functioning effectively (Downs & Hazen, 1977:67).

#### **1.6.4 Supervisory communication skills as the second concept of the study**

Supervisory communication plays a critical role in the success of organisations (Tubbs & Moss, 2000:422). It refers to immediate supervisors' vertical communication that mainly facilitates delegation and reporting functions in an organisation.

According to Pincus (1986:399), supervisors' openness to ideas and willingness to listen influences effective supervisory communication. This type of communication helps employees solve problems, encourage employees to develop new skills to and participate in important decisions.

### 1.6.5 Graphic presentation of the research strategy, design and methodology

Phases:	1	2	3
Research approach:	Exploratory/Qualitative	Quantitative	Quantitative
Research design:	Case study		
Research method:	Communication audit		
Population:	All the employees of The Utility		
Population size:	3 176		
Element:	Communication satisfaction		Supervisory communication skills
Data collection tool:	Focus groups	Questionnaire	FCA™ Rank ordering tool
Data analysis methods:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inductive reasoning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cronbach's Alpha correlation</li> <li>- Measurement of central tendency and dispersion</li> <li>- T-test</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kendall's W of concordance to test internal consistency and correlation</li> <li>- Spearman's Rho for comparison</li> <li>- Mann-Whitney <i>U</i> test for statistical difference</li> </ul>
Sampling frame:	Lists of relevant job levels		Lists of all Top Management and Site Communication Officers
Sample:	Employees from job levels H, I and J	Employees from job levels K to P	All Top Management and Site Communication Officers
Sample size:	360	1 380	18
Sample dimensions:	Geographical Temporal	Geographical Temporal	Temporal Geographical

## 1.7 Importance and benefits of the study

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The Utility supplies potable water to about 12 million people in the Gauteng area every day, which is a tremendous responsibility. Considering the fact that employees influence external relationships (Dozier *et al*, 1995:229), it is vital to work towards an internal communication environment where employees' communication needs are satisfied. Such an environment is especially important when taking into consideration that communication satisfaction has been found to be crucial to job satisfaction, tasks performance, productivity, commitment and morale (Clampitt & Downs, 1993:7; Pincus, 1986:412; Varona, 1996:1).

Attempting to establish a satisfactory communication environment is, however, only possible once The Utility's management has a clear and validated understanding of the extent to which communication satisfaction currently exists. Once this has been established, the formal internal communication strategy can be formulated accordingly.

The Utility's transformation strategy is core to the achievement of its new strategic intent. A key pillar of this strategy is Organisational Culture Change. The improvement of *internal communication* is accepted as an initiative to promote an organisational culture that is more reflective of its values (The Utility, 2003:11-12).

Without understanding whether The Utility's employees experience communication satisfaction, it is unlikely that the organisation will be able to improve internal communication effectively. In turn, it can also mean that the organisation will not realise its new vision, or achieve its positioning and transformation strategies effectively. The latter can be implemented and achieved more effectively when beginning with an understanding of whether employees' communication expectations are fulfilled; i.e. a base-line measurement on which future interventions and research can be built.

The strategic intent to transform and position The Utility as a customer orientated organisation (The Utility, 2003:1) implies a recognition of its stakeholders. In this case, seen from The Utility's point of view, the customer is one of the most important stakeholders.

However, to achieve success as a customer orientated organisation would mean building an organisational culture amongst employees that portrays recognition of 'the other' (i.e. stakeholders such as customers). An underlying assumption of this study is thus the recognition of The Utility's employees as strategic stakeholders and their satisfaction with internal communication as being important in the achievement of organisational goals such as a customer orientation.

## 1.8 Delimitations

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Within one research project, a researcher cannot investigate all the aspects of any research objective (Leedy, 1980:60). This does not suggest that those aspects rejected are not important, but only that they are peripheral to either the primary or secondary objective/s of the specific problem. A study of The Utility's terms of reference for the internal communication audit and aspects relative to internal communication in their Corporate Business Plan for the period 2003 to 2008 led to the delimitation of this study's constructs.

Only four of the eight constructs of the Downs and Hazen's (1977:68) communication satisfaction concept are to be measured in this study because of practical resource constraints and the specific needs of The Utility. One of The Utility's urgent needs is to get feedback about the quality of their internal communication mediums. The other three constructs were selected for measurement based on theoretical considerations, namely being the three strongest, relatively stable constructs, as pointed out by Hecht (1978a:362).

Thus compromising between The Utility's need and the theoretical foundation of the study, the following constructs will be measured to determine the extent of communication satisfaction amongst employees of The Utility:

- communication climate;
- supervisory communication;
- organisational integration; and
- media quality.

The Downs and Hazen's (1977:68) communication satisfaction constructs excluded from this study are discussed below.

- Co-worker communication/horizontal communication

This construct was not chosen as part of this study as it was felt that it would not provide relevant input to The Utility's immediate internal communication strategy. Instead the construct of supervisory communication was chosen as a point of departure for this base-line study.

- Job information

The researcher interpreted Downs & Hazen's (1977:67) description of job information to be similar to their construct of organisational integration. Thus in the attempt to keep the measuring instruments short to prevent interview fatigue, the assessment of job information was omitted for the purposes of this study.

- Personal feedback

Within the context of The Utility, personal feedback is seen as the function of the Human Resource Division. Thus, although a few questions about personal feedback were prompted during the internal communication audit, it was not deemed sufficiently important to be measured separately.

- Subordinate communication

This construct was not chosen as part of this study as it was felt that it would not provide relevant input to The Utility's immediate internal communication strategy. Instead the construct of supervisory communication was chosen as a point of departure for this base-line study.

## **1.9 Structure of the study**

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The dissertation is structured into five Chapters.

### **1.9.1 Chapter One**

Following the presentation of the problem and research objectives, the proposed methodology and procedure for the implementation of the research were outlined. This is supported by an explanation of the main theories and concepts as well as the importance and delimitation of the study.

### **1.9.2 Chapter Two**

In Chapter Two, the study is placed within the communication domain, and the meta-theoretical framework and other theoretical contexts discussed. A detailed explanation of the major concept of communication satisfaction and its key constructs is also provided. The review of the relevant literature in the second Chapter of the dissertation also includes the second concept, namely supervisory communication skills.

### **1.9.3 Chapter Three**

In Chapter Three, the research strategy, design and methodology of the study is discussed. It also provides detail on sampling procedures, the research element, data collection and analysis, reliability and validity.

### **1.9.4 Chapter Four**

The findings of the research on communication satisfaction and supervisory communication skills are presented in Chapter Four. The achievement of the research objectives and the testing of the research hypotheses are discussed.

### 1.9.5 Chapter Five

Chapter Five summarises the findings and includes the overall conclusions, recommendations and limitations of the study. It also suggests further research, based on the findings.

## 1.10 Chapter summary

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Within this Chapter, the main problem of determining the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees of The Utility was pointed out. The main concepts were briefly explicated together with the communication satisfaction constructs of communication climate, organisational integration, supervisory communication and media quality. The meta-theoretical and theoretical framework of the study was provided, and other important concepts of the study such as communication, satisfaction, communication satisfaction and supervisory communication were briefly clarified.

To assist in providing possible solutions to the main problem, three primary objectives and their secondary objectives were set:

For Primary Objective 1, four qualitative secondary objectives relating to the existence of communication satisfaction were set, namely communication climate, supervisory communication, organisational integration and media quality. Four propositions were set to achieve Primary Objective 1.

- For Primary Objective 2, three quantitative secondary objectives were set relating to the existence of communication satisfaction. Secondary objectives for Primary Objective 2 attempt to determine whether employees were more satisfied with supervisory communication than with the other three selected constructs.

The hypotheses set to achieve Primary Objective 2 were directional.

- For Primary Objective 3 (relating to the concept of supervisory communication skills), two secondary objectives were set: firstly, to determine the order of importance of the specific communication skills; and secondly, to determine whether active listening is perceived as being more important than providing guidance in improving the communication skills of line managers.

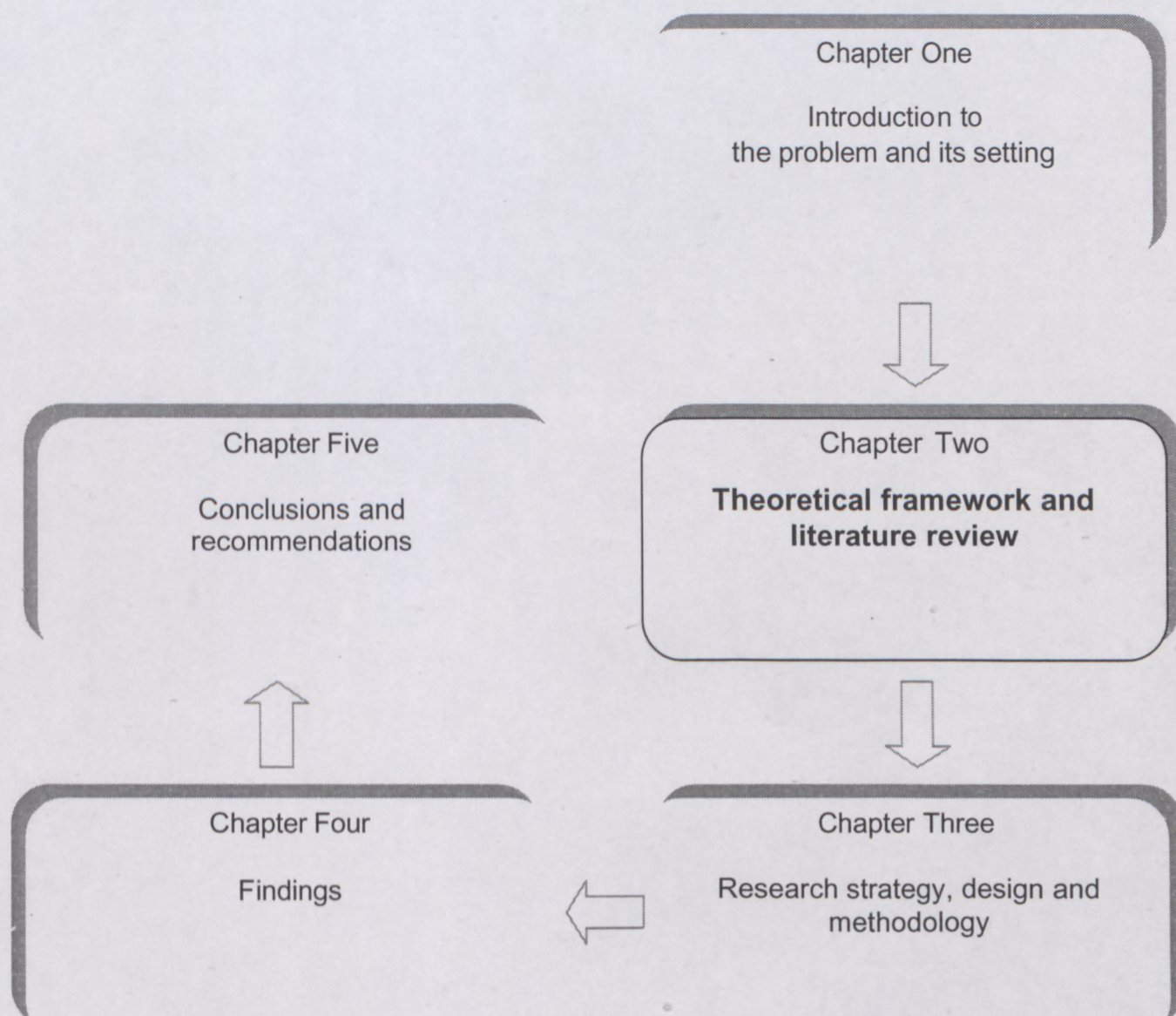
The hypotheses set to achieve Primary Objective 3 are also directional.

A graphic presentation depicts this case study as a three-phased communication audit, using both a qualitative and quantitative approach. The element of communication satisfaction is to be assessed within a utility which employs 3 176 people. From this population, two samples are selected: employees from lower job levels H, I and J and employees from mid-range job levels K to P. The sub-population of all members from Top Management and all Site Communication Officers was selected to assess the importance of the element of supervisory communication skills. Data analysis methods range from inductive reasoning, correlation tests, measurement of central tendency and dispersion to One-Way Analysis of Variance.

Dozier *et al's* (1995:229) statement that employees influence external relationships emphasises the importance of the study when considering that The Utility supplies potable water daily to about 12 million people in Gauteng. As communication satisfaction is crucial to job satisfaction, task performance, productivity, commitment and morale (Clampitt & Downs, 1993:7; Pincus, 1986:412; Varona, 1996:1), it is important to determine the extent to which communication satisfaction exists within The Utility.

In Chapter One, this study has been placed in context. The following Chapter clarifies the meta-theoretical framework and conceptualisation of this research. In Chapter Two, communication satisfaction and supervisory communication skills are contextualised and theoretical overview provided of communication, management communication and excellence in communication.

## Outline of the research report



*In Chapter Two, the study is positioned within the communication domain. It also describes the meta-theoretical framework of the study, being the Excellence theory of public relations and communication management. Communication satisfaction and supervisory communication skills are explicated as the major concepts of the study. Previous research on communication satisfaction is also discussed.*

## **2.1 Introduction**

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The importance of communication satisfaction and supervisory communication skills are vital in establishing quality management communication, excellent internal communication systems and, ultimately, an excellent organisation. However, the management communication approach and accompanying communication styles of managers greatly affect communication satisfaction.

## **2.2 The domain and sub-domains of the study**

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The domain of this study is communication and the relevant sub-field management communication - the latter being a blending of the fields of management and communication. Before discussing the basic tenets of management communication, a short introduction to communication, management and internal communication will be provided in order to differentiate between these concepts important to the study.

### **2.2.1 Communication**

Chester Barnard wrote that, in an organisational context, the first executive function is to develop and maintain a system of communication, since communication is vital to all other management functions (Tubbs & Moss, 2000:419).

Communication as the creation of meaning can occur in different contexts by giving, receiving and exchanging information, opinions or ideas by writing, speech or visual means - or any combination of the three (Sillars, 1988:1). However, the manner in which meaning is created is not as important as the outcome of 'created meaning'. Meaning will not be created effectively if there is not an understanding of the other parties involved in the communication process. This is true whether it occurs in a corporate, business, organisational or management communication context.

Steyn and Puth (2000:5) clarify the confusion that exists in practice with regard to the different sub-domains of communication as follows:

- Corporate communication is regarded as managed communication, with the aim of increasing organisational effectiveness.
- Organisational communication focuses on knowledge and the organisation as a system.
- Management communication incorporates both knowledge and skills in order to manage people.
- Business communication is concerned with the structural component of writing style, language and format.

### 2.2.2 Internal communication

Internal communication is often used to describe how senior management, subordinates, middle management and other employees communicate with one another in an organisation. The flow of communication thus takes place on vertical, lateral, horizontal and diagonal levels (Adey & Andrew, 1996:85). Contrary to this, the flow of information relevant to management communication is mostly vertical.

Reuss and DiSilvis (1985:3) say that organisations consist of people, not just boxes on a chart. Likewise, Tubbs and Moss (2000:416) argue that internal communication involves human communication in the context of an organisation. It is the people who communicate with each other, not organisations.

Internal communication is defined as the pattern of messages shared between workers within an organisation (Rensburg & Bredenkamp *in* Ward, n.d.:3). It is the exchange of information, ideas and feelings amongst employees of an organisation (Reuss and DiSilvis, 1985:3).

The primary function of internal communication is formal task development, coordination and the achievement of business objectives by supporting organisational objectives, policies and programmes (Rensburg & Bredenkamp, *in* Ward, n.d.:3). However, Reuss and DiSilvis (1985:4) state that internal communication should also be focussed on meeting employees' needs by knowing what information they want and how they prefer to acquire it.

### 2.2.3 Management

Management has been described as the process of planning, organising, leading and controlling the effort of organisational members and of using all available organisational resources to reach stated organisational goals. Communication is important in the process of management and has a leading role to play (Stoner & Freeman, 1992:6).

The communication skills of an organisation's leaders, and their understanding of leadership communication, directly influence all other management functions in the organisation (Puth, 2002:11). *Planning*, for example, will be ineffective without the anticipation of stakeholder reactions (Stoner & Freeman, 1992:192).

The importance of communication in *organising* is also apparent. It influences a variety of sub-functions such as the structuring of the organisation, division of work, departmentalisation and coordination. Management communication further influences authority, delegation, job design and decentralisation (Stoner & Freeman, 1992:312, 341).

Other sub-functions influenced are human resource management as well as the management of organisational change and innovation (Stoner & Freeman, 1992:371, 405).

*Leading* is viewed as managerial leadership that directs and influences the task-related activities of organisational members. It incorporates the ability to change the attitudes and behaviour of employees (Stoner & Freeman, 1992:472). This is where a distinction is made between managers and leaders. A person can be an effective manager – a good planner and a fair and organised administrator – but lack the motivational and effective communication skills of a leader. This view of management is shared by Follett (*in* Stoner & Freeman, 1992:6), who defines management as the art of getting things done through people.

The last function in the process of management is that of *control*. Core to this managerial function are feedback systems (Stoner & Freeman, 1992:600). The role that management communication thus plays in coping with change, adding value and the facilitation and motivation of employees becomes apparent. This is specifically true in relation to operations management and information systems (Stoner & Freeman, 1992:629, 663).

It is clear that communication is inherent in, and fundamental to, each one of the leadership functions. The quality and effectiveness of management communication will eventually determine the success of the organisation as a whole (Puth, 2002:12). Management's quality and effectiveness can be influenced by the degree to which they satisfy communication expectations.

Top executives right down to supervisors from all divisions and departments at The Utility should be able to plan, organise, lead and control while also fulfilling the communication expectations of all their colleagues and personnel. In addition they should also fulfil the communication demands of each management function. Staff members of the communication department are only the facilitators of the overall communication process.

#### **2.2.4 Management communication**

The information explosion has changed traditional management drastically (Smeltzer *et al*, *in* Groenewald, 1998a:11). Management has become indisputably associated with communication. Not only is each employee empowered as a manager through the availability of information, but the role of the manager as communicator has also become more prominent (Groenewald, 1998a:11).

Communication in a managerial context is seen as a means to an end; namely the attainment of organisational goals (Steyn & Puth, 2000:6). It is the only field of study that integrates management and communication.

In the management communication subject field, communication is studied as being functional to the organisation and, more specifically, to management. The ties between the organisation and its management are described as follows: *"If a business is considered commercial, industrial, professional, or a service activity, by its very definition business includes both managers and the organisations within which and across which they communicate"* (Krapels & Arnold, in Groenewald, 1998a:12). Management communication implicitly supports the goals set by the organisation and focuses on decision making by management. It thus has the potential to influence business goals (Reinsch, in Groenewald, 1998a:12).

In management communication the communication process is primarily vertical (upwards and downwards) and thus excludes other forms of internal communication such as horizontal and diagonal communication. Management communication is therefore a sub-field of internal communication, referring specifically to the communication flows between managers/supervisors and their subordinates.

Adey and Andrew (1996:85) note that downward communication serves a useful purpose in coordinating and controlling the activities of the organisation. On the other hand, upward communication's main purpose is to allow the management to know what is happening at the lower levels (Adey & Andrew, 1996:86).

However, management communication comprises far more than simply the structural aspects of up- and downward communication. From a communication science view, management communication includes everything a manager needs to know to better manage human resources (Reinsch, in Groenewald, 1998b:47). Management communication combines communication and management. It integrates the knowledge with the communication skills that managers should have (Groenewald, 1998a:18).

Management communication does not only concentrate on formal communication mediums like meetings, letters, speeches and reports. It also focuses on internal communication processes, e.g. informal interpersonal communication between supervisors and subordinates. Its purpose is to enable managers or supervisors to manage more effectively through communication. Therefore, management communication borrows from communication science everything that a manager needs to know and to do to manage people better (Groenewald, 1998a:18).

In the following section, the meta-theoretical Excellence approach is explained and applied to communication within The Utility. It must be noted that the term 'internal communication' is used extensively since that is the way it is usually referred to in the literature and also the way it is termed within the Excellence approach. In effect, in most instances it really refers to 'management communication', as explained above.

### **2.3 Meta-theoretical framework: Excellence in communication**

According to Grunig (in Grunig, 1992b:219), excellence in communication is a characteristic of excellent organisations. Organisational communication can be considered 'excellent' when it contributes to organisational effectiveness by aligning the organisation's goals with the expectations of its strategic stakeholders (Grunig, Grunig & Ehling, in Grunig, 1992:86). Communication thus contributes to effectiveness by building quality, long-term relationships with strategic stakeholders (Grunig & Repper, in Grunig, 1992:117).

A major characteristic of organisational effectiveness is the management of interdependence. Grunig (in Grunig, 1992a:11) states that organisations are effective when they attain their goals. However, goals must be appropriate for the organisation's environment. If not, stakeholders within the environment will constrain the autonomy of the organisation to meet its goals and achieve its vision.

The Utility sees their employees as critical stakeholders in transforming organisational culture and in achieving The Utility's strategic intent of positioning itself as a customer orientated organisation. According to The Utility (2003:13), its management realises that it will have to provide a favourable, stimulating and rewarding work environment where employees can contribute to achieving the organisation's objectives. Employees will thus have to develop a mutual and shared understanding of the organisation's objectives, values and ethics.

Excellent communication departments are defined as those that are managed strategically in order to maximise the contribution of communication programmes to organisational effectiveness (Grunig, in Grunig, 1992a:15). Strategic management expertise within a communication department can contribute to communication excellence (Dozier *et al*, 1995:11). Grunig (in Grunig, 1992b:236) stated that effective leaders foster a climate for a combination of asymmetrical and symmetrical public relations. This is known as the Mixed Motives model (Grunig & Grunig, in Grunig, 1992:310), which holds that communication practitioners are generally driven by their loyalty to achieve their organisations' vision as well as by the stakeholders affected by the behaviour of the organisations (Grunig & White, in Grunig, 1992:46).

Communication is most likely to contribute to organisational effectiveness when senior communication managers are members of top management (Grunig *et al*, 1992:86) and when communication is managed strategically. With the establishment of the Corporate Communications Division in 2003 (The Utility, 2003:7), its General Manager became part of The Utility's Top Management team, contributing to organisational effectiveness. Communication managers must furthermore have knowledge to use the two-way symmetrical model of communication (Dozier *et al*, 1995:7). Approaching communication in this manner, will contribute to excellence (Grunig & White, *in* Grunig, 1992:31).

Managing communication strategically implies two-way symmetrical communication, as it requires the identification, segmentation and management of stakeholders. Resolving issues through symmetrical communication programmes also constitutes strategic communication management (Grunig & Repper, *in* Grunig, 1992:150). A stakeholder perceives a problem when something that it would like to occur, such as satisfactory communication, is missing. When such problems are not resolved, stakeholders make issues out of problems (Grunig & Repper, *in* Grunig, 1992:146).

In an attempt to manage issues strategically, an organisation with a two-way symmetrical worldview for communication uses research and dialogue to manage problems and conflict, improve understanding and build relationships with stakeholders. In using a two-way symmetrical communication approach, both the organisation and the stakeholders can be persuaded; both also may change their behaviour (Grunig & White, 1992:39). To develop excellent communication, it is thus required that organisations conform to societal purposes through implanting the desired perspectives into the core decision making process of the organisation (Kanter, *in* Grunig & White, 1992:42).

As a first step in planning The Utility's internal communication strategy, the 2003 to 2008 Corporate Business Plan called for the assessment of the outcomes of the informal communication efforts within The Utility (The Utility, 2003:47). This study aims to determine the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees of The Utility, thus enabling the Corporate Communications Manager to strategically manage potential communication problems experienced by The Utility's employees.

Since this study is based on the Excellence approach to communication, it is necessary to identify the assumptions of the two-way symmetrical worldview in order to apply them to The Utility.

According to Grunig & White (*in* Grunig, 1992:43-44), these assumptions are the following:

- *Interdependence*: Organisations cannot separate themselves from their environment.
- *Open system*: The organisation is open to inter-penetrating systems and freely exchanges information with those systems.
- *Moving equilibrium*: Organisations as systems strive toward an equilibrium with other systems through cooperation and mutual adjustment.
- *Equity*: People are given equal opportunity and are respected as fellow human beings.
- *Autonomy*: People are more innovative, constructive and self-regulating when they have the autonomy to influence their own behaviour rather than having it controlled by others.
- *Innovation*: New ideas and flexible thinking, rather than tradition and efficiency, are stressed.
- *Decentralisation of management*: Management that coordinate rather than dictate increases autonomy, employee satisfaction and innovation.
- *Responsibility*: People and organisations are concerned with the consequences of their behaviours on others and attempt to eliminate adverse consequences.
- *Conflict resolution*: Conflict is resolved through negotiation, communication and compromise.
- *Interest-group liberalism*: A view that the political system is a mechanism for open negotiation amongst interest or issue groups.

As these assumptions can be regarded as the characteristics of organisations practising two-way symmetrical communication, the degree to which they currently relate to The Utility, is discussed below:

- Having identified the employees as critical stakeholders in achieving the goals and strategic intent of The Utility, its management portrays an acceptance of the principle of *interdependence* in their managerial approach.
- Dissemination of information amongst the employees of The Utility is taking place continuously. In addition, studies such as this that determines the degree of communication satisfaction amongst the employees of The Utility is an indication that The Utility is attempting to exchange information between itself and its employees. To an extent, this portrays an *open systems* approach.
- The Utility is not achieving the principle of *equilibrium* at present. With this base-line case study, the research objective is to determine the 'existence' of communication satisfaction. There is thus no attempt as yet to pro-actively determine the communication expectations or needs of employees, implying that The Utility's managers cannot cooperate and adjust to the communication expectations and needs of its employees as yet. Nevertheless, management is expecting employees to develop a mutual and shared understanding of the organisation's objectives, values and ethics.

- With the values of Equity, Integrity and Caring that are supporting The Utility's vision, the organisation is attempting to give equal opportunity to, and respect its employees - portraying the intention of *equity*.
- Within the scope of this study, the researcher cannot comment on the degree of autonomy that The Utility's employees are experiencing.
- Other assumptions of the two-way symmetrical world-view that do not have relevance to the scope of this study are innovation; decentralisation of management; responsibility; conflict resolution and interest-group liberalism. They will not be discussed here.

The researcher interprets excellent communication, inclusive of internal communication, as a core element of effective organisations. For The Utility to become an excellent organisation, its internal communication, amongst other things, has to function according to the assumptions which underlie two-way symmetrical communication.

The same is true if The Utility wants to transform to a customer orientated organisation and achieve more effective internal communication. Conducting a study to determine employee satisfaction with internal communication works towards the identification of issues. Through symmetrical communication programmes and dialogue, identified issues can be managed and the understanding of all parties improved. Bringing together The Utility's goals with the expectations of its employees thus contributes to better organisational effectiveness.

Organisations' survival largely depends on the support of the people who work for them. This can be brought about through, *inter alia*, excellent internal communication (Dozier *et al*, 1995:218). A few key characteristics underlie all excellent communication programmes. According to Dozier *et al* (1995:7), the best indicators of communication excellence are, *inter alia*, expertise in sophisticated communication practice, shared expectations about communication and a participative organisational culture.

According to Dozier *et al* (1995:7), shared expectations about communication, amongst other things, contribute to excellence in communication. The researcher argues that only once communication satisfaction is mutually understood, can it be managed effectively. Determining the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees of The Utility, or whether a need for communication satisfaction exists, can thus contribute to the communication excellence of The Utility to some degree.

Excellence in internal communication systems are described as two-way symmetrical in nature (Grunig, *in* Grunig, 1992b:231). Symmetrical communication takes place through dialogue, negotiation, listening and conflict management by senior managers (Grunig, *in* Grunig, 1992b:233).

These communication skills relate to some of Downs and Hazen's communication satisfaction constructs. The two-way symmetrical approach to internal communication (rather than persuasion, manipulation or the giving of orders) can bring about excellent internal communication.

Symmetrical communication is enhanced by participation from senior management communicating with stakeholders. Excellent organisations have leaders who rely on networking and management by walking around. Excellent leaders give people power but minimise power politics. At the same time, excellent leaders provide a vision and guidance for the organisation, creating order out of the chaos that empowerment of people can create (Grunig, *in* Grunig, 1992b:233). Participation by senior management can result in a participative culture amongst employees. Employees of excellent organisations share a sense of mission.

According to Grunig (*in* Grunig, 1992b:236) such employees are integrated by a strong culture that values symmetrical communication. Two-way symmetrical communication systems can bring about excellence in the form of collaboration, participation, trust and mutual responsibility (Grunig, *in* Grunig, 1992b:245). With The Utility's transformation strategy's pillar of Organisational Culture Change, its management is partly compliant with a two-way symmetrical communication system, as defined by Grunig. This is also true for The Utility's organisational value of 'Spirit of Partnership' - more so since management realised that the improvement of internal communication is a way to promote an organisational culture which is more reflective of its values (The Utility, 2003:12).

The researcher interprets excellent internal communication as a core element of excellent organisations. For The Utility to become an excellent organisation, its internal communication, *inter alia*, has to function according to the principles which underlie excellent communication. Conducting a study to determine employees' satisfaction with internal communication recognises two of these principles. The study can provide an understanding of communication satisfaction within The Utility and lead to the initiation of a participative organisational culture in the organisation.

Internal communication should also be focused on meeting employees' needs by knowing what information they want and how they prefer to get it (Reuss & DiSilvis, 1985:4). Meeting these needs is the key to gaining support for organisational objectives, policies and programmes and, in turn, excellent internal communication. People who feel they are important to an organisation are more likely to support that organisation than those who believe that management does not care about what they think (Reuss and DiSilvis, 1985:4).

Internal communication is so intertwined with the process of organising and with organisational structure, environment, power and culture that many theorists of organisational communication argue that organisations could not exist without communication (Grunig, *in* Grunig, 1992c:532). The importance of internal communication is emphasised by Grunig stating that it is one of the most important contributors to organisational effectiveness as it helps organisations define their goals, values and strategic stakeholders. It has an integral relationship with the conditions that make excellent communication possible. In turn, excellent communication helps to make organisations excellent overall (Grunig, *in* Grunig, 1992c:532).

Systems of internal communication are part of organisational structure and culture; yet they also create structure and culture. The environment affects how the people with power in an organisation construct its structure, culture and communication. In turn, the latter also affect who has power and how an organisation perceives and interacts with its environment (Grunig, *in* Grunig, 1992c:532). It is thus clear that internal communication's role in organisational survival demands strategic planning (D'Aprix, Smith, L. Grunig & Troy, *in* Grunig, 1992c:569).

Reuss and DiSilvis (1985:4) believe that top management should have an understanding of employees' communication needs. If The Utility's employees can be provided with the information they want in the manner in which it is preferred, it will take the organisation a step closer to what Dozier *et al* (1995:7) describe as a two-way symmetrical communication system of excellence. It can also result in increased communication satisfaction. Seen from a strategic point of view, the communication systems changes within The Utility can, in turn, influence its structure and culture (Grunig, *in* Grunig, 1992c:532).

Through the recognition of the importance of effective strategic internal communication and the implementation of the outcomes of an internal communication audit, the organisation's Top Management can be a step closer to their strategic intent of transforming The Utility to a customer orientated organisation. Realising that The Utility is not independent from, but rather dependent on, its employees portrays a two-way symmetric world-view which also facilitates the transformation process.

The recognition of the importance of the results of the internal communication audit and its implementation can lead management in creating a more participatory culture in The Utility - facilitating an excellent internal communication climate and, in turn, transforming The Utility into an excellent organisation.

## 2.4 Theoretical framework: human resource theory

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From a historical point of view, different management theories indicate different eras with different views on the importance of communication in organisations and how it affects organisational behaviour. Most theorists agree that the most important of these theories are the classical / scientific management theory and the human relations theory (Neher, 1997:61), as well as the human resource management theory (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1989:27). This study takes the latter as its theoretical framework. However, all three theories are discussed here so as to explain the evolution of management communication through the years, and thereby better understand the background to certain management styles and approaches within The Utility.

In the *classical management era*, scientific processes were applied to organisational management (Neher, 1997:64). The nature of communication during this era was formal and determined, inter alia, by the organisation's structure. In essence, communication direction was downward and instructional. Upward communication mainly consisted of reports to management. Communication activities were thus clearly defined according to hierarchical position. The classical management theory also deemed the internal management of organisations as being separate from its environment (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1989:32; Narayanan & Nath, 1993:32).

The establishment and history of The Utility in an autocratic mining and regulatory environment resulted in communication within The Utility being mostly influenced by the assumptions of the classical management era. Until recently ( $\pm$  2000), communication within The Utility was thus mainly downward and followed an asymmetrical communication approach.

In opposition to the scientific management era, was the *human relations movement* (Neher, 1997:85). According to Narayanan and Nath (1993:33), the human relations era was based on the assumption that humans want to feel useful and important and have a desire to belong and to be recognised as individuals. Gibson and Hodgetts (1989:35) regarded the communication in this era as still being formal, but the importance of informal systems of communication was gradually being recognised. Most communication was still downward, although methods of upward communication (such as suggestion boxes and complaint systems), were slowly being implemented. The purpose of communication was furthermore expanded from that of providing instructions to also making the employees feel needed. Horizontal communication gained ground with the establishment of cross-departmental committees (Meintjes, 2003:9).

The basis of the *human resource management* era (an approach currently followed by many modern organisations) is that work is not inherently unpleasant. Employees are given a say in setting job-related goals and determining how the work is to be done.

If people are properly motivated they will assume responsibility, exercise self-direction and self-control in carrying out their jobs (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1989:35). Communication during this era is, therefore, both formal and informal in nature. It takes whatever direction necessary to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. It is used to support participative planning and not just for control purposes. Furthermore, the purpose of communication is designed to tap the full potential of all individual members (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1989:46; Narayanan & Nath, 1993:40).

From a more contemporary point of view, new directions in the nature and processes of management are proposed by theorists such as Mintzberg, Kanter and Naisbitt. These directions require a greater emphasis on the communicating abilities of all leaders (Puth, 2002:12). Mintzberg (*in* Puth, 2002:8) pointed out leaders' dependence on orally communicated information. Kanter (*in* Puth, 2002:8,10) specified the reinvention of the management profession as a result of societal and organisational changes. She says that contemporary leadership realities create new relationships and thus new patterns of communication and interaction. Naisbitt (*in* Puth, 2002:10, 11) also provides significant insights into the demands to be met by management to keep abreast of and remain relevant in, the dynamic world of business. One of these is that human capital has replaced monetary capital as the strategic resource. Authoritarian management has thus yielded to a network, interactive, people-style of leadership.

With consideration of the preceding theories, there can be no doubt that communication is vital to all organisational management functions. In fact, Puth (2002:12) contends that without communication there can be no management. The communication skills of an organisation's leaders, and their understanding of communication, directly influence all other management functions in the organisation. In the same regard, Steyn and Groenewald (1996:3) maintain that top management, corporate communication managers and all other managers in an organisation should manage the process of internal communication to better achieve organisational goals. To ensure survival, organisations should take note of the fact that, if communication is bad, an organisation is likely to under-perform. If it is good, an organisation's performance and overall effectiveness will also be good (Goldhaber, Yates, Porter & Lesniak, *in* Steyn & Groenewald, 1996:4).

Puth (2002:4) states that for communication to become a force in business it has to be practised effectively by all organisational leadership. This view is reflected by O'Connor (*in* Steyn & Groenewald, 1996:10); regarding communication to be a legitimate and essential management function in organisations.

To achieve organisational goals, successful management communication is crucial because of its focus on the internal communication process. If management communication is practised successfully, employees will experience satisfaction, which, in turn, will have an impact on overall organisational effectiveness (Meintjes, 2003:8).

Currently, the management communication practice within The Utility stills reflects assumptions of the classical and human relations eras, but also some of the human resources management era. However, with the initiative to determine the extent to which of communication satisfaction exists amongst its employees, it seems that The Utility is striving to practise communication which is more in line with the communication style relevant to the human resources management era. In addition, The Utility's management is endeavouring also to determine the perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication of line managers. This endeavour partly conforms to the recommendations of Mintzberg, Kanter and Naisbitt around the communication skills of leaders. Following such approaches, The Utility will be able to adjust their communication (and specifically their management communication) practices to be more in line with the two-way symmetrical communication approach.

Realising the integration of communication with organisational management, the researcher points out that the attainment of communication satisfaction amongst employees is not the responsibility of the staff formally appointed in an internal communication department – they are but facilitators in the process. For The Utility to transform to a customer orientated organisation and achieve more effective internal communication, top executives right down to supervisors from all divisions and departments, should go about their daily managerial functions with a focus on ensuring communication satisfaction amongst their employees. This important concept in internal communication will be fully explicated in the following section.

## **2.5 Major concept: communication satisfaction**

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The core of this study focuses on the satisfaction of The Utility's internal stakeholders with regard to the communication behaviours of their superiors, the quality of mediums, organisational integration and communication climate. It is thus a typical micro level study (Steyn & Puth, 2000:169).

### **2.5.1 Different conceptualisations of communication satisfaction**

According to Hecht (1978b:47), "*The study of communication satisfaction is of vital importance to the communication field.*" Communication satisfaction is an outcome of communication behaviours and thus serves as the basis for a holistic, theoretical approach to the field.

In organisational settings, communication satisfaction has been consistently found to be crucial to job satisfaction, tasks performance, productivity, commitment and morale (Clampitt & Downs, 1993:7; Pincus, 1986:412; Varona, 1996:1). Given that communication satisfaction is vital to organisational life, this study makes a valuable contribution in pointing out to The Utility how to improve their communication with employees as their strategic stakeholders.

Researchers have provided several definitions of communication satisfaction since the term was first introduced in 1959 by Level (*in* Varona, 1996:4). Since then various definitions have been formulated to fit different contexts of communication. Hecht (*in* Hecht, 1978a:351) defined communication satisfaction from an interpersonal communication viewpoint. The concept's definition within a small group context has been coined by Trow as well as Mulder (*in* Hecht, 1978a:357). Seen from an organisational communication context, and thus relevant to this study, Downs and Hazen (*in* Hecht, 1978a:362) were the two main theorists defining communication satisfaction.

The Downs Hazen definition of communication satisfaction has been interpreted by Pincus (1986:399) as a summing-up of an individual's satisfaction with information flow and relationship variables. Crino and White (1981:831) adopted a simpler approach by defining communication satisfaction as an individual's satisfaction with various aspects of communication in their organisation. Clampitt and Downs (1993:6) defined communication satisfaction very similarly to Downs and Hazen, namely as an individual's satisfaction with various factors of communication in the organisation.

Hecht (1978b:47) pointed out that communication satisfaction provides an outcome criterion for assessing process variables and a means for organising communication strategies. Likewise Redding (*in* Downs & Hazen, 1977:64) referred to communication satisfaction as a measurable and meaningful tool in advancing the understanding of organisational communication. It enables communication researchers to apply communication theory and research in the pursuit of making everyday interaction, such as internal communication, more fulfilling (Hecht, 1978b:47).

Communication satisfaction and communication dissatisfaction are seen to be similar, dependant dimensions. Based on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, the dependence of satisfaction and dissatisfaction was assessed by various researchers (Hecht, 1978a:363). It appeared unlikely that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are separate, independent dimensions.

Another characteristic of communication satisfaction is that it is multi-dimensional (Downs, Hazen, Quiggens & Medley, *in* Downs & Hazen, 1977:68). This implies that employees can express varying degrees of satisfaction about definite dimensions and/or types of communication (Clampitt & Downs, 1993:6). Downs and Hazen's multi-dimensional clarification of communication satisfaction has been selected as the major concept of this study.

## 2.5.2 Downs and Hazen's factor analytic study of communication satisfaction

Traditionally communication satisfaction was thought to be a one-dimensional construct as evidenced by Thayer (1968:140), who defined it as the personal satisfaction inherent in successfully communicating to someone or in successfully being communicated with. In 1972, Redding (*in* Clampitt & Downs, 2004:140) reviewed some of the literature on communication satisfaction, exploring whether communication satisfaction may indeed be a multi-dimensional concept.

According to Clampitt and Downs (2004:140), two research efforts did suggest that communication satisfaction is indeed a multi-dimensional concept, namely that of Wiio in 1976 and Downs, Hazen, Medley and Quiggins in 1974. Wiio's work suggested four dimensions of communication satisfaction: job satisfaction, message content, improvement in communication and channel efficiency. He conducted 22 organisational communication audits in Finland and factor analysed the results.

Downs, Hazen, Quiggins and Medley (*in* Downs & Hazen, 1977:68) contributed to the empirical research on communication satisfaction and thus confidently defined communication satisfaction as a multi-dimensional, generalised feeling which employees have towards their total communication environment. The multi-dimensionality of communication satisfaction means that employees are not merely satisfied or dissatisfied with communication in general.

The eight distinct primary constructs of the Downs and Hazen's standardised Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire include communication climate, media quality, organisational integration, personal feedback, job information, supervisory communication, subordinate communication and horizontal communication. Researchers who found Downs and Hazen's communication satisfaction dimensions as well as their questionnaire valid are Varona (1996:4), Clampitt and Downs (1993:6), Crino and White (1981:832) and Pincus (1986:399).

According to Hecht (1978a:362), the three strongest, relatively stable factors are communication climate, supervisory communication and organisational integration. The researcher has thus selected these as constructs to be measured in this study. In addition, at the request of The Utility, media quality has also been selected. A detailed description of the four measuring constructs of this study follows.

### **2.5.3 Operationalisation of Downs and Hazen's constructs to be measured in this study**

The following constructs have been selected for exploration of Primary Objective 1 and measurement of Primary Objective 2:

#### **a) Communication climate**

The broad construct of communication climate reflects communication on both the organisational and personal level (Downs & Hazen, 1977:66). It reflects satisfaction with items such as:

- the extent to which communication in the organisation motivates and stimulates employees to meet organisational goals;
- the extent to which attitudes toward communication are perceived to be healthy;
- the extent to which supervisors know and understand the problems faced by subordinates; and
- the information about how employees are being assessed.

According to Downs and Hazen's (1977:68) studies, communication climate stands out as the single most important factor influencing communication satisfaction.

#### **b) Supervisory communication**

This construct includes upward and downward dimensions of communication between employees and their supervisors/managers. According to Downs and Hazen (1977:66), the principal items which operationalise this construct are:

- the extent to which employees' supervisors pay attention to them; and
- the extent to which employees' supervisors offer guidance for solving job related problems.

#### **c) Organisational integration**

Organisational integration refers to the degree to which employees receive information relevant to their jobs (Pincus, 1986:399). Downs and Hazen (1977:67) describe it as the reflection around satisfaction of employees with the information that they receive about the organisation and their immediate work environment. The items which operationalise this construct are:

- obtaining information about departmental policies and plans;
- the requirements of employees' jobs; and
- personnel news.

Clampitt and Downs (1993:6) defined organisational integration as corporate information, stating that it deals with the broadest kind of information about the organisation as a whole. They include items such as information and notification about:

- organisational changes;
- the organisation's financial standing; and
- the organisation's overall goals and policies.

#### **d) Media quality**

According to Downs and Hazen (1977:67), media quality reflects the degree to which employees perceive major forms of organisational media as functioning effectively. Of principal concern is the extent to which:

- meetings are well organised;
- the organisation's publications are helpful; and
- the right amount of communication is received.

### **2.5.4 Downs and Hazen's constructs not selected for this study**

A study of The Utility's terms of reference for the internal communication audit and aspects relative to internal communication in their Corporate Business Plan for the period 2003 to 2008 lead to the delimitation of communication satisfaction constructs from this study. Downs and Hazen's (1977:68) communication satisfaction constructs that are excluded from this study are discussed below.

#### **a) Subordinate communication**

Similar to supervisory communication, subordinate communication focuses on both upward and downward communication (Clampitt & Downs, 1993:7), with specific reference to subordinates.

According to Downs and Hazen (1977:68) the construct of subordinate communication reflects such items as the:

- extent to which subordinates are responsive to downward communication;
- extent to which they feel responsible for initiating upward communication; and
- degree to which the supervisor feels s/he has a communication overload.

This construct was not chosen as part of this study as it was felt that it will not provide relevant input to The Utility's immediate internal communication strategy. Instead the construct of supervisory communication was chosen as a point of departure.

#### **b) Personal feedback**

Satisfaction with personal feedback refers to what an individual knows about how his/her performance is being judged (Pincus, 1986:399). Personal feedback is concerned with employees' need to know how they are being judged and how their performance is being appraised.

Within the context of The Utility, personal feedback is seen as the function of the Human Resource Division. Thus, although some questions about personal feedback were prompted during the internal communication audit, it was not deemed sufficiently important to be measured separately.

#### **c) Job information**

Job information deals with the broadest kind of information about the organisation as a whole and reflects information relating to the overall functioning of the organisation (Downs & Hazen, 1977:67). According to these authors, this construct reflects whether or not employees receive information about government action affecting the organisation. It also includes items such as:

- notification about changes;
- information about the organisation's financial standing; and
- information about the overall policies and goals of the organisation.

This construct is also described as organisational perspective by Pincus (1986:399).

The researcher interpreted Downs & Hazen's (1977:67) description of job information to be similar to their construct of organisational integration. Thus, in the attempt to keep the measurement tools short to prevent interview fatigue, it was decided to omit the assessment of job information for the purpose of this study.

#### **d) Horizontal communication**

Also described as co-worker communication (Clampitt & Downs, 1993:7), this construct of communication satisfaction is concerned with the extent to which horizontal and informal communication is accurate and free flowing (Downs & Hazen, 1977:67).

Downs and Hazen (1977:67) listed the items included in the horizontal communication construct as the extent to which:

- the grapevine is active in the organisation;
- horizontal communication is accurate and free-flowing; and
- informal communication is accurate and free-flowing.

This construct was not chosen as part of this study as it was felt that it would not provide relevant input to The Utility's immediate internal communication strategy. Instead the construct of supervisory communication was chosen as a point of departure for this base-line study.

Downs and Hazen's items in their Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (ComSat) were selected on the basis of factor analysis out of an original pool of many items (Clampitt & Downs, 2004:139). Now composed of only 46 items, the ComSat has proved to be easy and quick to administer while being thorough in covering a variety of communication practices ranging from climate to supervisory communication. It has been the basis for more than 30 PhD dissertations and MA theses and has also proven to be useful for research in a variety of organisations; manufacturing plants, television stations, school districts, consulting firms, banks, hotels, airlines, etc. ComSat has also been used productively in 14 different countries, thus illustrating its practical significance.

Downs, Hazen, Medley and Quiggins used empirical procedures to investigate the communication satisfaction question. From an examination of the literature, other satisfaction measures, three pilot studies and interviews, 88 items were constructed (Hecht, 1978a:362). From the 88 items, they developed a questionnaire and administered it to 225 employees from different kinds of organisations. The results were factor analysed and a new questionnaire was refined and applied in four different organisations. Factor analysis led to the identification of eight stable dimensions of communication satisfaction. These were satisfaction with: communication climate, organisational integration, supervisory communication, media quality, horizontal and informal communication, organisational perspective, communication with subordinates and satisfaction with personal feedback.

Downs and Hazen (1977:72) concluded that the various constructs of their communication satisfaction questionnaire can be a useful tool in auditing internal organisational communication. Hecht's remarks (*in* Clampitt & Downs, 2004:141) on the ComSat were mainly positive. He noted that the thoroughness of the construction of this satisfaction measurement is apparent. While the fatigue factor could be of concern, the strategies employed in the original study are exemplary. Hecht did however also have criticisms regarding Downs and Hazen's ComSat. He questioned internal consistency and reliability for each dimension and also noted that validity as a whole is lacking.

Crino and White (1981:836) reported a study that answered most of Hecht's concerns. The researchers sought to determine the dimensional stability and intra-scale internal consistency of the tool. The results showed that the eight-factor solution is reasonable. They concluded that the ComSat provides a uniquely theoretical and empirically sound method of gathering information about organisational communication.

## 2.6 Communication skills of supervisors as the second concept measured in this study

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To achieve Primary Objective 3, supervisory communication skills have been selected for measurement in this study.

Much emphasis has been placed on the communicating abilities of all leaders (Mintzberg; Kanter; Naisbitt, *in* Puth, 2002:12). Line managers' and supervisors' communication skills have an impact on the effectiveness of internal communication – from the top right down to the bottom. Supervisory communication therefore plays a critical role in the success of organisations achieving their goals (Tubbs & Moss, 2000:422).

Supervisory communication refers to immediate supervisors' vertical communication that mainly facilitates delegation and reporting functions in an organisation. According to Pincus (1986:399), supervisors' openness to ideas and willingness to listen influences effective supervisory communication.

This type of communication helps employees to solve problems, encourages employees to develop new skills and to participate in important decisions. It has also been suggested that organisational internal relationship satisfaction is largely dependant on supervisors' openness (Jablin, *in* Avtgis & Brogan, 1997:66) and supervisors' overall communication (Redding, *in* Avtgis & Brogan, 1997:66). In turn, Hawkins and Fillion (1997:167) identified communication skills as essential for success in work group contexts.

Furthermore, in a study to describe managers' perceived importance of management communication skills, both functional and communication managers perceived management (supervisory) communication skills as very important (Groenewald, 1998c:13). There is also a growing awareness that managers' performance is dependent on their level of communication skills. Communication and management are thus undeniably linked as a result of the nature of management as well as the responsibility of managers/supervisors. Wilcox, Ault & Agee (*in* Groenewald, 1998c:14) report that about 75% of management's time is allocated to communication related activities.

Since the communication skills of line managers and supervisors are of great importance in achieving communication satisfaction amongst employees, the second concept to be measured in this base-line study is the communication skills of supervisors.

The importance of supervisory communication is emphasised by Puth and Ewing (1998:108) in stating that communication skills are the top barrier to internal communication.

Noting the role of supervisors' communication in organisational internal relationship satisfaction, together with the importance of communication skills, the researcher identified the following communication skills relevant to supervisors and their functions as communicators (pertaining to Primary Objective 3):

- *Acting on feedback* (Hawkins & Fillion, 1997:168).
- *Active listening* (Downs & Hazen, 1977:67; Puth & Ewing, 1998:108; Harrop & Varey, 1998:127; Cheney & Carroll, 1997:526; Cooper & Buchanan, 1997:48 & 52; Hawkins & Fillion, 1997:167).
- *Channelling information to those accountable* (Waller & Michael, 1998:88; Hawkins & Fillion, 1997:168).
- *Clarifying meaning* (Downs & Hazen, 1977:67; Karathanos, 1998:67; Waller & Michael, 1998:87; Hackley, 1998:96; Cheney & Carroll, 1997:526; Hawkins & Fillion, 1997:168).
- *Demonstrating empathy* (Cheney & Carroll, 1997:539; Hawkins & Fillion, 1997:168; Kassing, 2000:393).
- *Encouraging feedback* (Karathanos, 1998:66; Cheney & Carroll, 1997:526; Hawkins & Fillion, 1997:168; Kassing, 2000:393).
- *Encouraging input* (Harrop & Varey, 1998:127; Cheney & Carroll, 1997:526; Hawkins & Fillion 1997:168; Kassing, 2000:393).
- *Facilitating cohesion* (Downs & Hazen, 1977:67; Hackley, 1998:97; Puth & Ewing, 1998:107 & 108; Cheney & Carroll, 1997:528; Hawkins & Fillion, 1997:168).
- *Managing conflict* (Hawkins & Fillion, 1997:168; Martin & Anderson, 1997:370).
- *Mentoring* (Karathanos, 1998:68; Puth & Ewing, 1998:108; Hawkins & Fillion, 1997:168).
- *Motivating employees* (Downs & Hazen, 1977:66; Waller & Michael, 1998:87; Puth & Ewing, 1998:108; Harrop & Varey, 1998:127; Hawkins & Fillion, 1997:168; Kassing, 2000:393).
- *Providing guidance* (Downs & Hazen, 1977:67; Waller & Michael, 1998:88; Hackley, 1998:93; Puth & Ewing, 1998:107 & 108; Avtgis & Brogan, 1997:66).
- *Skills in conducting meetings* (Puth & Ewing, 1998:108; Harrop & Varey, 1998:127; Kassing, 2000:393; Anderson & Martin, 2001: 241).

Other skills mentioned include, amongst others, the skill to motivate, leadership skills, the ability to communicate change, interpersonal communication skills, problem solving- and decision making skills, planning- and organisational skills as well as negotiation skills (Puth, 1994; Kitchen & White, 1992; Newsom *et al*, 1996:12-13; Gibson, 1993:46; Turk, 1989:49; Black, 1988:31; Baskin, 1989; McGovern, 1993:7; Kanter, 1989:88; Neelankavil, 1994:9, *in* Groenewald, 1998c:16).

In this case study, the specific need to determine the perceived importance of supervisory communication skills relevant to The Utility results from the large, diversified and dispersed workforce of The Utility. If the communication skills of supervisors can be improved through communication skills development, the effective vertical flow of information within The Utility will also improve and, hence, also the internal communication.

The construct of supervisory communication was also the interest of Mueller and Lee (2002:1). Their study explored the extent to which the quality of upward and downward dimensions of communication between employees and their supervisors affects subordinates' perceptions of communication satisfaction. The term that they gave for this causal relationship was the leader-membership exchange. Findings indicated that the quality of leader-membership exchange strongly influences subordinates' communication satisfaction.

This was true in the context of interpersonal communication (personal feedback and supervisory communication), group communication (co-worker communication and organisational integration in the workgroup) and organisational communication contexts (corporate climate, organisational integration and media quality). Furthermore, subordinates' leader-membership exchange with their superiors is closely coupled within larger group and organisational contexts within respect to communication satisfaction (Mueller & Lee, 2002:1).

An essential premise of the leader-membership exchange theory is that leaders and supervisors have limited amounts of personal, social and organisational resources (time, energy, role, discretion). They thus distribute such resources among their subordinates selectively (Dansereau, *in* Mueller & Lee, 2002:3). Over time this results in the formation of leader-membership exchanges that vary in quality.

Interactions in higher quality leader-membership exchanges are characterised by increased levels of information exchange, mutual support, trust, greater participative decision making and higher levels of communication satisfaction (Mueller & Lee, 2002:3). Thus, the higher the levels of leader-membership exchange, the more subordinates reported higher levels of communication satisfaction in the superior-subordinate context, and beyond it (Mueller & Lee, 2002:9, 10). The quality of leader-membership exchange is strongly and positively related to communication satisfaction in larger group and organisational contexts. Mueller and Lee (2002:10) explain this in that the leader-membership exchange quality not only affects subordinates' satisfaction with communication from supervisors but also their satisfaction with communication practices within group and organisational contexts as a whole. The leader-membership exchange quality is thus a powerful predictor of communication satisfaction in organisations.

Because of the overwhelming evidence as to the importance of supervisory communication skills, the latter was selected as the second concept to be measured in this study.

## **2.7 Chapter conclusion**

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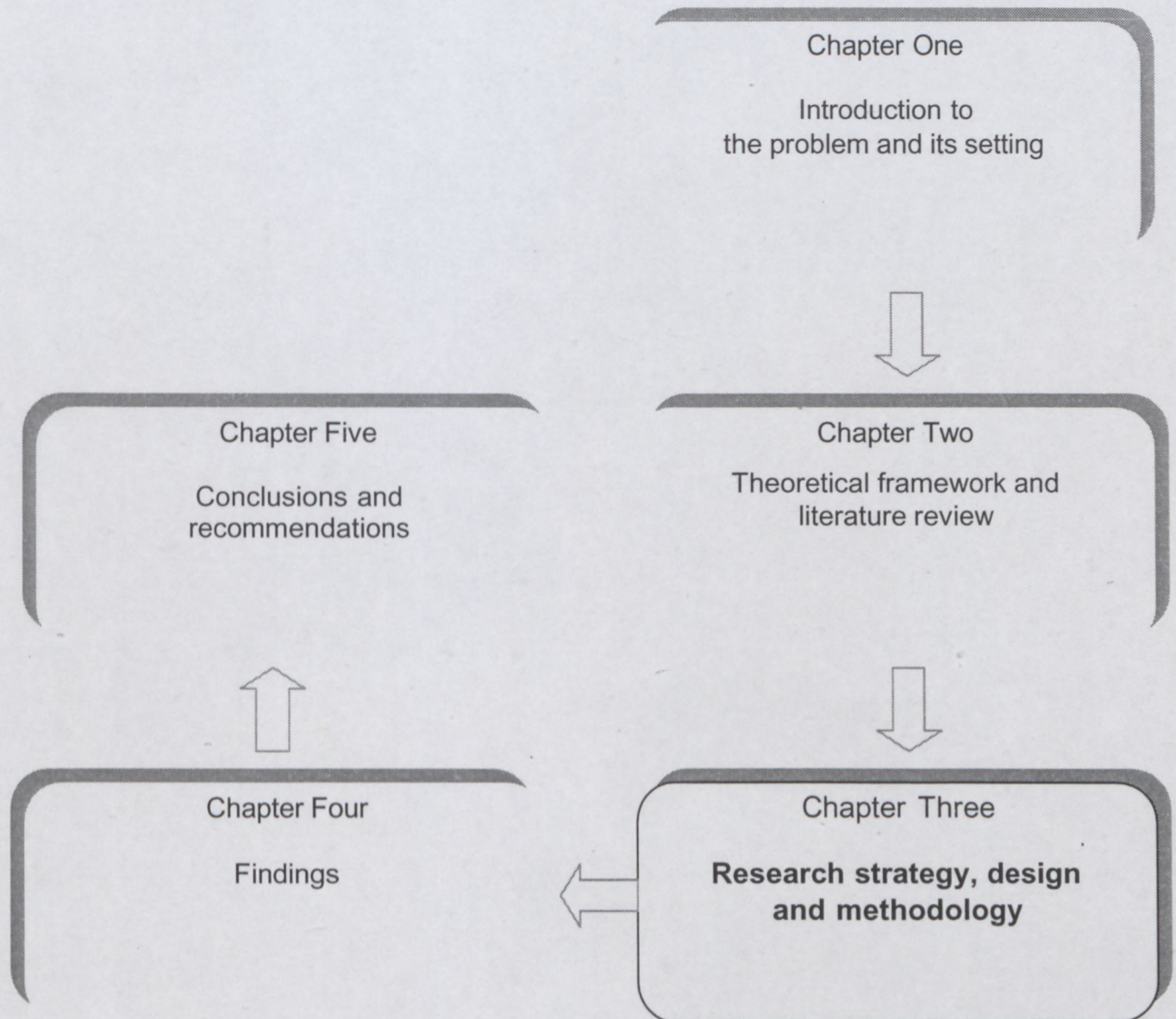
The insights obtained in this Chapter were firstly concerned with the sub-domain in which this study is positioned, namely management communication. Management's quality and effectiveness can be judged by the degree to which they contribute to communication satisfaction. Two other important aspects also came to the fore: i) that communication is inherent in all leadership functions and ii) that the quality and effectiveness of management communication will determine the success of the organisation as a whole.

Secondly, it became clear that the Excellence approach for public relations and communication management (Dozier *et al*, 1995) is also a core element of excellent organisations. Selected as the meta-theoretical framework for this study, excellence in internal communication systems is described as two-way symmetrical in nature. The need for, and benefits of, such an approach is emphasised when conducting an internal communication audit and studying its findings (such as the one conducted and reported on in this study).

Thirdly, the different management communication theories in the literature make obvious the reasons why employee communication satisfaction does not always exist in organisations. Management practice with regard to communication needs to be adjusted to ensure increased employee communication satisfaction. The theories of management communication made it clear that top management should have an understanding of employees' communication needs. Internal communication should be improved to such an extent that it would lead to satisfaction of the communication needs of employees. In turn, this will be a step towards making The Utility an excellent organisation.

Lastly, the description of the concepts of communication satisfaction and supervisory communication skills provided a detailed clarification with regards to the objectives presented in Chapter One. It also provided a basis for the selection of the research strategy, design and methodology of the study—to be discussed in detail in the following Chapter.

## Outline of the research report



*In the preceding Chapter, this study was placed within a theoretical framework and the concepts clarified. This Chapter develops the research strategy, design and methodology, according to three phases: Phase 1 employs a qualitative approach and Phases 2 and 3 are quantitative. The research design is a case study, while the methodology is a communication audit. Detail on sampling procedures, the two research elements (communication satisfaction and supervisory communication skills), data collection and analysis, reliability and validity is also provided.*

### 3.1 Introduction

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This research should be seen as a base-line study since no other research to determine similar aspects of internal communication has been conducted in The Utility thus far. This research was, therefore, a method of empirically and objectively observing and describing firstly, the extent to which communication satisfaction currently exists amongst the employees of The Utility and secondly, the perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication of line managers.

This kind of communication research, called scanning research, is part of the problem-defining stage of communication (Dozier & Repper, *in* Grunig, 1992:186). Scanning research moves through the three phases of problem detection, exploration and description. The aim of scanning research is the early detection of emerging issues as well as quantification of existing or known problems in the environment (Dozier, *in* Dozier & Repper, 1992:187).

Considering the short time that The Utility's' internal communication function has been operating formally, the use of scanning research fits the research objectives. As The Utility's management realised that they were not well informed as to the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst their employees and which communication skills were deemed important for line management, this study explored and described relevant research objectives by using both a qualitative and quantitative approach.

A further reason for using both qualitative and quantitative research was the diversity of the workforce. The nature of The Utility's business requires a wide spectrum of workplace skills. Employees with a range of different workplace skill levels pose a significant communication challenge within The Utility. According to their skills capacity, the different levels of employees all have different communication needs. Two groups on opposite sides of the employee profile are described below.

The highly educated and skilled scientific and technical employees often have a low need for interaction and communication. However, due to their contribution to water purification and watershed technology, these employees have a huge influence on the way in which The Utility functions, as well as the standard.

Unskilled, semi-literate and illiterate employees constitute ±55% of The Utility's workforce. In contrast with the educated and skilled employees, this group has a high need for personal interaction and face-to-face communication. The different South African vernaculars spoken by this group present a further communication challenge.

The Utility's workforce is scattered across seven geographically diverse sites. It is the only water supply utility in the world that has to provide water to a major industrial and urban complex that is not situated on a river or waterway. The Utility has to pump water to Gauteng, situated  $\pm 70$ km from the Vaal Dam and 375m above it in altitude. The workforce is dispersed as a result of the distance and altitude of the requisite 3 000 kilometres of piping infrastructure.

<b>Occupational categories</b>	<b>Total number of employees</b>	<b>Job level</b>
Legislators, senior officials and managers	125	P
Professionals	216	O
Technicians and associate professionals	390	N
Clerks	353	M
Service and sales workers	360	L
Skilled agricultural and fishery worker	1	K
Craft and related trade workers	202	J
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	255	I
Elementary occupations	1 274	H
<i>Total</i>	<i>3 176</i>	

Table 3.1: The Utility's employee profile, March 2003 (The Utility, 2003:23).

In view of the above, Phase 1 concentrated on the illiterate employees, i.e. job levels H, I and J where data was extracted by means of focus groups. In Phase 2, a survey was conducted amongst job levels K to P. In Phase 3, data was obtained by means of a computerised rank ordering tool, amongst The Utility's Top Management and Site Communication Officers. It is an assumption of this study that using both qualitative and quantitative research increases the validity of the research, if conducted amongst very diverse populations. More detail in this regard is provided in subsequent sections.

## 3.2 Phase 1: Qualitative research (focus groups)

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In this phase, Research Objective 1 was to be achieved, namely 'To explore qualitatively the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels H, I and J of The Utility.'

### 3.2.1 Research approach

The research approach or strategy is a road map, an overall approach for undertaking a systematic exploration of the phenomenon of interest (Marshall & Rossman *in* Steyn, 2000:4). A qualitative research approach was selected to explore the concept and constructs of communication satisfaction, thus achieving Primary Objective 1.

Qualitative research involves an analytical and interpretative, non-numeric assessment and interpretation of observations for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings from the perspective of the research participants. Events or unrelated variables are not controlled. The purpose of qualitative research is to capture the normal flow of events (Du Plooy, *in* Steyn, 2000:4).

According to Marshall (*in* Steyn, 2000:5), a qualitative study is research: "that delves in depth into complexities and processes; on little-known phenomena; on unstructured processes in organisations; that cannot be done experimentally for practical reasons; and for which relevant variables have yet to be identified".

Based on Marshall's description above, a qualitative approach was selected for this phase for the following reasons. Firstly because the participants in this phase of the study were mostly illiterate and had difficulty in understanding English. It was thus practically impossible for these participants to complete self-administered questionnaires. It was also not feasible to have many interviewers conducting one-on-one interviews with the participants from this sample - specifically because of the language problem. Secondly, they were all elementary workers doing similar types of work but scattered over Gauteng. Thus, although they were in an interrelated milieu, the sample was also from multi-contextual settings resulting in multi-perspectives. Conducting qualitative research amongst such a relatively diverse and unstructured composition allowed for the exploration of complexities, processes and relevant constructs.

Exploration is particularly useful when the researcher lacks a clear idea of the problems they will meet during the study. Through exploration, researchers develop concepts more clearly, establish priorities and improve the final research design. It can also assist in formulating hypotheses for further research (Cooper & Schindler, 2003:151).

With this phase of the research, The Utility's management was exploring a problem, i.e. the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst its employees. It also assisted in establishing communication priorities relevant to the sample's population and in formulating hypotheses for further studies in The Utility.

### **3.2.2 Research design**

A research design is the blueprint for fulfilling research objectives. It determines, inter alia, the research techniques, sampling plans and data collection procedures and is the principal methodology to resolve the research objectives (Cooper & Schindler, 2003:81).

The design for Phase 1 was a case study. This is a type of qualitative research in which a single entity or phenomenon (in this case The Utility) is explored and analysed, bounded by time and activity. Detailed information is collected by means of various data collection procedures over a sustained period of time. It is an in-depth study of each case in its natural context (Leedy, 1980:157).

In this instance, the aim was to produce detailed descriptions of the research element, communication satisfaction. The researcher spent a specific period of time on-site with the focus group participants, collecting a substantial amount of data.

### **3.2.3 Research method**

The research method for Phase 1 was a communication audit. The latter can be described as an objective report of an organisation's internal communication (Frank & Brownell, *in* Hargie & Tourish, 2000:23). The description of a communication audit is expanded by Emmanuel (1985:50) as being a comprehensive and thorough study of communication philosophy, concepts, structure, flow and practice within an organisation.

The communication audit thus played a significant role in qualitatively exploring the status quo of communication satisfaction amongst the employees from job levels H, I and J of The Utility. The aim was to provide Top Management with an objective picture of what is happening compared with what they thought was happening. The communication audit also assisted the researcher with, inter alia:

- qualitatively exploring the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst employees;
- qualitatively exploring which elements of communication satisfaction need to be improved; and
- providing guidelines for the formulation of a formal internal communication strategy based on the findings of the study.

### **3.2.4 Element**

In Phase 1, the research element was communication satisfaction. An element is the basic unit or 'thing' about which information is collected (Smith, *in* Steyn, 2000:23).

Primary Objective 1 was limited to exploring four constructs of Downs and Hazen's (1977:68) communication satisfaction concept. The rationale of limiting the study to the four constructs of communication satisfaction was mainly because of practical resource constraints and the specific needs of The Utility. One of The Utility's needs was to obtain feedback on the quality of their internal communication mediums (media quality). Compromising between this need and the theoretical foundation of the study, the researcher followed Hecht's (1978a:362) theory that communication climate, supervisory communication and organisational integration are the three strongest, relatively stable constructs of the communication satisfaction concept. The focus-group moderator guide thus explored these four constructs as per the Downs and Hazen's concept of communication satisfaction.

### **3.2.5 Research environment**

The data collection of Phase 1 occurred under The Utility's normal environmental conditions.

### **3.2.6 Research time dimension**

The research was carried out once, thus representing a snapshot of the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees of job levels H, I and J at one specific point in time. Phase 1 of the study was conducted from March 10 to March 23, 2004.

### **3.2.7 Population**

The population is the totality of entities in which there is interest and about which inferences are made (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 2000:10). The population for this study was all The Utility's employees, i.e. all job levels. The population size was therefore 3 176 employees.

### **3.2.8 Sampling frame**

Lists of employees from job levels H, I and J were used to extract the sample for Phase 1.

### **3.2.9 Sample**

The sample for Phase 1's focus groups was the following: *a stratified sample of support staff from job levels H and I & J* (two sub-samples) from all sites. These participants were representative of the population.

The sample relevant to this phase was low job level workers who are mostly illiterate and who had difficulty in understanding English. Although they were all support workers, they were representative of different job categories ranging from craft and related trade workers, plant and machine operators and assemblers to other elementary occupations. They were also scattered over the seven different, remote sites of The Utility. Thus, although they were in an interrelated milieu, the sample was drawn from multi-contextual settings, resulting in multi perspectives.

The rationale of having two sub-samples in this phase was only to prevent intimidation by more senior participants. Job level H includes participants who are more senior supervisors inclined to intimidate and dominate participants from job levels I and J. This was a suggestion made at the participative workshop held with key players at The Utility.

### **3.2.9.1 Sample size**

The sample size for the employees relevant to this qualitative phase was 360. This was compiled from:

- job level H (180); and
- job levels I and J (180).

### **3.2.9.2 Sample dimensions**

As the dimensions of sampling are closely linked to the question of validity (Steyn, 2000:31), the geographical and temporal elements were considered during Phase 1 of this study. This was done to guarantee the smooth implementation of the fieldwork as to ensure an acceptable response rate and validity of the study.

The temporal dimension refers specifically to the time period in which the research is conducted. The fieldwork for Phase 1 took place within a fourteen-day period during March 2004. The specific time when this fieldwork was done had no temporal relevance and thus had no effect on the validity of the study.

As the qualitative phase of the fieldwork took place at The Utility's different sites around Gauteng, a geographical dimension was indeed present. The implementation of the focus groups presented the biggest challenge in this regard, since the participants often had to be transported from remote plants spread across Gauteng to a specific site that was more accessible to the research team. In all instances, this was successfully arranged by the Site Communication Officers. They also ensured that facilities were available that could accommodate the focus group meeting. All that was then needed was for the researcher and translator to meet the participants at the relevant sites.

The geographical dimension did thus not affect the validity of the focus groups as a measurement instrument.

### **3.2.10 Measuring instrument**

The data collection method used for Phase 1 was focus groups. The latter can be described as watching people in their own territory and interacting with them in their own language, on their own terms.

Using focus groups within a qualitative approach in Phase 1, together with the questionnaire and computerised ranking tool used in Phases 2 and 3, meant that this research study comprised numerous observations in different contexts. This ensured triangulation, which is a requirement of case study research.

Collecting data by means of focus groups, allowed for some flexibility during application. However, to ensure some degree of triangulation with the quantitative part of this study, the focus groups were fairly structured in their design so as to provide data on the same concept, namely communication satisfaction (based on Downs and Hazen's theory). Through a more subjective approach, the researcher collected the research data in association with participants.

For participatory and transparency purposes, the original design of the focus group moderator guide was discussed with key players at The Utility before it was administered. Due to the context in which this study took place, the content and structure of this research methodology was discussed and amended according to reasonable suggestions made by the key players. There was participation from The Utility's communication management team, Site Communication Officers, employee representatives and unions.

#### **3.2.10.1 Data collection procedure**

Fourteen focus groups were scheduled with support staff who do not understand English and/or who are illiterate. Facilitated by a translator, focus groups were held at all seven of The Utility sites, inclusive of its head office. Two focus groups of one and a half hours each were scheduled at each site. One focus group was conducted with participants on job level H and another with participants on job levels I and J.

The administration of the focus groups is discussed below.

- Site Communication Officers were provided with name lists of semi- and illiterate employees in job levels H, I and J from the respective sites. The Site Communication Officers arranged for the researcher and facilitator to meet with the focus group participants on pre-arranged dates and times.

- To break the ice, the facilitators made small talk with the participants. This included general comments about the site, the number of participants present, etc. - mostly done by the translator who had a good rapport with the participants.

The rationale of the internal communication audit and the importance of the focus groups were then explained. According to Mariampolski (*in* Dozier & Repper, 1992:192) such rapport-building exercises establish good communication between facilitator and participants. They also serve to clarify the task ahead of the group.

- The fact that the facilitators were independent from The Utility was made clear.
- It was also made clear to participants that the focus groups were anonymous. Of importance was WHAT was said, not WHO said it.
- The importance of them providing the researchers with accurate information was emphasised.
- The reason for the recording of responses was explained.
- Focus group discussions were initiated by allowing participants to define the nature of the dialogue through their responses to very broad questions. These questions were, for example, about the climate of communication. Mariampolski (*in* Dozier & Repper, 1992:192) defined this as the exploration phase of a focus group.
- Dialogue was then guided to more specific areas of interest such as supervisory communication.
- Specific verbal and written communication mediums were then evaluated.
- Lastly, during the focus groups' closing phase, any untapped information was explored by asking if there was anything else that they wanted to add to the dialogue (Mariampolski, *in* Dozier & Repper, 1992:192).
- All responses of the focus groups were considered during final data analysis.

### 3.2.10.2 Focus group moderator guide

In the focus groups, different questions probed different constructs of communication satisfaction. These questions are listed below:

- a) The construct of communication climate was probed through these items:
- ***"In general..."***
    - *"Do you receive information and messages on time?"*
    - *"Does mutual trust around communication exist? For instance, do you trust the information/messages/mediums that you get? Do you think that the messages/information that you give to The Utility is trusted?"*
    - *"Do you think that the information/messages /mediums that you get are credible? That is, can they be believed?"*

- *“Do the information/messages /mediums/communication processes that you get make you more committed to The Utility? Do the information/messages /mediums that you get make you understand that The Utility is committed to you?”*
- *“What are barriers to communication within The Utility? What prevents you from understanding messages/information/mediums?”*
- ***“How can communication be improved?”***
- ***“What do you expect the internal communications department to do for you?”***

b) The construct of supervisory communication was probed through these items:

- ***“Does your supervisor convey your messages to management?”***
- ***“Do you get feedback on queries/suggestions/ complaints that you have had?”***

c) The construct of organisational integration was probed through these items:

- ***“Do you get information about... ”***
- *“The Utility’s vision?”*
- *“Programmes initiated and presented by The Utility (Employee Well-being, HIV/Aids, business initiatives, Equity, etc)?”*
- *“Your job expectations?”*
- *“Your job performance?”*
- ***“About what would you like to get more information.... ?”***

d) The construct of media quality was probed through these items:

- ***“In general... ”***
- *“Are the information/messages /mediums that you get accurate?”*
- *“Are the information/messages/mediums that you receive clear, understandable and relevant?”*
- *“Do you experience overload or underload of information? For instance, do you get too much or too little information?”*

- *"Are the information/messages /mediums that you get consistent?"*
  
- ***"Verbal communication..."***
  - *"Do you have workplace meetings/briefing sessions? If so, what happens at these meetings?"*
  - *"Do you have 'Let's Talk meetings'? If so, what happens at these meetings?"*
  - *"Have you had an Imbizo at this plant/site? If so, what happened at the Imbizo?"*
  - *"Have the Chief Executive and General Managers been on road shows to this plant/site? If so, what happens at these road shows?"*
  - *"Do you have Site Forum Meetings? If so, what happens at these meetings?"*
  - *"How does your management communicate to people that cannot read?"*
  - *"Do you have social functions and informal get-togethers? If so, what happens at these functions?"*
  - *"Which verbal communication tool do you prefer?"*
  
- ***"Written communication and publications..."***
  - *"Do you get Aquavita? If so, do you read it/understand it/find it useful?"*
  - *"Do you get H<sub>2</sub>O? If so, do you read it/understand it/find it useful?"*
  - *"Do you get Lerothodi? If so, do you read it/understand it/find it useful?"*
  - *"Do you get brochures and pamphlets? If so, do you read them/understand them/find them useful?"*
  - *"Do you have notice boards? If so, do you use them/find them useful?"*
  - *"Do you get memoranda? If so, do you read them/understand them/find them useful?"*
  - *"Do you see cloakroom posters? If so, do you read them/understand them/find them useful?"*
  - *"Which written communication tool do you prefer?"*

### 3.2.11 Data analysis methods

The outcome of this phase is ultimately to make recommendations for the formulation of the formal internal communication strategy. The effective analysis and interpretation of the data collected through the qualitative research method was thus crucial. Through inductive reasoning, the researcher interpreted participants' communication satisfaction, i.e. their satisfaction with communication climate, supervisory communication, organisational integration and media quality.

As with the data analysis techniques applied with quantitative research methodologies, data analysis relevant to qualitative research methodologies enables researchers to organise and bring meaning to large amounts of data. According to Struwig and Stead (2001:172), qualitative data analysis provides researchers with reasonable insights that were not obvious at first glance. The researcher ensured that the interpretations of the qualitative data did not deviate from the study's research objectives.

The researcher also ensured that original interview transcripts were complete and kept safely. These transcripts were the verbatim reports of comments made by participants during the focus group meetings. Once the raw data was organised and summarised, transcripts were rephrased and grammatical corrections were made.

To guide the data analysis process in Phase 1, propositions were set. Propositions are statements about concepts that may be judged as true or false if they refer to observable phenomenon (Cooper & Schindler, 2003:50). The propositions explored with regard to Primary Objective 1, are the following:

• P <sub>1</sub>	Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with the communication climate within The Utility.
• P <sub>2</sub>	Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with supervisory communication within The Utility.
• P <sub>3</sub>	Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with organisational integration within The Utility.
• P <sub>4</sub>	Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with media quality within The Utility.

### 3.2.12 Reliability

To ensure reliability during the qualitative phase of the research, the researcher consistently applied the same procedure during exploration. According to Mason (*in Steyn, 2000:47*), data collection and analysis of qualitative research should not only be appropriate to the research objective but also thorough, careful, honest and accurate.

The focus group moderator guide that was used during each focus group session attempts to elicit as much information about the four selected constructs of communication satisfaction as possible. During the analysis of transcripts, the researcher ensured that all responses were considered for final analysis. This approach takes into account Mason's recommendation that thoroughness increases the reliability of qualitative research.

The researcher was careful in the conducting of the focus groups to ensure that all comments were captured verbatim. The translator facilitating the focus groups was also made aware of being very careful to interpret precisely to both the participants and to the researcher. The translator was also briefed to be careful not to lead the participants in any way or not to make any biased statements. During the analysis of transcripts, the researcher took care to analyse all comments objectively.

The research team was honest with the participants of the focus group about the rationale of the communication audit and the focus groups. The role and responsibilities of the team was made clear in the sense that the researcher's role was only to capture the employees' views, analyse it and present it to The Utility's management. The Utility's management's accountability, in terms of amending their communication initiatives according to the comments and recommendations of participants, was made clear.

The researcher was also honest in her analysis and interpretation of participants' comments. The report presented to The Utility's management was an honest reflection of the focus group sample's responses.

The importance of focus group participants providing the researchers with accurate information was emphasised during each introduction session. That did not, however, ensure that the information gathered was accurate. It was hoped that the participants would provide accurate information by explaining to them that if they did not do so, their current communication needs and related problems would not be addressed. As they could only benefit from providing accurate information, it is thus assumed that the information they provided was accurate.

None of the focus groups lasted longer than two hours. This prevented interview fatigue which, in turn, increases the accuracy of the information which participants provided. Only one of the focus groups included more than 15 participants. With a relatively small group, it was possible to transcribe with more accuracy.

### **3.2.13 Validity**

The researcher ensured validity by seeing that the focus group moderator guide measured what it was purported to measure. In Phase 1, Primary Objective 1 was to be achieved namely '*To explore qualitatively the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels H, I and J of The Utility.*' In the sense that the moderator guide relevant to the focus groups covered all the constructs relevant to communication satisfaction, it was valid. However, the validity of the focus groups as a measuring instrument was negatively affected by the time constraints on conducting each focus group. With only one and a half hour for each focus group, the number of measuring items on the focus group moderator guides that could be discussed was limited.

In the opinion of the researcher, the extent to which the focus group as a measuring instrument provided accurate coverage of communication satisfaction and its constructs was not ideal. The content validity of the focus groups could have been better.

### **3.3 Phase 2: Quantitative research (questionnaire)**

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In this phase. Research Objective 2 was to be achieved, namely 'To determine quantitatively the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.'

#### **3.3.1 Research approach**

A quantitative research approach was selected to measure the concept of communication satisfaction and its constructs, thereby achieving Primary Objective 2. The research element and concepts/constructs in this phase had theoretical origin.

The origins of quantitative research in positivism explain its theoretical, deductive nature that aims to establish relationships between concepts/constructs. The focus of the research is on the individual. The research data is collected and analysed in numeric value in an attempt to test hypotheses, which clarify why things are the way they are (Struwig & Stead, 2001:5, 19). The measures designed during a quantitative research process are standardised throughout most research projects. This improves generalisation as well as replication possibilities.

According to Struwig and Stead (2001:6), the unit of analysis in quantitative research is focused only on individuals' aggregated responses. However, Babbie (1992:93) states that units of analysis for quantitative research could also be groups, organisations and social artefacts.

#### **3.3.2 Research design**

The design for Phase 2 was a case study.

#### **3.3.3 Research method**

The research method for Phase 2 was a communication audit, quantitatively determining the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst The Utility's employees from job levels K to P. The aim was to provide to Top Management with an objective picture of what is happening compared with what they thought was happening. The communication audit also assisted the researcher with, inter alia:

- determining quantitatively the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst employees;
- determining quantitatively which elements of communication satisfaction need to be improved; and
- providing guidelines for the formulation of a formal internal communication strategy based on the findings of the study.

### **3.3.4 Element**

As in Phase 1, the research element in this phase was communication satisfaction. Primary Objective 2 was set to determine the extent of employee communication satisfaction. Secondary objectives 1 to 4 were set to determine the extent of employee satisfaction with four specific constructs of the Downs and Hazen's (1977:68) communication satisfaction concept. The rationale of limiting the study to four of the eight constructs of communication satisfaction was mainly because of practical resource constraints and the specific needs of The Utility. One of The Utility's needs was to get feedback about the quality of their internal communication mediums (media quality). Compromising between this need and the theoretical foundation of the study, the researcher followed Hecht's (1978a:362) theory that communication climate, supervisory communication and organisational integration indicate the three strongest, relatively stable constructs of the communication satisfaction concept.

Secondary research objectives 5 to 7 attempt to determine whether employees are more satisfied with supervisory communication than with the other selected constructs. The focus on supervisory communication results from the important role of line managers in the communication function of The Utility. If it is found that employees on job levels K to P are more/less satisfied with supervisory communication than with communication climate, organisational integration or media quality, supervisory communication can be strategically managed accordingly. These secondary objectives can be theoretically justified, based on the work of various authors. For instance, it has been suggested that organisational internal relationship satisfaction is largely dependant on supervisors' openness (Jablin, *in* Avtgis & Brogan, 1997:66) and supervisors' overall communication (Redding, *in* Avtgis & Brogan, 1997:66).

### **3.3.5 Research environment**

The data collection of Phase 2 occurred under The Utility's normal environmental conditions.

### **3.3.6 Research time dimension**

This part of the study was carried out once and represents a snapshot of the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees of job levels K to P at one specific point in time. Phase 2 of the study was conducted from March 15 to March 31, 2004.

The online questionnaire was available on The Utility's Intranet during the time specified above. The same time period applied to the hardcopy version of the questionnaire. The Site Communication Officers ensured that most questionnaires were returned by March 31, 2004.

### **3.3.7 Population**

The population in this study comprised all The Utility employees from all job levels. The population's size was, therefore, 3 176 employees.

### **3.3.8 Sampling frame**

The sampling frame for Phase 2 was a list of all employees on job levels K to P.

### **3.3.9 Sample**

The sample was a comprehensive and well-defined group of employees from job levels pertinent to the research objectives of Phase 2. The people from whom information about communication satisfaction was collected were the following:

- a) *All literate employees on job levels M to P with e-mail access. They received the web-based questionnaire posted on the Intranet. Stratified sampling applied.*
- b) *A stratified sample of literate employees on job levels K and L without e-mail access. They received the questionnaire in hardcopy format.*

#### **3.3.9.1 Sample size**

The sample size relevant to the quantitative Phase 2 amounts to 1 380, comprising:

- all literate employees on job levels M to P with e-mail access (1 200); and
- the literate employees on job levels K and L without e-mail access (180).

#### **3.3.9.2 Sample dimensions**

The geographical and temporal elements were also considered during Phase 2 of this study. This was done to guarantee the smooth implementation of the fieldwork to ensure an acceptable response rate and the validity of the study.

The fieldwork for Phase 2 took place within a two-week period during March 2004. As part of the field-work took place at The Utility's different sites around Gauteng, a geographical dimension was also present.

- The geographical dimension presented a challenge during Phase 2. Hard copies of the questionnaire had to be disseminated to the selected respondents (job levels K and L) who did not have access to email. The Utility's internal mail department kindly assisted by delivering the required number of questionnaires together with a list of the selected respondents' names to the different Site Communication Officers. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents by the Site Communication Officers. The questionnaires were collected by the researcher. This was done to increase the honesty and accuracy factors which related to the completion of the questionnaire.

The geographical dimension did thus not affect the validity of the hardcopy questionnaires as the measuring instrument used during Phase 2.

- The rest of the respondents relevant to the survey sample (job levels M, N, O and P), received the questionnaire electronically. Neither the geographical dimension nor the temporal dimension thus presented problems in Phase 2.

### **3.3.10 Measuring instrument**

To ensure objectivity in Phase 2, observations occurred with the use of a theoretically based, structured and quantitative measuring instrument: a questionnaire. This self-administered questionnaire was used to test a few variables amongst a large number of respondents. The aim was to legitimately generalise the results beyond the limitations of the research sample to its population. Based on the data received, the researcher explained the reality of the population studied through deductive reasoning.

The research objective guided the development of the research design and was therefore the foundation for the creation of the measurement instrument.

The responses to the measurement items enabled the researcher to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. The measurement items in the questionnaire reflect the different constructs that make up the concept of communication satisfaction; namely the following:

- communication climate;
- supervisory communication;
- organisational integration; and
- media quality.

Within Phase 2, the researcher recognised the authoritarian right of the respondents and was thus not involved with them during the observation phase.

For participatory and transparency purposes, the original design of the questionnaire was discussed with key players in The Utility before it was administered. Due to the context in which this study took place, the content and structure of this research methodology was discussed and amended according to reasonable suggestions made by the key players. There was participation from The Utility's communication management team, Site Communication Officers, employee representatives and unions.

### 3.3.10.1 Measurement items

In the questionnaire, different items/questions/statements probed the four constructs of communication satisfaction selected for measurement.

a) The following statements/questions assessed the construct of communication climate:

- I am proud to be part of The Utility's community.
- The internal communication in The Utility encourages two-way feedback.
- To what extent do you *trust* the internal communication process in The Utility?
- The internal communication processes make *me* more *committed* to achieve The Utility's goals.
- The Utility's internal communication encourages a feeling that I have as much influence on my relationship with The Utility as they have on me.
- The internal communication at The Utility creates a climate of transparency.
- The Utility's internal communication has improved during the last 12 months.
- Taking everything into account, I am satisfied with internal communication in The Utility.
- Communication within The Utility is best described as:
  - o Reaches all staff      --      Only reaches certain staff
  - o Consistent            --      Inconsistent
  - o Speedy                --      Slow
  - o Understandable      --      Confusing
  - o Credible              --      Questionable
  - o Purposeful            --      Not purposeful
  - o Relevant                --      Irrelevant
  - o Efficient              --      Inefficient
  - o Customer focused    --      Not customer focused

b) The following statements assessed the construct of supervisory communication:

- Communication from Divisional, Departmental and Site management is speedy, slow, regular, irregular and I don't know/I'm not sure.
- How would you rate the communication performance of your line manager?
- (Effective communication performance is good listening skills, briefing skills and feedback).
- How would you describe the communication style of your line manager?
- My line manager engages in dialogue with me.
- My line manager has a good *understanding of The Utility's business / policies and procedures* to communicate effectively.

- My line manager's communication skills display an empathy (understanding / compassion) for my work related needs.
- My line manager communicates well upwards representing staffs' needs raised at workplace meetings / green areas / other forums.
- My line manager always responds (provides feedback) to my concerns, enquiries or suggestions.

c) The following statements assessed the construct of organisational integration:

- I am proud to be part of The Utility's community.
- The internal communication processes make *me* more *committed* to achieve The Utility's goals.
- I have a clear understanding of where my Division fits within The Utility.
- Information about The Utility's programmes (HIV/AIDS, Business Planning Processes, Employee Well-being, Employment Equity, etc) is sufficient.
- On which of the topics below do you prefer to get more information?
  - Vision and values
  - Business performance
  - Business goals (strategic objectives)
  - Your immediate team's goals
  - Your immediate team's performance
  - Major change (restructures, etc.)
  - Policy updates (payroll, IT changes, etc.)
  - Individual performance feedback
  - Job expectations
  - Personal development discussions
  - New services / business
  - Crises at The Utility
  - Other - please specify:\_\_\_\_\_.
- The role and services of the Corporate Communication Division are clear to me

d) These statements assessed the construct of media quality:

- The *quality* (credibility and accuracy) of information in The Utility is sufficient for me to do my work effectively.
- The *quantity* (amount) of information in The Utility is sufficient for me to do my work effectively.
- Communication mediums *within* The Utility are relevant for our purposes as employees.
- In dealing with other Divisions, Departments, Sections and Sites I know which internal communication medium to use to find the required information.

- In my Division, Department, Section or Site we regularly have 'green area' meetings / workplace meetings.
- The 'green area' meetings / workplace meetings which I attend are participative.
- I receive *Aquavita* monthly.
- I find the information of the *Aquavita* valuable.
- I find *Aquavita* easy to understand.
- I receive *H<sub>2</sub>O* monthly (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei).
- I find the information of *H<sub>2</sub>O* valuable (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei).
- I find *H<sub>2</sub>O* easy to understand (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei).
- I receive *Lerothodi* monthly.
- I find the information of *Lerothodi* valuable.
- I find *Lerothodi* easy to understand.
- I find it easy to get hold of the communication mediums in The Utility.
- Notice boards (including electronic notice boards where applicable) are useful sources of work related information.
- The Utility's e-mail system is a useful source of work related information.
- The Utility's e-mail system is a reliable source of work related information.
- I use The Utility's Intranet.
- The Utility's Intranet is easy to use.
- PCP forums (Site Forums, Stakeholder Forums and Steering Committees) are a useful communication mediums.
- Corporate Imbizos / road shows are a useful communication medium.
- Cloakroom posters are a useful communication medium.
- I have access to a communication medium (newsletter, suggestion box, line managers, etc.) if I need to convey messages to management.
- I often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, *unofficial internal* sources.
- I often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, *official external* sources (mass media).

An example of the questionnaire can be seen in Addendum 7.1. It should be noted that items 5 and 37 to 42 of Addendum 7.1 was not included in the data analysis for academic purposes.

### **3.3.10.2 Data collection procedure**

The administration of the questionnaire is discussed below.

- Administration of the *Intranet-based* questionnaire include the following:
  - An announcement and explanation of the internal communication audit was e-mailed to relevant respondents. This announcement, signed by the Acting Chief Executive,

included a detailed rationale of the audit as well as a hyper-link leading to the questionnaire.

- The questionnaire was active on The Utility's Intranet for a period of two weeks.
  - Based on the response rate, a reminder and another request to complete the questionnaire were sent towards the end of the period.
  - Whenever an employee accessed the Intranet, a 'pop-up' appeared informing them of the internal communication audit and requested participation in the questionnaire.
  - As respondents completed questionnaires, raw data fed automatically into a database, provided to the researcher by The Utility.
  - Only fully completed questionnaires were considered for analysis.
- The same questionnaire, in a *hardcopy* format, was distributed to literate employees (180) who did not have access to the Intranet. It was administered as follows:
    - Questionnaires were delivered to Site Communication Officers at all sites of The Utility together with a list of the names of randomly selected respondents. It was the responsibility of the Site Communication Officer to distribute the questionnaires together with envelopes pre-addressed in the researcher's name.
    - A covering letter signed by the Acting Chief Executive explained the rationale for the internal communication audit and the importance of the questionnaire. The letter also noted the date on which the completed questionnaires were to be returned to the Site Communication Officers in the pre-addressed envelopes (similar to the covering letter for the electronic version of the questionnaire.) It was also explained to them that completed questionnaires would be collected by an independent researcher.
    - At a pre-selected date, the researcher collected the questionnaires from all the different sites.
    - Only fully completed questionnaires were considered for the data analysis.

### **3.3.11 Data analysis methods**

The outcome of this study was ultimately to make recommendations for the formulation of a formal internal communication strategy. The effective analysis and interpretation of the data collected through a quantitative research method were thus crucial.

The measuring instrument, a theoretically based questionnaire, collected data that was analysed in numeric value. Due to the theoretical base and the procedure for collecting data, the data had a degree of credibility and generalisability from the sample to the survey population. Analysing the data in numeric values allowed for the assessment of directional relationships between the constructs. Not only should quantitative data be statistically valid but it should also be helpful in the formulation of The Utility's internal communication strategy. It should thus be understandable to the lay person.

Logistics for the data analysis of the questionnaire's raw data included exclusion of uncompleted questionnaires and the editing of raw data to eliminate errors.

To analyse the data, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used.

### 3.3.11.1 Descriptive statistics

- Univariate tabulation of raw data: This is the tabulation of responses to one question at a time.
- Measurement of central tendency and dispersion: This was done in terms of the mean or average score per question. The semantic scale used for all the measurement questions was converted to a numeric scale. Strongly agree equated to 1, Agree = 2, I don't know/not sure = 3, Disagree = 4, Strongly disagree = 5. According to Sham (2004a), this may not be valid in the strictest mathematical sense, but it is a fairly common practice in the world of communication research and gives the capability to measure central tendency by the mean score and dispersion by the Standard Deviation.

### 3.3.11.2 Inferential statistics

- The Cronbach Coefficient Alpha was used to test reliability and check for internal consistency amongst the questionnaire items. It measures how well a set of items measures a single one-dimensional construct. When data have a multi-dimensional structure, Cronbach's Alpha will usually be low.

Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of squared correlation between observed scores and true scores. Reliability was thus measured in terms of the ratio of true score variance to observed score variance. It minimises the measurement error so that the error is not highly correlated with the true score and tested the strength of the relationship between true score and observed score.

- Hypotheses were tested by means of the paired samples t-test, used to analyse variance.

The original ordinal variables (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) were transformed into a ratio scaled variable (100%, 66.7%, 33.3% & 0%) and the parametric t-test applied. The benchmark was set at 70%, as this is only slightly higher than the 66.7% ratio scale point relevant to the ordinal variable of 'Agree'.

The overall mean for each construct was calculated and the 70% benchmark subtracted from this value. Whether the resulting value was significantly different to zero (difference between the benchmark and the overall mean) was then tested. The findings of the hypotheses tests were thus interpreted based on the following: an average response below the benchmark of 70% indicated insufficient communication satisfaction, while an average response above

70% indicated communication satisfaction. The extent of satisfaction/dissatisfaction was indicated, calculated based on the difference between the benchmark of 70% and the actual average response.

The t-test is used to compare the means of two populations. It is the application of a paired-sample to a situation where more than two variables are involved (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:196).

### **3.3.11.3 Steps that were followed in hypotheses testing**

For the purpose of testing hypotheses in this study, the five steps below were followed, as suggested by Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch (1997:136-147).

- **Step 1: Formulation of null and alternative hypotheses**

The basic assumption is that the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is true unless rejected as a result of the testing procedure (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:136). Therefore, if  $H_0$  is rejected, this is interpreted as signifying support for the alternative hypothesis ( $H_A$ ).

- **Step 2: Specification of significance level**

In this step, the circumstances under which the null hypotheses will be rejected or not, are specified. A 5% significance level was selected for the hypotheses tests in this study. This means that the tests will be conducted in such a way that the null hypotheses will only be rejected, when in fact it is true, five times out of 100. The higher the significance level, the higher the probability of rejecting the null hypotheses when in fact it is true.

- **Step 3: Selection of appropriate statistical test**

A statistical test is a technique used to test a particular hypothesis. Different tests are used in the different phases of this study. In Phase 2, the paired samples T-test is used to test for significant differences between the means of two groups or populations.

- **Step 4: Identification of the probability distribution of the test statistic and definition of the region of rejection**

Each test generates a test statistic, which is a measure for expressing the results of the test. The distribution of the test statistic allows for assessing the sampling error. The decision on the rejection region (or significant region) depends on the significance level that was set.

With this study a 95% level of confidence was used. The alpha statistic therefore is 0.05 (1-Level of Confidence). When the t-test was run, the resulting probability value was compared to the predetermined alpha (0.05). If the probability was less than 0.05, the null hypotheses were rejected. As directional hypotheses were set in this study, one-tailed tests were used (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch (1997:124).

- **Step 5: Computation of the test statistic and rejection or non-rejection of the null hypothesis**

In this study, the probability value (P-value) will be reported instead of the critical value. The reason is that the critical value is test-specific, while the P-value provides more information on how far down in the significant region the result lies. It also represents a common currency across which the results of different tests/studies can be compared. The P-value is the probability that the sample value would be at least as large/small as the value actually observed, if the null hypotheses are true. The lower the P-value, the stronger is the evidence against the null hypothesis.

### 3.3.11.4 Hypotheses set for Phase 2

The hypotheses tested with regard to Primary Objective 2, are the following:

• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between the average response on <u>communication satisfaction</u> amongst employees on job levels K to P of The Utility, and the benchmark of 70%.
• H <sub>1</sub>	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on <u>communication satisfaction</u> .
• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>communication climate</u> and the benchmark of 70%.
• H <sub>2</sub>	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>communication climate</u> .
• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and the benchmark of 70%.
• H <sub>3</sub>	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> .
• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>organisational integration</u> and the benchmark of 70%.
• H <sub>4</sub>	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>organisational integration</u> .

• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>media quality</u> and the benchmark of 70%.
• H <sub>5</sub>	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>media quality</u> .
• H <sub>0</sub>	On job levels K to P of the Utility, there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and their satisfaction with <u>communication climate</u> .
• H <sub>6</sub>	On job levels K to P of the Utility, employee satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> is significantly higher than with <u>communication climate</u> .
• H <sub>0</sub>	On job levels K to P of the Utility, there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and their satisfaction with <u>organisational integration</u> .
• H <sub>7</sub>	On job levels K to P of the Utility, employee satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> is significantly higher than with <u>organisational integration</u> .
• H <sub>0</sub>	On job levels K to P of the Utility, there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and their satisfaction with <u>media quality</u> .
• H <sub>8</sub>	On job levels K to P of the Utility, employee satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> is significantly higher than with <u>media quality</u> .

### 3.3.12 Reliability

As reliability had to be ensured the researcher designed the data collection procedure as consistently as possible. This was done by:

- clarifying meaning and ensuring that measurement items in the questionnaire were not ambiguous;
- scoring the measurement items accurately and objectively;
- administering the questionnaire as correctly as possible;
- motivating the respondents to complete the tests; and
- using Cronbach's Alpha correlation during the analysis of the data to determine internal consistency and reliability.

### 3.3.13 Validity

The researcher ensured validity by seeing that the questionnaire measured what it achieved to measure. In Phase 2, Primary Objective 2 was to be achieved; i.e. '*To determine quantitatively the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.*'

In order to obtain accurate results, the researcher took care to ensure that the questionnaire measured what it was purported to measure, namely communication satisfaction and its constructs. The fact that the questionnaire was theoretically based, increased the validity of the study. The possibility of random or unstable error within the measurement process and instruments was also eliminated as far as possible.

### **3.4 Phase 3: Quantitative research (rank ordering tool)**

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In this phase, Research Objective 3 was to be achieved, namely *'To determine quantitatively the perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication of line managers, according to The Utility's Top Management and Site Communication Officers.'*

#### **3.4.1 Research approach**

In Phase 3, a quantitative research approach was selected to measure the concept of supervisory communication skills and thereby achieve Primary Objective 3. The research concept in this phase had a theoretical origin.

#### **3.4.2 Research design**

The design for Phase 3 was a case study.

#### **3.4.3 Research method**

The research method for Phase 3 was a communication audit. The aim was to provide Top Management with a rank ordered list of supervisory communication skills. The communication audit also assisted the researcher with, inter alia:

- determining which communication skills would most probably improve supervisory communication; and
- providing guidelines for the formulation of a formal internal communication strategy based on the findings of the study.

#### **3.4.4 Element**

In Phase 3, the research element was supervisory communication skills.

The focus of Primary Objective 3 was on only one construct of employee communication satisfaction, namely supervisory communication. The element researched in this part of the study was the 'perceived importance of specific communication skills' in improving the communication of line-managers. Of particular interest to the researcher were the skills of active listening and providing of guidance by line managers. The reason was Downs and Hazen's (1977:67) opinion that the most important aspects of supervisory communication are the extent to which supervisors listen and the extent to which supervisors provide guidance. Hawkins and Fillion (1997:170) also identified 'effective listening' as essential for success in work group contexts.

#### **3.4.5 Research environment**

The data collection of Phase 3 occurred under The Utility's normal environmental conditions.

### **3.4.6 Research time dimension**

This study was carried out once. It represents a snapshot of the perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication of line managers at a specific point in time.

The first interview conducted in Phase 3 with a respondent from the FCA™ sample was on March 10, 2004 and the last was conducted on April 6, 2004,

### **3.4.7 Population**

The population in this study comprised all The Utility employees from all job levels. The population's size was, therefore, 3 176 employees.

### **3.4.8 Sampling frame**

The sampling frame of Phase 3 consisted of two lists:

- From job level P, the list of names of all General Managers, including the Chief Executive.
- From job levels K to O, the list of names of all Site Communication Officers.

### **3.4.9 Sample**

In this phase, participation was required from all the Top Managers and all the Site Communication Officers in The Utility. The Top Management (Chief Executive and General Managers on job level P) and Site Communication Officers (from job levels K to O) thus constituted the sample for Phase 3.

#### **3.3.9.1 Sample size**

In Phase 3, the total number of Top Managers and Site Communication Officers to whom the Focus Communication Audit™ (FCA™) rank ordering tool was presented, was 18 and comprised of the following:

- A top Management group, inclusive of the Chief Executive and General Managers (11).
- All the Site Communication Officers (7).

#### **3.4.9.2 Sample dimensions**

To ensure an acceptable response rate and the validity of the study, the geographical and temporal elements were also considered.

- The temporal dimension relevant to the Top Management respondents presented a challenge. Many of the meetings scheduled with these respondents were often re-scheduled. This led to the projected time frame of the study being prolonged by two weeks to ensure interviews with all members of Top Management. The temporal dimension did not, however, affect the validity of the FCA™ rank ordering tool as a data collection tool.

#### 3.4.10.1 Measurement item

The FCA™ had only one measurement question which referred to one of the constructs of the Downs and Hazen's concept of communication satisfaction namely supervisory communication. The specific concept measured was:

- Supervisory communication skills: the perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication of line managers.

The 13 communication skill variables selected to measure the concept are listed below. The measurement question was: *Which communication skill would most probably improve the communication of line-managers?*

- Acting on feedback
- Active listening
- Channelling information to those accountable
- Clarifying meaning
- Demonstrating empathy
- Encouraging feedback
- Encouraging input
- Facilitating cohesion
- Managing conflict
- Mentoring
- Motivating employees
- Providing guidance
- Conducting effective meetings

#### 3.4.10.2 Data collection procedure

The administration of the FCA™ with the relevant sample included the following:

- A rationalisation of the internal communication audit.
- A short explanation of the FCA™ as a rank ordering tool and its role in The Utility's internal communication audit.
- Description and explanation of the terms used in the assessment. Respondents were also left with definitions of terms used in the assessment. This was referred to when they were doing the rank ordering.
- The respondents were then left alone to complete the FCA™. The researcher was however at hand if technical problems were experienced with the computer or the rank ordering programme.
- Each respondent's consistency during the rank ordering was checked. If the consistency rating was not adequate (+70%), the response was not considered for final analysis.

### 3.4.11 Data analysis methods

A standardised research tool, the Focus Communication Audit (FCA™) rank ordering tool, collected data that was analysed in numeric value. Due to this standardisation and the procedure for collecting it, the data had a degree of credibility. Analysing the data in numeric values allowed for the assessment of directional relationships between the variables.

For the purpose of testing the hypothesis in this phase, the five steps as suggested by Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch (1997:136-147) were followed. The hypothesis tested with regard to Primary Objective 3, are the following:

• $H_0 =$	According to the perceptions of The Utility's Top Management and Site Communication Officers, there is no significant difference between the importance of <u>active listening</u> and <u>providing guidance</u> in improving the communication skills of line managers.
• $H_9 =$	According to the perceptions of The Utility's Top Management and Site Communication Officers, <u>active listening</u> is significantly more important than <u>providing guidance</u> in improving the communication skills of line managers.

The results of the FCA™, a formative research tool, provide a list of specific communication skills perceived to be important in improving the communication of line managers. These communication skills priorities could assist in developing communication strategies. FCA™ applies the following statistical analyses to draw conclusions and make comparisons: Kendall's W, Spearman's Rho and the Mann-Whitney *U* test.

- Comparative analysis amongst the two clusters within the sample was done. This allows for comparison of the responses of individuals within a group. In addition, it makes it possible to compare the collective response of one group with that of another.
- Kendall's W of concordance was used to test the internal consistency (reliability of response) of each respondent.
- Kendall's W of concordance was also used to test the correlation (level of internal agreement) within a group of respondents.

The Kendall Coefficient of Concordance (Kendall's W) is a technique that can be used in studies involving rankings made by independent respondents. It is based on the concept of concordant and discordant pairs. It does not require the assumption of bivariate normal distribution, yet by incorporating order, it produces a range from -1.0 (a perfect negative relationship) to +1.0 (a perfect positive relationship). Within this range, a coefficient with a larger magnitude (absolute value of measure) is interpreted as having a stronger relationship. These characteristics allow the analyst to interpret both the direction and the strength of the relationship (Cooper & Schindler, 2003:596). To analyse the rankings, the Kendall's W indicates the degree to which respondents agree in their rankings. Kendall's W is based on the deviation of the total of each ranking (Leedy, 1997:204).

- Spearman's Rho was used to compare two respondents with each other and to compare one respondent with the group list.

Spearman Rank Order Correlation (Spearman's Rho) is a popular ordinal measure. It correlates ranks between ordered variables (Cooper & Schindler, 2003:599). If dealing with a situation in which both variables are ordinal, the strength of the association as well as its direction can be determined. Spearman's Rho ranges from -1 to +1 with values close to zero, indicating little or no association between the variables concerned (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 2000:201). Correlation measurement +1.0 represents total correlation (agreement) and -1.0 represents total disagreement.

- The Mann-Whitney *U* test was used to determine statistical significant difference between the variables of active listening and providing guidance.

The Mann-Whitney *U* test is a non-parametric statistical significance test. It is appropriate when two groups are compared on variables that are measured at ordinal level (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 2000:180). This means that it can be used to determine whether the means of two independent groups differ from each other to a significant degree (Leedy, 1985:204). This test is sometimes also called the Wilcoxon 2 Sample Test or the Wilcoxon Rank Sum *W* test.

### 3.4.12 Reliability

The researcher designed the data collection procedure in Phase 3 as accurately and consistently as possible. This was done by:

- Clarifying meaning and ensuring that the measurement item and relevant variables were not ambiguous.
- Administering the FCA™ as correctly as possible.
- Motivating the respondents to complete the tests.

### 3.4.13 Validity

The researcher ensured validity by seeing that the measurement instrument for this phase, the FCA™ rank ordering tool, measured specifically what it was designed to measure. In Phase 3, Primary Objective 3 was to be achieved; i.e. *'To determine quantitatively the perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication of line managers according to The Utility's Top Management and Communication Officers.'*

### 3.5 Chapter summary

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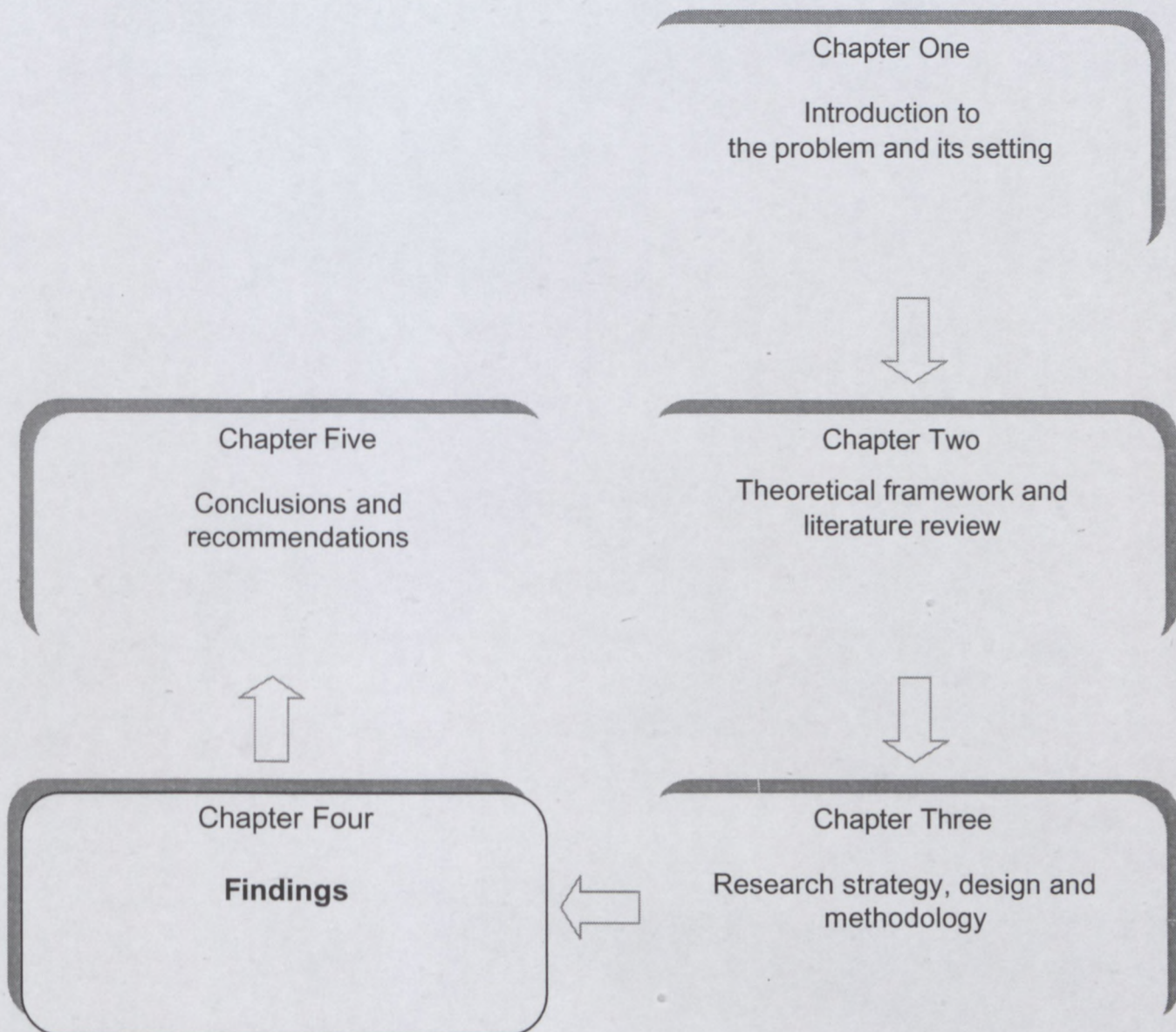
This Chapter reflected the study's research strategy, design and methodology. Aspects such as the research elements, sampling procedures, data collection and analysis, reliability and validity were also described.

The study was divided into three phases – a qualitative phase and two quantitative phases:

- In Phase 1, the element of communication satisfaction was qualitatively explored amongst a sample of 360 employees, from job levels H, I and J in The Utility. This was done within a field setting in a cross-sectional time dimension of four weeks. Data collection was done by means of focus groups.
- In Phase 2, the element of communication satisfaction was measured quantitatively amongst a sample of 1 380 employees in total, on job levels K to P in The Utility. This was done within a field setting in a cross-sectional time dimension of four weeks. Data collection was done by means of a questionnaire and data analysis included a Cronbach's Alpha correlation, measurement of central tendency and dispersion, as well as a paired samples t-test for purposes of hypothesis testing.
- The research element in Phase 3 was supervisor communication skills, determined amongst a sample of 18 respondents. This was also conducted within a field setting in a cross-sectional time dimension of six weeks. Data collection was done by means of a computerised rank ordering tool. The sample included all members of Top Management and all Site Communication Officers. Relevant data analysis tools included consistency tests (Kendall's W), correlation tests (Spearman's Rho) and the Mann-Whitney *U* test to determine statistical significance between the variables of active listening and providing guidance.

In Chapter Four, the research strategy, design and the methodology selected for this study are put to the test in describing the findings of the research.

Outline of the research report



*In the previous Chapter, the research strategy, design and methodology were discussed. In Chapter Four, the findings of the research on communication satisfaction and importance of communication skills are presented. The achievement of the research objectives and the testing of the hypotheses are discussed.*

## 4.1 Introduction

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As part of a process to determine the extent to which communication satisfaction exists within The Utility, as well as the perceived importance of specific supervisory communication skills, an internal communication audit was conducted from March 10 to April 06, 2004.

In this Chapter, the research findings are presented according to the research objectives:

- Section 4.2 reports on the findings of Phase 1, which explored qualitatively the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst The Utility's employees on job levels H, I and J;
- Section 4.3 reports on the findings of Phase 2, which determined quantitatively the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst The Utility's employees on job levels K to P; and
- Section 4.4 reports on the findings of Phase 3, which determined quantitatively the perceived importance of specific supervisory communication skills in improving the communication of line managers, according to The Utility's Top Management and Communication Officers.

Using sound methodology, the assessment was carried out on internal stakeholders to obtain relevant information to address the communication needs of The Utility. These findings will assist The Utility's Corporate Communications Division to align its practices and action plans and, ultimately, to finalise a more symmetric overall communication strategy.

## 4.2 Findings of Phase 1: Focus groups

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In this phase of the study, Primary Objective 1 was achieved:

*'To explore qualitatively the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels H, I and J of The Utility.'*

From the fourteen focus groups scheduled to take place, only twelve were conducted. On one of the sites, no employees from job level H were employed and focus groups were only held with participants from job levels I and J. On another site, no participants from job levels I and J arrived for the focus group meeting. Although this focus group was rescheduled, no respondents arrived for the second meeting either. The selected participants varied from 9 to 20 in each focus group.

Findings reported in this section are summaries and trends of what was said in all the focus groups across all sites. The summaries are presented according to the four constructs of communication satisfaction selected for exploration in this phase: communication climate, supervisory communication, organisational integration and media quality.

The responses generated by the focus group participants provided data from which to explore the four propositions set and to explore the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels H, I and J of The Utility. These responses can be found in sections 4.2.1 to 4.2.4 that represent the four selected constructs of communication satisfaction respectively.

## 4.2.1 Findings relating to Proposition 1: Satisfaction with communication climate

Proposition 1 states the following:

Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with the communication climate within The Utility.

The findings relevant to the construct of communication climate are discussed below.

### 4.2.1.1 "In general..."

- *"Do you receive information and messages on time?"*

With the exception of a few participants, almost all see communication and information within The Utility as slow. Their explanation is that *"Carriers of messages don't understand the messages and thus communicate them late"* and that there are too many stages through which messages have to go. This results in information losing its momentum and impact and that employees are receiving The Utility related information from unreliable external sources.

- *"Does mutual trust around communication exist? For instance, do you trust the information/messages/mediums that you get? Do you think that the messages/information that you give to The Utility is trusted?"*

The overall finding with regard to trust is that information in formal publications of The Utility and from The Utility's Top Management is trusted.

Most members of top management are trusted, but site or station managers and supervisors are often regarded as treacherous. Participants are also of the opinion that management does not trust them because they are never considered nor asked for feedback and input.

There were also some participants who mentioned that they do not trust anybody in The Utility - not their colleagues, supervisors or top management. Their perception resulted from racism, nepotism, favouritism, preferential treatment, not getting the same information at the same time and too much inconsistency.

- *"Do you think that the information/messages /mediums that you get are credible? That is, can they be believed?"*

The only information that is believed and seen as credible to a degree is information from head office. Participants said that they find information only partly credible as, firstly, they do not understand some of the messages and, secondly, they also find many of the messages contradictory.

Other factors that contribute to the lack of credibility in the messages from The Utility are the following:

- the minimal interaction that staff has with top and middle management, leading to estrangement and ultimately a loss in credibility; and
  - nothing that the site managers and supervisors say is believed.
- *"Do the information/messages /mediums/communication processes that you get make you more committed to The Utility? Does the information/messages /mediums that you get make you understand that The Utility is committed to you?"*

An overall finding relevant to commitment is that the participants of the focus groups are very committed to The Utility, but only because they need to get a salary cheque at the end of the month. Their commitment is survival based and they are not committed to The Utility because of loyalty to the organisation.

On the other hand, participants do not see the management of The Utility committed either to its employees or to The Utility itself. A reflection of this is: *"All messages are only promises – nothing materialises. We cannot only be committed to promises."* Other issues which resulted in the perceived lack of managerial commitment to The Utility and its staff are nepotism, racism, too much focus on profit, insensitivity towards employees, unsuitable working conditions and lack of feedback.

However, management from specific sites were seen as committed to The Utility and its staff as they are considerate and assist in the upliftment of the support staff.

- *"What are barriers to communication within The Utility? What prevents you from understanding messages/information/mediums?"*

Supervisors are seen by almost all participants as a major barrier to the effectiveness of communication. There is a perception that supervisors have been bought off and can thus not be trusted. Supervisors are seen as autocratic, keeping information to themselves, editing it to suit their own needs and not disseminating information. This is evident from quotations such as: *"You're lucky if you get a word from supervisors"* and *"Information is sabotaged by supervisors"*.

Another perceived barrier is the Site Communication Officers. When these people are known, they are seen as not working hard enough to ensure that communication takes place at sites. Other comments about the Site Communication Officers are that they are not trusted and that they communicate at the sites without considering all the relevant staff.

For most participants of the focus groups, the general and frequent use of English in most mediums is a major barrier to communication.

Other barriers to communication mentioned are too much information on social and informal events; too little personal, face-to-face communication; and those who are supposed to convey messages don't understand them themselves, so they are too embarrassed to convey them.

#### **4.2.1.2 "How can communication be improved?"**

Participants made two major recommendations on how communication in The Utility can be improved: i) more direct communication with management and ii) communication training for supervisors and Site Communication Officers.

Almost all of the recommendations received from participants seek more direct, interpersonal communication with management. They see that through such face-to-face interaction, issues and problems would be addressed and solved more effectively than before. A verbatim quote illustrating this feeling is: "*Communication with management is important otherwise our department will close down.*" Suggestions linked to this aspect are for a secure and confidential suggestion scheme and an open door policy.

It seems that the main reason for the recommendation above is that support staff do not want a middle-man who talks on behalf of management. Supervisors, for example, are seen to "*waste time as they don't know and run back and forth between management and us to try and explain.*"

The other main recommendation for the improvement of The Utility's internal communication is for communication skills capacity-building amongst supervisors specifically but also for Site Communication Officers. Participants want supervisors to be more objective and for them to understand the threat of editing information received from management. In some cases supervisors, who are tasked with interpreting messages to support staff, are semi-literate and thus do not completely understand messages themselves.

Another significant suggestion was for more effective feedback more often. "**WE WANT FEEDBACK AND RESPONSE ON OUR INPUT – don't just file it.**"

Other recommendations are that participants feel that if management can show staff some respect and listen to them, The Utility and all its employees can grow together; a dedicated person to deliver communication messages is required at each site; more effective use of green area meetings for the benefit of shift workers, the illiterate and those who do not understand English; and more use of other African languages in all tools of communication.

**4.2.1.3 “What do you expect the internal communications department to do for you?”**

The focus group participants raised the following expectations of internal communication, presented below in order of priority:

The most recurring expectation of internal communication encountered was the hope that it would facilitate mutual understanding. Specific requests were for assistance to improve the flow of information throughout the organisation and the facilitation of effective two-way communication with management. A comment that reflects this need is: *“Just make us understand The Utility and how their decisions affect us.”*

Another highly frequent request was for the internal communication department to create better understanding about internal communication, its functions and the team responsible for it. Most participants did not know that there is such a department or that there are Site Communication Officers designated with the function. In instances where participants did know of the Site Communication Officers, these persons were held in low regard. *“The Site Communication Officer should become more seen and more participative and representative of our needs.”*

Information around human resource issues is much needed. Participants request the internal communication function to assist in the provision and explanation of policies and procedures relevant to long service awards, leave, increases, the medical aid scheme, personal and work related development, multi-skilling, etc.

It seems that participants from the sites and regions do not get feedback and they request that the internal communication department should assist with improving feedback and the time it takes to get feedback. They also expect the internal communication department to recognise and consider the sites. Participants further expect internal communication to devise and implement a language policy that is more reflective of the African representation in The Utility.

**4.2.1.4 Conclusion on Proposition 1**

P <sub>1</sub>	Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with the <u>communication climate</u> within The Utility.
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Proposition 1 has been rejected based on the analysis of above responses regarding communication climate.

Other recommendations are that participants feel that if management can show staff some respect and listen to them, The Utility and all its employees can grow together; a dedicated person to deliver communication messages is required at each site; more effective use of green area meetings for the benefit of shift workers, the illiterate and those who do not understand English; and more use of other African languages in all tools of communication.

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**4.2.1.4 Conclusion on Proposition 1**

P <sub>1</sub>	Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with the <u>communication climate</u> within The Utility.
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Proposition 1 has been rejected based on the analysis of above responses regarding communication climate.

## 4.2.2 Findings relating to Proposition 2: Satisfaction with supervisory communication

Proposition 2 states that:

Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with supervisory communication within The Utility.

The findings relevant to the construct of supervisory communication are discussed below.

### 4.2.2.1 “Does your supervisor convey your messages to management?”

“No, but it is needed.” This comment is reflective of the overall opinion of whether participants have a way to convey messages to management. Although shop stewards represent them at site forums, it is felt that it does not work or that it takes too long with little feedback being received.

Most participants are of the opinion that supervisors gatekeep information and that the truth does not get to management. Grievance procedures, which are not used for fear of victimisation, were also listed as a method of conveying messages to management.

### 4.2.2.2 “Do you get feedback on queries/suggestions/ complaints that you have had?”

Most participants said that it is very seldom that they get feedback on queries or concerns or suggestions that they have. If they do, it is usually too late and the information has gone through too many stages, often resulting in distortion.

It was also mentioned by some participants that they seldom have the opportunity to give feedback to their management. There seems to be a top-down communication approach without expectations of input from support staff. “The CE must know that as much as he is encouraging feedback and input, we are victimised for doing so.”

### 4.2.2.3 Conclusion on Proposition 2

P <sub>2</sub>	Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with <u>supervisory communication</u> within The Utility.
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Proposition 2 has been rejected based on the analysis of the above responses with regard to supervisory communication.

### 4.2.3 Findings relating to Proposition 3: Satisfaction with organisational integration

Proposition 3 states that:

Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with organisational integration within The Utility.

The findings relevant to the construct of organisational integration are discussed below.

#### 4.2.3.1 "Do you get information about..."

- "The Utility's vision?"

Almost none of the participants know The Utility's vision. Although they admit that they often see it on posters or in Aquavita, they do not know and understand it and seem not to identify with it nor do they see how it relates to them. The attitude around the vision is: "*Who cares?*"

Most participants do, however, know The Utility's values but have a very indifferent attitude towards them. They are perceived as 'empty talk' from management. A comment which reflects this is: "*Some of the values are not put into practice; e.g. equity. It is nicely framed but not practised in my area.*"

- "Programmes initiated and presented by The Utility (Employee Well-being, HIV/Aids, business initiatives, Equity, etc)?"

Some of the participants have attended and have appreciated these programmes. Others have heard of them and would appreciate such participation. Programmes recalled the most were programmes about HIV/Aids, well-being, the provident fund and the medical aid scheme. A typical comment relevant to this was: "*We would like more of them as they help us to understand.*"

There are also some participants who have never heard or experienced such programmes.

- "Your job expectations?"

Participants in the focus groups who have job expectations are the exception to the rule. Those whose job expectations have not been considered are of the opinion that management are insensitive around them as employees and their conditions of work.

Quotations that are evident of this trend include: "No, no needs, aspirations, etc are considered," and "Never get asked what we want from our work."

For some it leads to not being able to develop on a personal or career level. Although this is serious, a more crucial concern is their unmet expectations around job safety and security. It is said that Pipeline Control has no communication tools (two-way-radios). They thus feel that they cannot do their work properly and are often in unsafe situations.

- "Your job performance?"

The majority of participants do not receive information about their job performance, unless, as they say, they have done something wrong. Quotations reflective of this and the result of little job performance feedback are:

- "No recognition – this internal communication person does nothing. We see in Aquavita, etc. about other people at other sites that do well and get recognition"; and
- "Very seldom are we told how we are doing in our jobs. This makes us feel not appreciated."

#### 4.2.3.2 "About what would you like to get more information.... ?"

Further information on human resource related topics are required by most participants. They do not only want to know about Human Resource policies but also want them clarified. Explanation of things such as the payment structure, leave, payment when on leave, promotions, overtime payment, the provident fund, the medical aid scheme, loans, working hours, bereavement policies, equity and disciplinary procedures are needed.

Another topic that stood out was the need for information around safety, health and security. Participants wanted to know more about the policies around protective clothing, health/hygiene risks and solutions.

Participants furthermore asked for information on personal development plans, training, skills development and the development of their career paths.

#### 4.2.3.3 Conclusion on Proposition 3

P <sub>3</sub>	Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with <u>organisational integration</u> within The Utility.
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Proposition 3 has been rejected based on the analysis of above responses about organisational integration.

## 4.2.4 Findings relating to Proposition 4: Satisfaction with media quality

Proposition 4 states that:

Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with media quality within The Utility.

The findings relevant to the construct of media quality are discussed below.

### 4.2.4.1 "In general..."

- *"Are the information/messages /mediums that you get accurate?"*

Information in formal organisational publications such as Aquavita and memoranda are perceived to be accurate, although participants say that they have no means of knowing whether it is or not. They do, however, trust that it is accurate.

Messages and information from their site managers and/or supervisors are seen to be inaccurate. The general perception on the accuracy of verbal communication within The Utility is "A four legged horse becomes a one-legged horse when it comes to you." Most participants are of the opinion that, as information cascades down the organisation, it becomes distorted since communicators select what message they want to communicate.

- *"Are the information/messages/mediums that you receive clear, understandable and relevant?"*

Most information is not understandable, neither put into context nor explained. Participants said that they sometimes do not even understand why specific information is given to them. This gives an indication that messages are not explained or perhaps are not relevant.

It is said that the problems that cause them not to understand are that the information is too difficult to comprehend and that there is too much English used, without any adequate explanation of the message.

- *"Do you experience overload or underload of information? That is, do you get too much or too little information?"*

There is a clear need for more information as most participants were of the opinion that they do not receive enough information. A comment that is a good reflection of the need for more understandable information is: *"We are getting too much information which we do not understand and too little which we do understand."*

- *"Are the information/messages /mediums that you get consistent?"*

Although a few participants were of the opinion that they always receive consistent messages via all communication mediums, they were the exception rather than the rule.

Communication messages are mostly seen as inconsistent as participants pick-up differences and contradictions in similar information they receive via different sources. Participants are also aware of messages that are disseminated and interpreted differently at different sites.

#### **4.2.4.2 "Verbal communication..."**

- *"Do you have workplace meetings/briefing sessions? If so, what happens at these meetings?"*

In general, workplace meetings and briefing sessions do happen daily, weekly or twice a month. There are, however, many sites that do not have meetings for support staff.

Participants said that they are seldom informed about meetings and most do not get agendas of meetings. They also do not have the opportunity to place items for discussion on the agenda.

Those who do have meetings said that these meetings are mostly not participative, being more instructional, with little feedback on queries or issues raised by staff. On a more positive note, some sites do have more constructive meetings where problems, solutions and improvements are discussed, although no feedback is received. The concern of no or little feedback is reflected by a verbatim comment stating that *"Supervisors are neither confident nor competent in giving feedback to and from management."*

Many sites have translators present at meetings if needed for those who do not understand English. However, at sites where no translators are used, the meetings cause only problems and frustrations and therefore, staff often do not attend.

Meetings are furthermore known for being used often for scolding sessions, resulting in staff being very de-motivated or not attending meetings. However, at one specific site, staff are told the good and the bad: *"We are commended and when needs be, reprimanded."*

There is also a trend that suggests that decision makers are not always present at such meetings, resulting in problems raised not being solved.

At most sites, the minutes of meetings are not kept. This results in not being able to follow-up on discussions and decisions. At those sites where minutes are kept, they are either not distributed or distributed too late. At one or two of the sites it is said that minutes are edited and that support staff's concerns are neglected.

- *"Do you have 'Let's Talk meetings'? If so, what happens at these meetings?"*

There is an almost equal split between staff who knows of 'Let's talk meetings' and those who have never heard of it.

Staff who are aware of 'Let's talk meetings' have the option to attend but they do not. Meetings are held irregularly and mostly attended by shop stewards, managers and supervisors. Participants said that feedback from those attending at meetings was often not understood. Some receive no feedback at all. Shift workers are unable to attend and thus gain no benefit whatsoever.

On two specific sites, 'Let's talk meetings' were associated with 'Tip-talk meetings' on safety issues held on Fridays. Some participants mentioned that they used to have them, but not any more.

- *"Have you had an Imbizo at this plant/site? If so, what happened at the Imbizo?"*

On average most participants had been to at least one Imbizo. Those recalled most often were the Imbizos called for by the Chief Executive. These Imbizos are translated into other African languages that facilitate discussion and participation. The translations are much appreciated by the support staff as they are more understandable, making the message worthwhile. A participant's verbatim quote supports this opinion: *"Here valuable information was broken down."*

Most participants said that they could participate during the question and answer session. The Imbizos are seen as beneficial because of the opportunity for interaction with management. Results of issues discussed at these meetings are evident in different changes that have taken place. Feedback was also picked up through Aquavita.

At some sites, only managers and shop stewards may attend these meetings. Support staff who were not allowed/could not attend Imbizos had the opportunity to put forward ideas via their unions to be presented at the meetings. Although feedback is received it is said to be *'like diluted milk.'*

More Imbizos (four times a year) involving the Chief Executive and the General Managers were requested.

There were some participants who said that they have never seen an Imbizo and they do not know what it is. This was found to be the case particularly in the outlying sites.

- *"Have the Chief Executive and General Managers been on road shows to this plant/site? If so, what happens at these road shows?"*

The overall trend is that, in most regions and at most sites, participants have been to Chief Executive road shows. At these road shows translations take place and the Chief Executive encourages participation. The only problem mentioned regarding these events was the minimal time allocated to them. This results in inadequate immediate feedback. It was, however, also noted that attempts at improvement and changes have since been implemented with regard to issues and problems raised at road show meetings.

Confusion exists as to the identity of some of the General Managers. It is said that *"They don't appear. We have not seen any GM except in company publications."*

At the regions and sites where road shows do take place, some staff members are not allowed to attend and/or participate. *"We have to sniff out what it is going to take place or what took place at the road show."*

- *"Do you have Site Forum Meetings? If so, what happens at these meetings?"*

A large majority of the participants have no knowledge of Site Forum Meetings, do not have them or do not attend. These meetings are seen to be for supervisors, managers and shop stewards only.

Although support staff can ask supervisors, managers or shop stewards to address their issues at site forum meetings, feedback is not always effective and is usually very negative. Also, they are seldom asked whether they have anything to propose for discussion.

- *“How does your management communicate to people that cannot read?”*

Although it is understood that most regions and sites have interpreters, almost all participants are of the opinion that very little, if anything, is done to assist in communicating with those who cannot read. This leads to a feeling amongst the staff that information is kept away from them deliberately as little effort is made for them. The result is that they get second hand information by word of mouth that is often inaccurate. This scenario is also valid for shift workers. The quotes *“It is on the onus of the persons who can't read to find out for themselves”* and *“You miss out – you lose out”* portray attitudes regarding communication for illiterate and shift workers.

Apart from the acknowledgement of ABET training, staff in the latter categories were also in agreement that at some sites, supervisors and managers read memoranda/messages and the translator interprets. This is also done with some publications such as Lerothodi. At some sites, illiterate staff that do not understand can go to supervisor's office afterwards for a further explanation. Interpretations by supervisors are also seen to be problematic as they often don't go into detail. It is often said that the supervisors themselves don't understand.

- *“Do you have social functions and informal get-togethers? If so, what happens at these functions?”*

The main social functions are the end-of-year parties. At most sites it is the only social function that occurs during the course of a year. These functions are paid for by management who either provide refreshments or a budget for staff to organise their own function.

Participants were of the opinion that, at most of these functions, there was a degree of segregation. There is little integration amongst staff of different hierarchical levels and different races. The verbatim quote of *“People don't come and mingle and mix”* is reflective of this situation. At some sites such as Lebanon, this situation is the exception to the rule as staff do mix and talk informally at social functions.

Occasionally long service, performance and achievement award functions are also held for staff. These are much appreciated but are very infrequent.

- *“Which verbal communication tool do you prefer?”*

The verbal communication tools most preferred by the majority of participants are meetings and interactions with management. They perceive management as having the capacity and authority to make decisions and solve problems quickly.

Quotations that reflect this opinion are “*Top management should come down to the plant to hear the real, fresh story of people at the plant with nothing left out*” and “*Senior management should sometimes take time to come and talk to us. This is our humble wish.*”

Another verbal communication tool preferred by many participants was green-area meetings. The prerequisite to this, however, was that these meetings should be held regularly and be participative.

A communication tool that was unwanted by many participants was meetings or interactions with supervisors. Supervisors are seen as being ineffective communicators and negative ‘editors’ of information.

#### **4.2.4.3 “Written communication and publications...”**

- “*Do you get Aquavita? If so, do you read it/understand it/find it useful?*”

Every participant at every focus group knew of Aquavita.

However, confusion exists as to the frequency of its distribution. Participants were not too sure whether it is published twice monthly, monthly or quarterly.

Some participants were clear that they do not always get Aquavita and said that its distribution is ‘erratic’. At some sites, they receive it late and it is not distributed to all staff. The distribution method and its effectiveness seems to differ from site to site. The most effective method of distribution seems to be at green-area meetings.

Aquavita is not read by participants of the focus groups as they feel that it does not carry any information of value to them. They see the content as old and informal, social news which does not represent them or their sites. There were one or two participants who felt that Aquavita does sometimes raise important issues.

Apart from the type of content in Aquavita that is not appreciated by the focus group participants, another reason why it is not widely read by them could be because of its English text that might be too difficult for them to understand. One respondent’s comment was: “*You cannot read it by yourself.*” There was an overriding trend of dissatisfaction with the amount of English that is used in Aquavita. Almost every focus group requested that more African languages be used in this well known publication.

At some sites staff are not allowed to read Aquavita at work.

- *“Do you get H<sub>2</sub>O? If so, do you read it/understand it/find it useful?”*

More than three quarters of the participants did not know of H<sub>2</sub>O or its site equivalent. Responses such as *“Is it a chemical?”* and *“It is water”* were self-explanatory. Many participants were adamant that they have never seen it and concluded that it is probably a publication for administrators which is only distributed in the administrative offices.

In an exception to the rule, some participants had heard of site publications such as H<sub>2</sub>O and those who could get hold of it, like to read it. It is not seen on a frequent basis and it sometimes gets distributed together with Aquavita or at green-area meetings. Distribution is a problem as participants who knew of this publication said that the further you are away from the administration building, the less you see of it.

Although Aquavita is preferred to H<sub>2</sub>O, participants said that they would still like to receive both publications as they have different functions - site versus head office/corporate information.

As with Aquavita, the use of English in H<sub>2</sub>O's makes it difficult to understand. This could be a reason why so few participants in the focus groups knew of this publication.

- *“Do you get Lerothodi? If so, do you read it/understand it/find it useful?”*

Lerothodi is the most popular publication in The Utility. Participants receive it frequently and are satisfied with its monthly distribution and its valuable, newsworthy content. Some participants saw it as the only publication in The Utility that is of value.

The only concern with this publication is the financial terminology that is not understood. A major trend was dissatisfaction with the English used and the level at which it is pitched. A quotation that indicates the frustration with the language and readability level situation is: *“We only understand the name but not the rest.”*

Its popularity comes firstly from the fact that it is representative of the Chief Executive. The fact that it carries newsworthy, useful information of relevance to the organisation's status quo is said to give staff a sense of belonging. *“It is appreciated as it puts things about The Utility development into perspective.”* Its brevity also adds to its popularity.

- *“Do you get brochures and pamphlets? If so, do you read them/understand them/find them useful?”*

Most participants appreciate brochures on ‘bread and butter’ issues, such as information on health and safety and would, in fact, like to receive more brochures more often, on more and different topics. Brochures which are in African languages are read more so than those which are only published in English. It seems that many of these brochures are not produced and distributed by The Utility.

Only a few participants said that they do not receive or see brochures. This might be the result of distribution and access problems.

- *“Do you have notice boards? If so, do you use them/find them useful?”*

Notice boards are often used as a source of credible, current information. As general, work-related information is placed on notice boards, they are read frequently. The effective management of notice boards at most sites is appreciated. Amongst other things, advertisements of vacancies, minutes of meetings, memoranda and hard copies of e-mails are placed on the notice boards.

In a more negative light, it was felt that notice boards at some sites are not used/read as information on the boards is stale and irrelevant.

- *“Do you get memoranda? If so, do you read them/understand them/find them useful?”*

The overall trend amongst participants with regard to memoranda is that they do receive them one way or another. They are either distributed to them personally, put on notice boards or read, interpreted and explained to them at green-area meetings. Although these memoranda are appreciated as being important sources of work related information, they are sometimes distributed belatedly.

There were, however, a few of the participants who do not receive memoranda at all.

- *“Do you see cloakroom posters? If so, do you read them/understand them/find them useful?”*

Cloakroom posters were seen, read and appreciated by most participants. Their opinion of them was: *“We read them and find them informative and easy to understand.”*

The general opinion was that more posters would be welcomed in all cloakrooms at all sites. Factors that could contribute to the fact that they were not seen everywhere are that they often just get dumped at sites; they are not properly distributed; not all the toilets doors have the required frames; and, that in specific cases, some participants (females) do not have cloakroom facilities.

- *“Which written communication tool do you prefer?”*

Without a doubt, Lerothodi were preferred by almost all participants. It was seen as carrying more relevant company news and as being more useful and more credible than other publications. *“It’s got food”* was a typical response.

Other favoured publications mentioned include Aquavita, Izi-ndaba and Quick News. There was also a comment that The Utility has too many publications, often resulting in staff’s confusion about issues.

#### **4.2.4.4 Conclusion on Proposition 4**

P <sub>4</sub>	Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with <u>media quality</u> within The Utility.
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Proposition 4 has been rejected based on the analysis of the foregoing responses regarding media quality.

#### **4.2.5 Overall conclusion with regard to Propositions 1 to 4**

The analysis of the previous propositions (P<sub>1</sub> to P<sub>4</sub>) led to the conclusion that, in most instances, employees on job levels H, I and J of The Utility are not satisfied with communication.

### 4.3 Findings of Phase 2: Questionnaire

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Phase 2 set out to achieve Primary Objective 2:

*'To determine quantitatively the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.'*

The findings presented in this section are the responses to all the measurement questions (items) in the questionnaire. Data analysis consisted of both descriptive and inferential statistics. The statistical package SAS was utilised in the advanced analysis process.

All staff on job levels M to P with access to e-mail (1 200) received the questionnaire that was completed on the Intranet. For those without Internet access (job levels K and L, were 180), the questionnaire was made available in hard copy. This ensured widespread access to the questionnaire. A total of 209 responses were received, which represents a 15% response rate.

The findings of the questionnaire are presented in two main sections (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:64-65):

- An analysis by means of descriptive statistics, which is an initial examination of the data that provides preliminary insights as to the nature of the responses obtained. The data is presented in the form of bar and pie charts to make it more digestible.
- An analysis by means of inferential statistics, where the focus is on using the sample to make inferences about the population. Specific tests were used to test hypotheses concerning the variables of interest. The evidence provided by the sample will be used to draw conclusions for the population as a whole.

The achievement of Primary Objective 2 and its secondary objectives, as well as the corresponding hypotheses relevant to this primary objective, are discussed under the relevant sub-sections.

## DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FINDINGS

This section presents the findings of the descriptive statistics on all the measurement items in the questionnaire. The relevant simple statistics can be seen in Addendum 7.2. The findings are presented according to the constructs that make up the concept of communication satisfaction.

Findings presented according to the constructs of <u>communication satisfaction</u>	Number of corresponding sub-section
• The biographical profile of the respondents	4.3.1
• Findings of employee satisfaction (job levels K to P of The Utility), with regard to <u>communication climate</u> .	4.3.2
• Findings of employee satisfaction (job levels K to P of The Utility), with regard to <u>supervisory communication</u> .	4.3.3
• Findings of employee satisfaction (job levels K to P of The Utility), with regard to <u>organisational integration</u> .	4.3.4
• Findings of employee satisfaction (job levels K to P of The Utility), with regard to <u>media quality</u> .	4.3.5

Each measurement item's findings are presented item-by-item on the following pages. This is done as follows:

- Univariate tabulation of responses indicates the overall and respective number and percentage of responses. The values allocated to the options are: Strongly Agree = 1, Agree = 2, Disagree = 3, Strongly Disagree = 4 and Don't Know = 5.
- The findings of the Likert-scale items are presented in terms of the actual number of respondents per category (in bar graphs) and the respective percentages per category (in pie charts). The bar graphs show the degree of respondents' conviction on the five-point scale; and the pie charts show the percentage of respondents that either agreed or disagreed, irrespective of the degree of conviction.

- The discussion of the bar graphs indicates the category selected most often with regard to the specific statement i.e. *Strongly agree, Agree, I don't know, Disagree and Strongly disagree*.
- It should be noted that in the pie-charts, the 'Agree' segment is inclusive of percentages depicting responses to both 'Strongly agree' and 'Agree'. Likewise, the pie-chart segment 'Disagree' is inclusive of percentages depicting responses to both 'Strongly disagree' and 'Disagree'. For example, if the pie-chart depicts 60% of responses as 'Agree', it could for example be inclusive of 33% respondents who *strongly agreed* and 27% of respondents who *agreed*. This approach is applied in all pie-charts and discussions of the descriptive statistics.
- Results of the measurement items where more than one answer/option could be selected; or where options were available in nominal scale are presented as per the selection of options. These results are presented in table format.
- Results are presented and interpreted in terms of gap analyses, measures of central tendency and variance.

A mean score (measure of central tendency) closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were in agreement with the measurement item or statement, i.e. these responses have a tendency towards being more 'positive'. The mean scores closer to five (5) indicate respondents' disagreement with the statement, i.e. these responses have a tendency towards being more 'negative'.

A standard deviation score (measure of variance) closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were more uniform in their degree of conviction. A standard deviation score closer to five (5) indicate that the respondents had more divergence in their degree of conviction.

### 4.3.1 Findings of biographical information

---

The questionnaire had five biographical questions:

- Site
- Division
- Job level
- Educational level
- Years of service

The findings of each question in Section A are presented in tabular and graphic format, item-by-item, on the following pages.

#### Q1: Site:

The 209 responses are distributed as follows in terms of *site*:

Table 4.1: Site

Site	No	Percentage %
A	24	11
B	28	13
C	24	11
D	23	11
E	31	15
F	15	7
G	35	18
H	27	13
Other	2	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100</b>

#### Discussion

Table 4.1 indicates a relatively even distribution of responses from the different sites. The only site with a significant low response rate (7%) was *Site F*. The option of 'other', with 1% response rate was received from 'Transport'. As 'transport' is not a site, those responses have been discarded for the purposes of Table 4.1.

**Q2: Division:**

From the 209 responses the following *divisional profile* emerged:

Table 4.2: Divisional profile

<b>Division</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Corporate Communications	14	7
Corporate Services	23	11
Engineering Services	26	12
Finance	13	6
Human Resources	17	8
Information Services	21	10
Marketing and Community Service	12	6
Potable Water Production	44	21
Sales and Customer Service	21	10
Scientific Services	18	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100</b>

**Discussion**

Table 4.2 indicates that a total of 10 Divisions are represented in the sample of respondents who submitted completed questionnaires. This indicates a cross-spectrum of respondents from divisions representative of The Utility.

**Q3: Job level:**

Of the 209 fully completed questionnaires received, the following *job level profile* emerged:

Table 4.3 Job level

Job level	No	%
Executive Management (Senior, General, Divisional and Departmental)	56	27
Sectional / Head Foreman / Supervisor	55	26
Official / Operator / Artisan / Support Staff	98	47
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100</b>

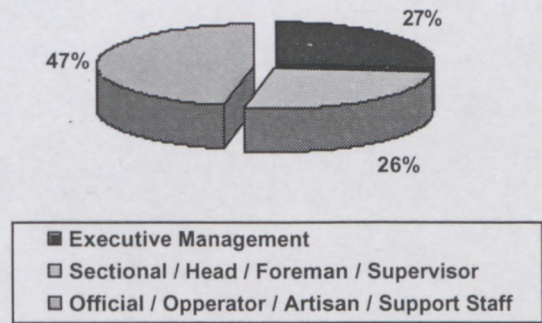


Figure 4.1 Job level

**Discussion**

Table 4.3 and Figure 4.1 indicate a graded split between the three broad job level categories, with more respondents in the level of *Official / Operator / Artisan and Support Staff* (47%) than in the *Executive Management* level (27%). The lowest response rate came from the *Sectional / Head Foreman / Supervisor* level (26%).

**Q4: Education level:**

Of the 209 fully completed questionnaires received, the following education level profile emerged.

Table 4.4 Education level

Education level	No	%
Standard 8 or less	56	27
Standard 9 to Matric	62	30
Post Matric	91	43
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100</b>

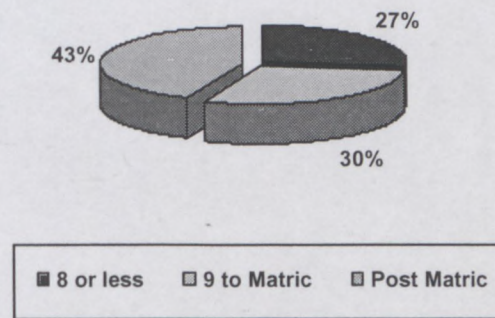


Figure 4.2 Education level

**Discussion**

As indicated by Table 4.4 and Figure 4.2, most responses came from the *Post Matric* education level (43%). There were more responses from the *Standard 9 to Matric* educational level (30%) than from the *Standard 8 or less* education level (27%).

The low response rate from education level '*Standard 8 or less*' should not be of too much concern. The focus groups conducted with job levels H, I and J obtained verbal comments from that specific educational level.

**Q5: Years of service:**

Of the 209 fully completed questionnaires received, the following profile on years of service emerged.

Table 4.5 Years of service

Years of service	No	%
Less than 1	42	20
2 to 5	48	23
6 to 10	56	27
11 to 15	48	23
16 and more	15	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100</b>

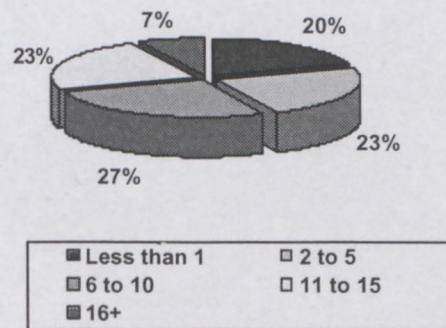


Figure 4.3 Years of service

**Discussion**

Table 4.5 and Figure 4.3 indicate that there was an even spread of responses from the different years of service categories, except for the 16 and more years of service category, in which only (7%) of respondents participated. The highest level of responses were received from the 6 to 10 years of service category (27%), whilst (23%) of responses were received from both the 2 to 5 and 11 to 15 years of service categories, respectively.

The lowest response rate was from respondents who have been working for The Utility for less than 1 year (20%). As this is a spectrum of the employee complement that should, on average, be more inquisitive, enthusiastic and participative, their low degree of participation in answering the questionnaire should raise concern.

### 4.3.2 Findings of the communication climate construct

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The findings of the descriptive statistics conducted on the items representing the construct communication climate are presented and discussed in this section. In relation to Primary Objective 2, it describes quantitatively:

... the extent to which there is satisfaction with regard to communication climate amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.

Before going through the findings in this section, the explanations below should be noted.

- A mean score (measure of central tendency) closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were in *agreement* with the measurement item or statement, i.e. these responses have a tendency towards being more 'positive'. The mean scores closer to five (5) indicates respondents' *disagreement* with the statement, i.e. these responses have a tendency towards being more 'negative'.

A standard deviation score (measure of variance) closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were more uniform in their degree of conviction. A standard deviation score closer to five (5) indicates that the respondents had more divergence in their degree of conviction.

For example: The mean score of B1 (2.3) indicates that respondents were more positive towards this measurement item. The standard deviation score of 1.12 indicates uniformity on the degree of conviction.

- The discussion of the bar graphs indicates the category selected most often with regard to the specific statement i.e. Strongly agree, Agree, I don't know, Disagree and Strongly disagree.
- It should be noted that in the pie-chart, the 'Agree' segment is inclusive of percentages depicting responses to both 'Strongly agree' and 'Agree'. Likewise, the pie-chart segment 'Disagree' is inclusive of percentages depicting responses to both 'Strongly disagree' and 'Disagree'. Thus, with reference to B1, the 60% 'Agree' is inclusive of 33% respondents who strongly agreed and 27% of respondents who agreed. This approach is applied in all pie-charts and discussions of the descriptive statistics.

**B1 "I am proud to be part of The Utility community"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	70	57	0	41	41	209
Percentage	33	27	0	20	20	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree = 5 A: Agree = 4 U: Unsure/don't know = 3 D: Disagree = 2 SD: Strongly Disagree = 1

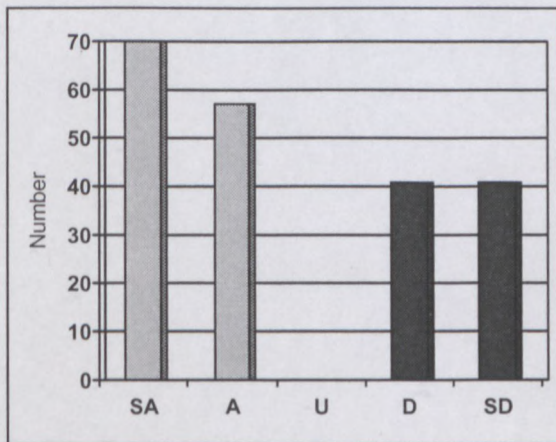


Figure 4.4

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to B1

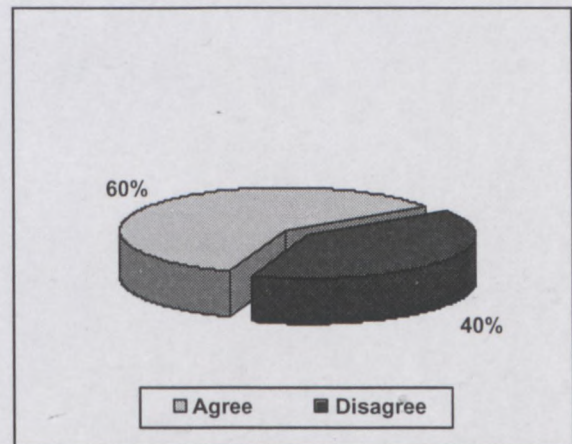


Figure 4.5

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed with B1, irrespective of their degree of conviction

**Mean score = 2.3** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.12** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (70) selected with regard to this item was 'Strongly agree'.

The majority of respondents (60%) said that they are *proud to be part of The Utility community*. This is a relatively average score – but, a good reflection on the state of the internal communication climate. It was important that there were no 'I don't know / I'm not sure' answers. Employees felt either proud or not proud to be part of The Utility community. A total of 40% *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed*.

**B2 “The internal communication in The Utility encourages two-way feedback”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	52	69	12	30	46	209
Percentage	25	33	6	14	22	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree = 5 A: Agree = 4 U: Unsure/don't know = 3 D: Disagree = 2 SD: Strongly Disagree = 1

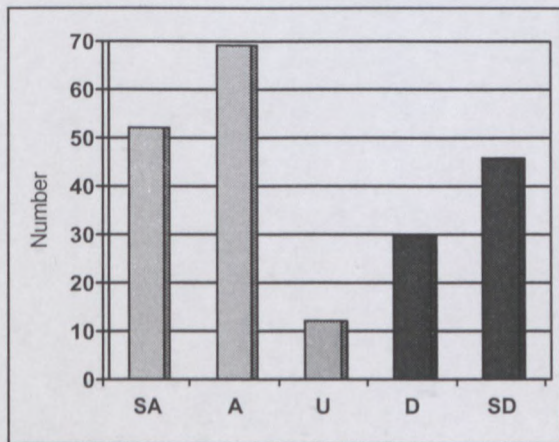


Figure 4.6

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to B2

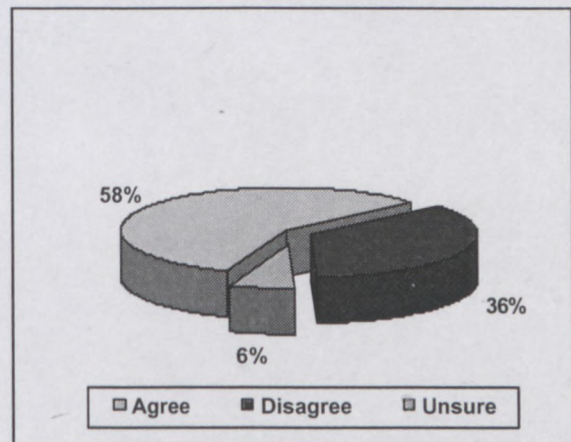


Figure 4.7

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed with B2, irrespective of their degree of conviction

**Mean score = 2.4** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.10** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (69) selected with regard to this item was *Agree*.

A slight majority of respondents (58%) said that the *internal communication in The Utility encourages two-way feedback*. An integral part of effective communication is the component of two-way feedback. More than a third (36%) *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this item.

**B3 “To what extent do you trust the internal communication process in The Utility?”**

Overall	LE	FE	U	SE	N	Total
Number	41	78	9	34	47	209
Percentage	20	38	4	16	22	100

**Legend:** LE Large Extent = 5 FE Fair Extent = 4 U: Unsure/don't know = 3 SE: Small Extent = 2 N: Not at all = 1

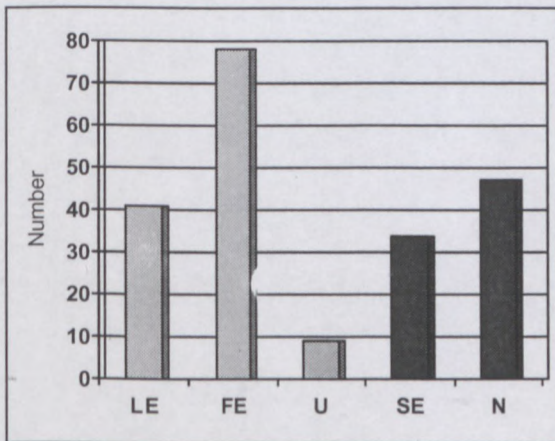


Figure 4.8

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to B3

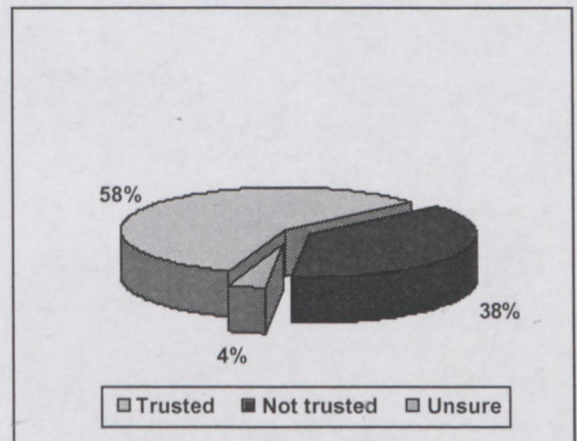


Figure 4.9

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed with B3, irrespective of their degree of conviction

**Mean score = 2.4** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.06** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (78) selected with regard to this item was 'Fair extent'.

A slight majority of respondents (58%) said that *they trust the internal communication process in The Utility to a fair extent*. Seen from a relationship management point of view, where trust is a core element, the responses reflect a relatively open communication climate. In such a climate, communication should flow throughout the organisation without distortion, thereby adding to organisational effectiveness.

However, a point of concern is that more than a third (38%) said that *they trust the internal communication process in The Utility only to a small extent or not at all*.

**B4** “The internal communication processes make me more committed to achieve The Utility’s goals”

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	51	69	4	41	44	209
Percentage	24	33	2	20	21	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree = 5 A: Agree = 4 U: Unsure/don't know = 3 D: Disagree = 2 SD: Strongly Disagree = 1

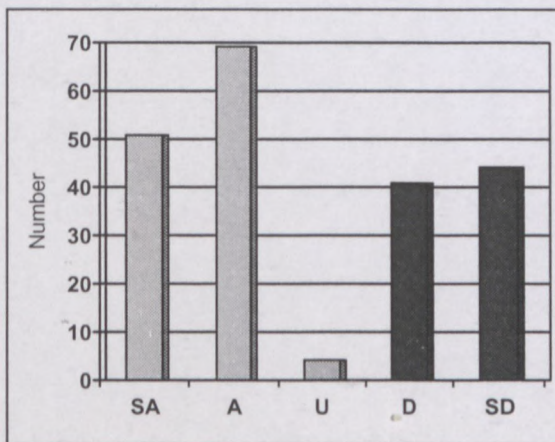


Figure 4.10

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to B4

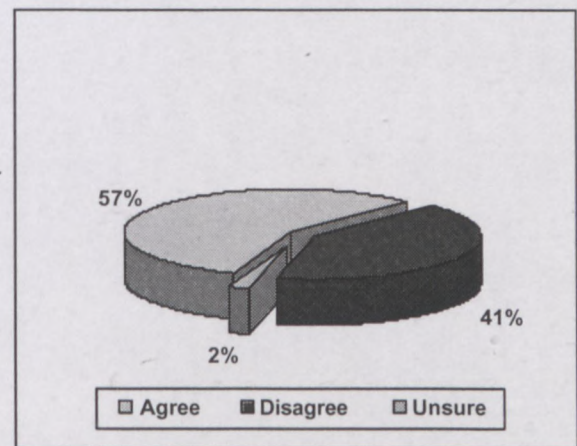


Figure 4.11

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed with B4, irrespective of their degree of conviction

**Mean score = 2.4** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.08** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

The category that most respondents (69) selected with regard to this item was ‘Agree’.

A slight majority of respondents (57%) said that *the internal communication processes make them more committed to achieve The Utility’s goals*. However, a large number of respondents (41%) *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**B6** “The Utility’s internal communication encourages a feeling that I have as much influence on my relationship with The Utility as they have on me”

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	49	69	6	33	52	209
Percentage	23	33	3	16	25	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree = 5 A: Agree = 4 U: Unsure/don't know = 3 D: Disagree = 2 SD: Strongly Disagree = 1

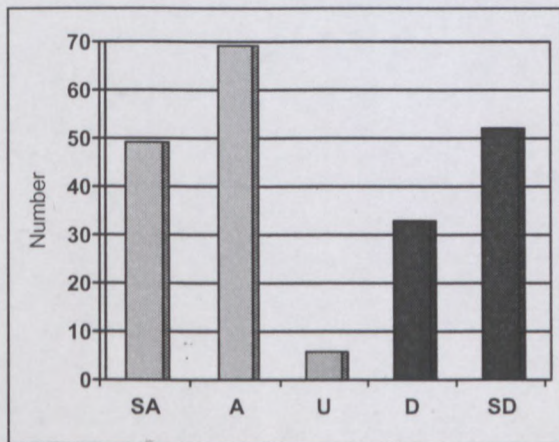


Figure 4.12

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to B6

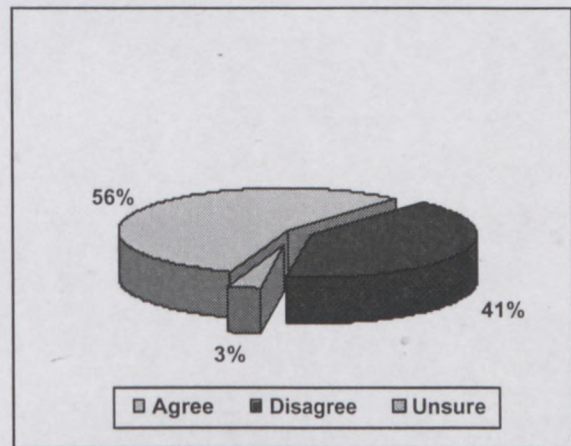


Figure 4.13

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed with B6, irrespective of their degree of conviction

**Mean score = 2.4** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.11** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

The category that most respondents (69) selected with regard to this item was ‘Agree’.

A slight majority of respondents (56%) said that *The Utility’s internal communication encourages a feeling that they have as much influence on their relationship with The Utility as The Utility has on them*. Of importance are the respondents (41%) who *disagreed and strongly disagreed* with this statement.

As mutual influence adds to a more stable relationship with employees, it is important that The Utility’s strategies and internal communication consider and reflect such mutuality.

**B7 “The internal communication at The Utility creates a climate of transparency “**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	30	67	14	41	57	209
Percentage	14	32	7	20	27	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree = 5 A: Agree = 4 U: Unsure/don't know = 3 D: Disagree = 2 SD: Strongly Disagree = 1

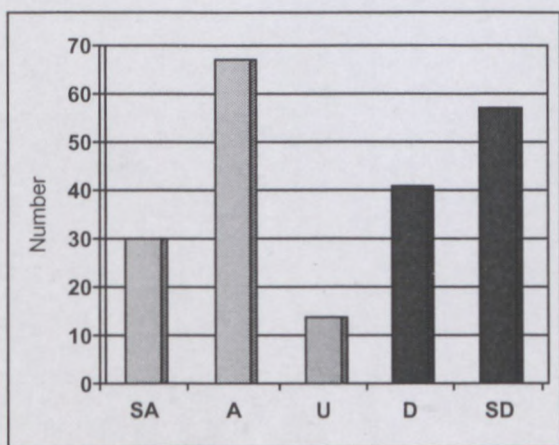


Figure 4.14

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to B7

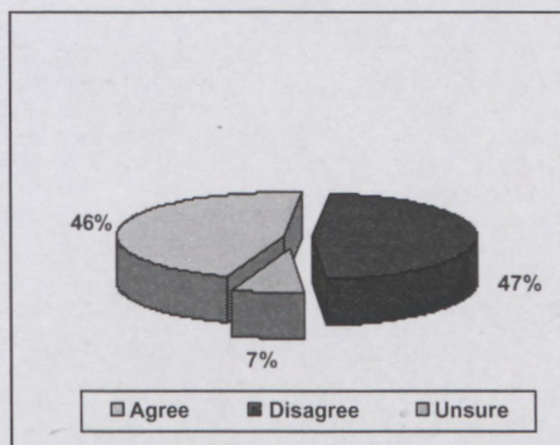


Figure 4.15

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed with B7, irrespective of their degree of conviction

**Mean score = 2.6** – responses on this item were slightly more negative

**Standard deviation = 1.06** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (67) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A small majority of respondents (47%) said that *the internal communication at The Utility does not create a climate of transparency*. On the other hand, those respondents who said that *the internal communication at The Utility does create a climate of transparency* (46%) are too low to be seen as not important. Seen in the light of global corporate governance initiatives, transparency is a non-negotiable.

**B8 “The Utility’s internal communication has improved during the last 12 months”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	68	59	7	39	36	209
Percentage	33	28	3	19	17	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree = 5 A: Agree = 4 U: Unsure/don't know = 3 D: Disagree = 2 SD: Strongly Disagree = 1

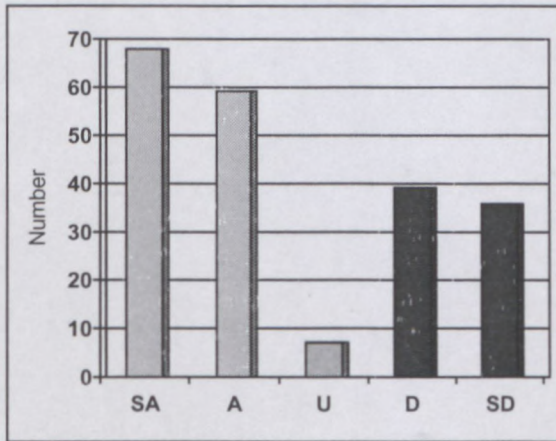


Figure 4.16

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to B8

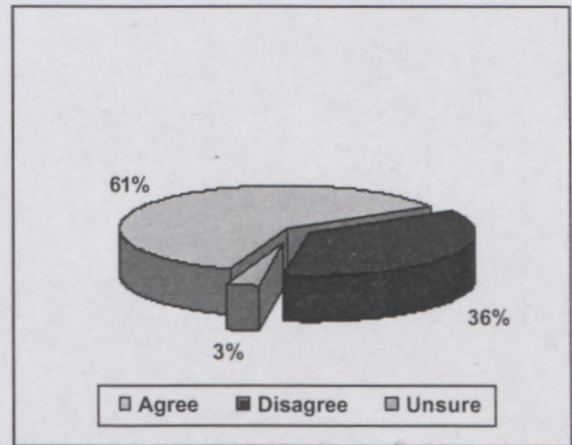


Figure 4.17

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed with B8, irrespective of their degree of conviction

**Mean score = 2.2** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.09** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (68) selected with regard to this item was ‘*Strongly agree*’.

A large majority of respondents (61%) said that *The Utility’s internal communication has improved during the last 12 months*. It is thus evident that the attempts being made by the internal communication department to improve internal communication are showing positive results.

However, of concern is that more than a third (36%) *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this item.

**F56 “Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with internal communication in The Utility?”**

Overall	VS	FS	U	FD	VD	Total
Number	17	121	12	12	47	209
Percentage	8	58	6	6	22	100

**Legend:** VA: Very Satisfied = 5 FS: Fairly Satisfied = 4 U: Unsure/don't know = 3  
 FD: Fairly Dissatisfied = 2 VD: Very Dissatisfied = 1

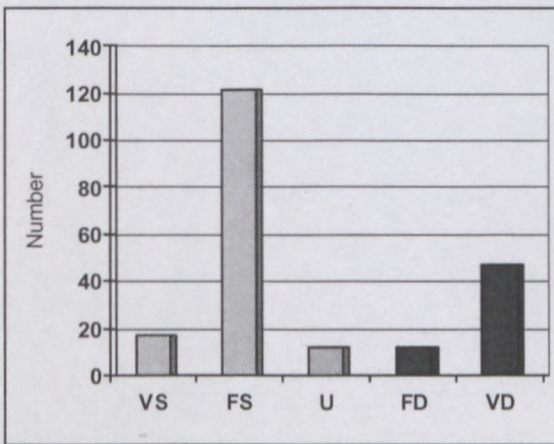


Figure 4.18

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to F56

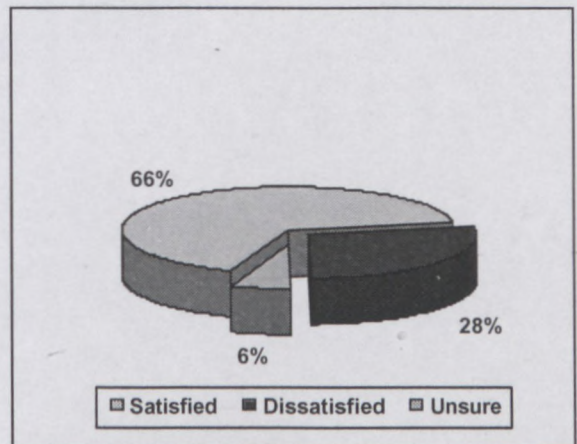


Figure 4.19

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction with F56

**Mean score = 2.5** – responses on this item were neither negative nor positive

**Standard deviation = 0.94** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (121) selected with regard to this item was 'Fairly satisfied.'

A fair majority of respondents (66%) said that, *taking everything into account, they are satisfied with the internal communication at The Utility*. It should, however, be noted that the fact that some respondents are *fairly dissatisfied* and *very dissatisfied* (28%) can become a problem if not managed effectively.

F55 "Communication within The Utility is best described as:

a) Reaches all staff – Only reaches certain staff"

	Reaches all staff			Only reaches certain staff		
Value	2.0	1.0	0	-1.0	-2.0	Total
Number	21	53	70	36	29	209
Percentage	10	25	34	17	14	100

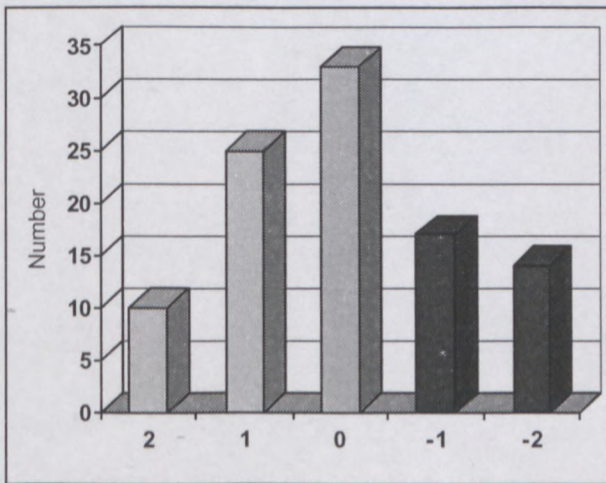


Figure 4.20

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to F55a

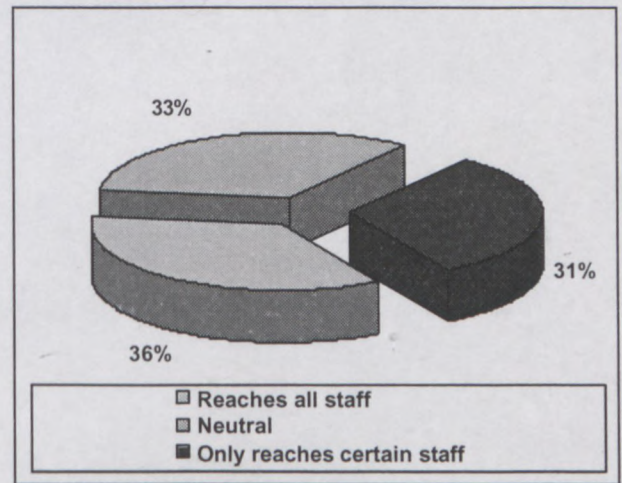


Figure 4.21

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction with F55a

**Overall mean score = 3.0** – responses on this item were more negative

**Standard deviation = 1.17** – in relation to the SDs of the other items which measured this construct, this SD shows that the respondents were more divergent in their conviction of this item than with other items that measured this construct.

### Discussion

Although most respondents perceive communication to *reach all staff* (36%), those who perceive that communication does not to *reach all staff* (31%) were relatively high. Of major importance is the exceptionally high percentage (33%) of respondents who were neutral around the statement. This can indicate that it measured whether communication is seen as a tool to democratise the work environment at The Utility.

F55 "Communication within The Utility is best described as:

b) Consistent – Inconsistent"

	Consistent			Inconsistent		
Value	2.0	1.0	0	-1.0	-2.0	Total
Number	20	55	75	37	22	209
Percentage	10	26	35	18	11	100

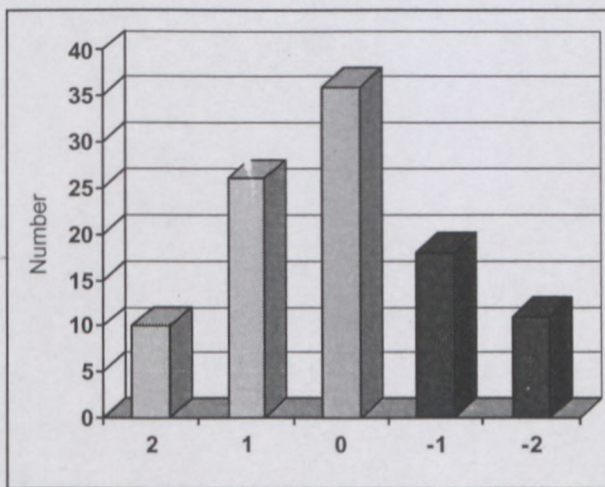


Figure 4.22

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to F55b

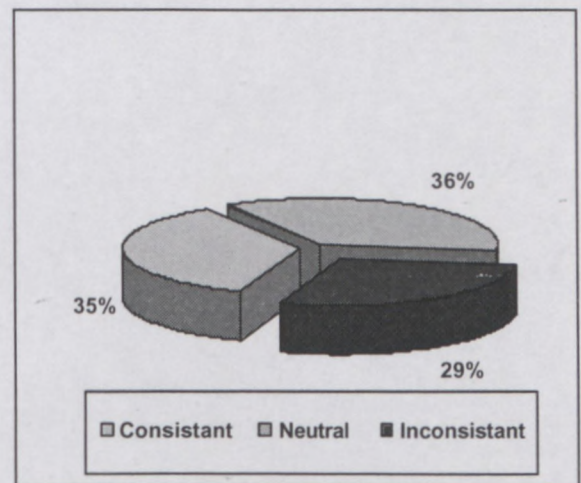


Figure 4.23

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction with F55b

**Overall mean score = 2.9** – responses on this item were slightly more negative

**Standard deviation = 1.11** – in relation to the SDs of the other items which measured this construct, this SD shows that the respondents were more divergent in their conviction of this item than with other items that measured this construct.

### Discussion

A majority of respondents (35%) were neutral as to whether communication in The Utility is *consistent* or *inconsistent*. The difference between those who perceived communication in The Utility to be consistent and those who did not is very small. Only (36%) perceived communication to be *consistent*, with a relatively high percentage (29%) who perceived it to be *inconsistent*.

F55 "Communication within The Utility is best described as:

c) Speedy – Slow”

	Speedy		Slow			
Value	2.0	1.0	0	-1.0	-2.0	Total
Number	17	39	75	53	25	209
Percentage	8	19	36	25	12	100

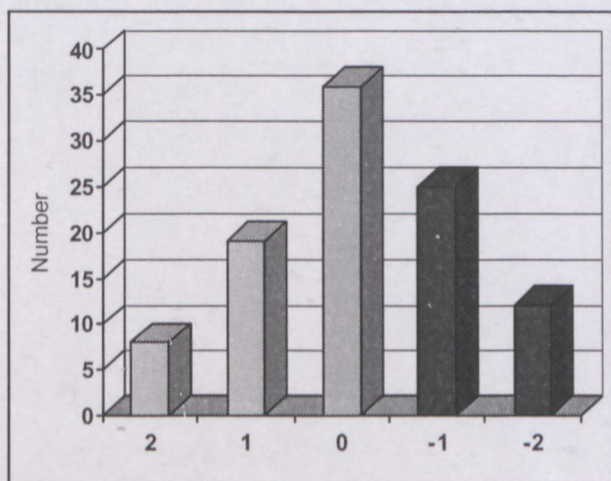


Figure 4.24

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to F55c

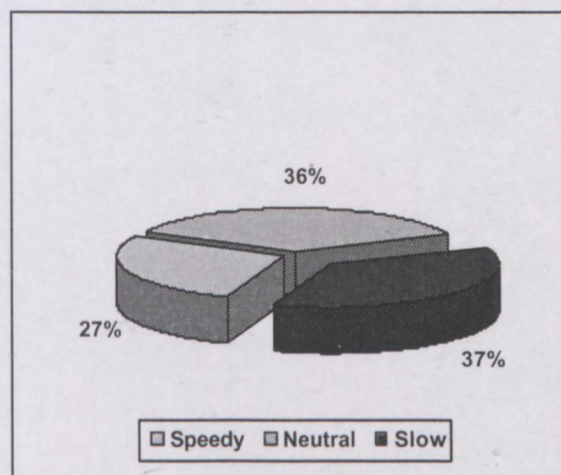


Figure 4.25

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction with F55c

**Overall mean score = 3.1** – responses on this item were more negative

**Standard deviation = 1.10** – in relation to the SDs of the other items which measured this construct, this SD shows that the respondents were more divergent in their conviction of this item than with other items that measured this construct.

### Discussion

The majority of respondents (37%) described communication in The Utility as *slow*. Of further concern is the high percentage (36%) that had a neutral response to the statement. It is rather worrisome that more than two thirds of the respondents perceive communication to be *slow* and/or are neutral towards the statement. Slow communication, no matter how inclusive or how consistent, is of very little use to the recipients.

Only 27% of respondents described communication in The Utility as *speedy*.

F55 "Communication within The Utility is best described as:

d) Understandable – Confusing"

	Understandable			Confusing		
Value	2.0	1.0	0	-1.0	-2.0	Total
Number	21	86	75	14	13	209
Percentage	10	41	36	7	6	100

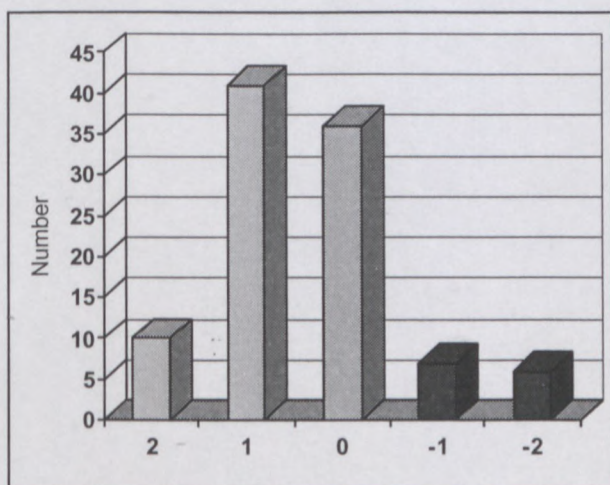


Figure 4.26

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to F55d

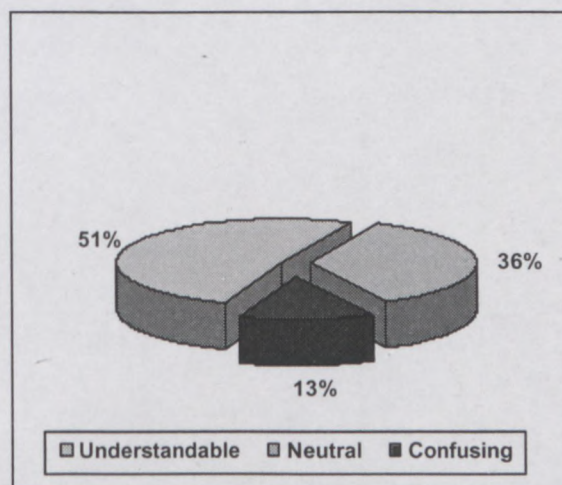


Figure 4.27

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction with F55d

**Overall mean score = 2.6** – responses on this item were slightly more negative

**Standard deviation = 0.97** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

A small majority of respondents (51%) described communication in The Utility as *understandable*. The high percentage of respondents (36%) who were neutral to the statement is important. This indicates that although communication is received in The Utility, many of the recipients (13%) find it *confusing*. Effective communication does not take place unless the recipient of the message understands the communication and the fact that more than a third of the respondents were neutral to the statement could become a matter of concern, if not managed.

F55 "Communication within The Utility is best described as:

e) Credible – Questionable"

	Credible			Questionable		
Value	2.0	1.0	0	-1.0	-2.0	Total
Number	24	64	89	18	14	209
Percentage	11	31	42	9	7	100

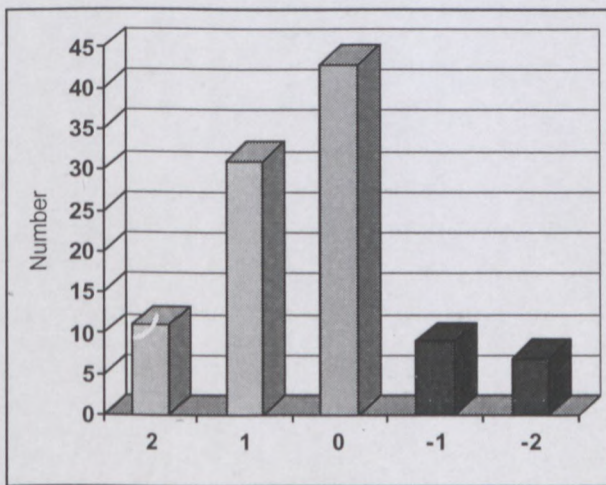


Figure 4.28

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to F55e

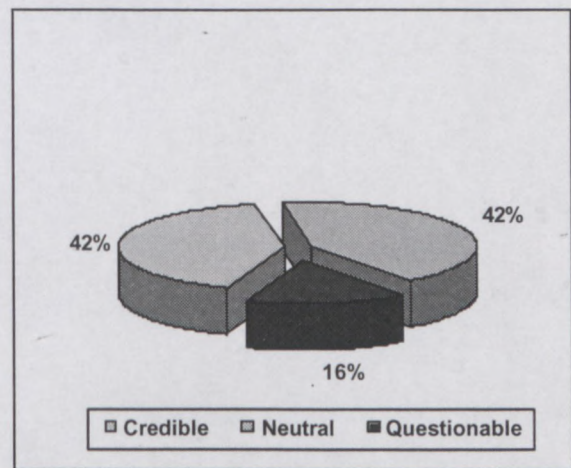


Figure 4.29

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction with F55e

**Overall mean score = 2.7** – responses on this item were slightly more negative

**Standard deviation = 1.01** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

The respondents who described communication in The Utility as *credible* (42%) were equal to those who were neutral to the statement (42%). This indicates a trend in The Utility's communication that could become a matter of concern as the 'neutrality' could lend itself to a negative communication climate, if not managed.

The percentage of respondents who described communication in The Utility as *questionable* was 16%.

F55 "Communication within The Utility is best described as:

f) Purposeful – Not purposeful"

	Purposeful			Not purposeful		
Value	2.0	1.0	0	-1.0	-2.0	Total
Number	25	78	76	19	11	209
Percentage	13	37	36	9	5	100

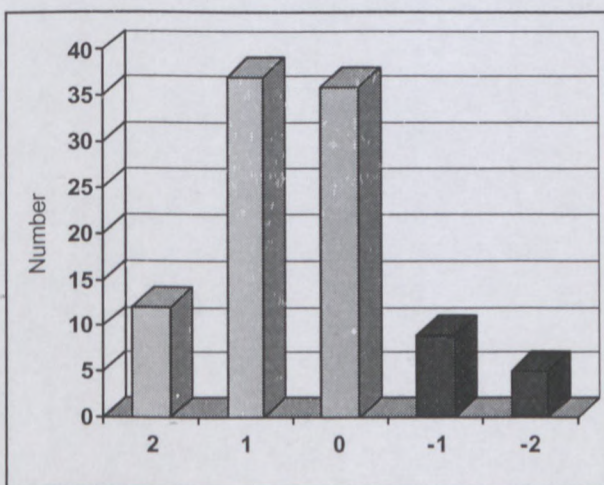


Figure 4.30

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to F55f

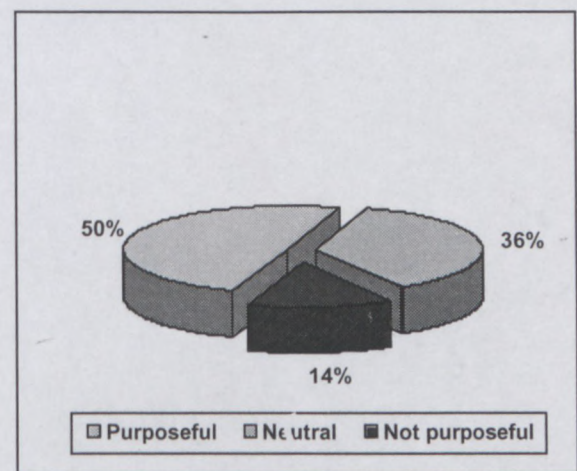


Figure 4.31

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction with F55f

**Overall mean score = 2.6** – responses on this item were slightly more negative

**Standard deviation = 0.99** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

A small majority of respondents (50%) described communication in The Utility as *purposeful*. The high percentage of respondents (36%) who were neutral to this statement is of concern. In today's busy world with schedules that are becoming more hectic, purposeful communication is not a luxury but a necessity. People simply do not have the time to wade through communication that is not purposeful.

Only 14% of respondents described communication in The Utility as *not purposeful*.

F55 "Communication within The Utility is best described as:

g) Relevant – Irrelevant"

	Relevant			Irrelevant		
Value	2.0	1.0	0	-1.0	-2.0	Total
Number	24	86	71	21	7	209
Percentage	12	41	34	10	3	100

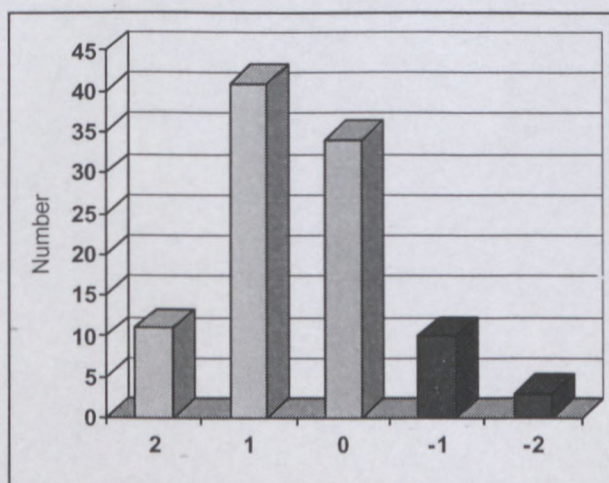


Figure 4.32

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to F55g

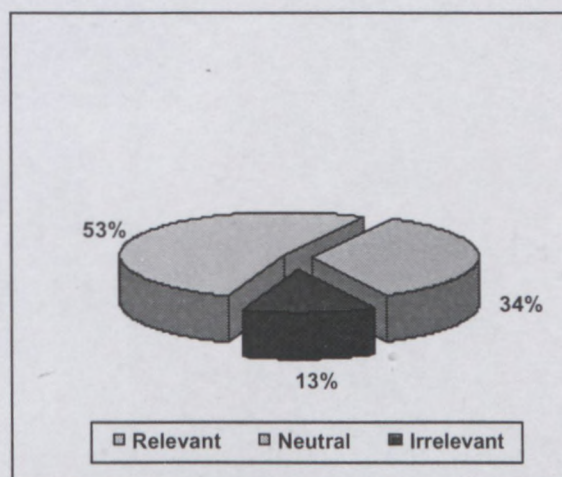


Figure 4.33

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction with F55g

**Overall mean score = 2.5** – responses on this item were neither negative nor positive

**Standard deviation = 0.94** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

A small majority of respondents (53%) described communication in The Utility as *relevant*. Of importance is the high percentage of respondents (34%) who were neutral to the statement. Irrelevant communication can be seen as fruitless in terms of expenditure, effort and resources.

The percentage of respondents who described communication in The Utility as *irrelevant* was 13%.

F55 "Communication within The Utility is best described as:

h) Efficient – Inefficient "

	Efficient			Inefficient		
Value	2.0	1.0	0	-1.0	-2.0	Total
Number	20	70	74	33	12	209
Percentage	10	33	35	16	6	100

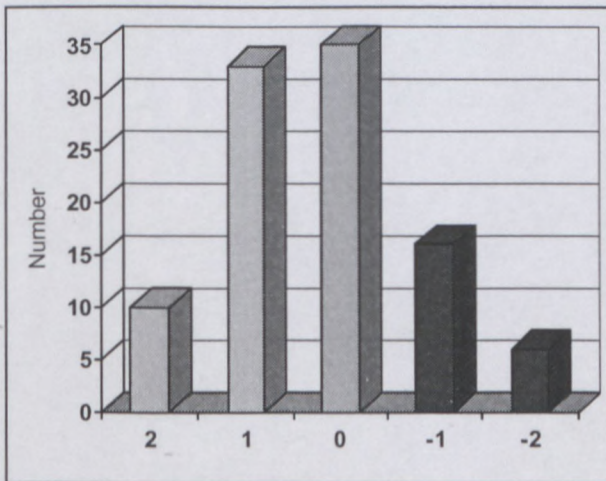


Figure 4.34

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to F55h

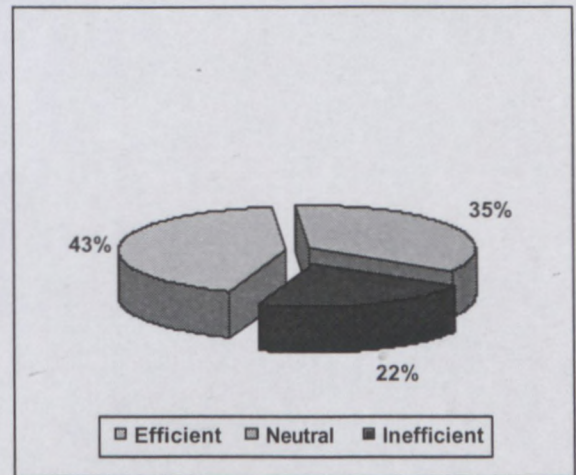


Figure 4.35

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction with F55h

**Overall mean score = 2.7** – responses on this item were slightly more negative

**Standard deviation = 1.02** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

A small majority of respondents (43%) described communication in The Utility as *efficient*. Of concern is the high percentage of respondents (35%) who were neutral to the statement.

Twenty-two percent (22%) of respondents described communication in The Utility as *inefficient*.

F55 "Communication within The Utility is best described as:

i) Customer focused – Not customer focused"

	Customer focussed			Not customer focussed		
Value	2.0	1.0	0	-1.0	-2.0	Total
Number	33	67	72	20	17	209
Percentage	16	32	34	10	8	100

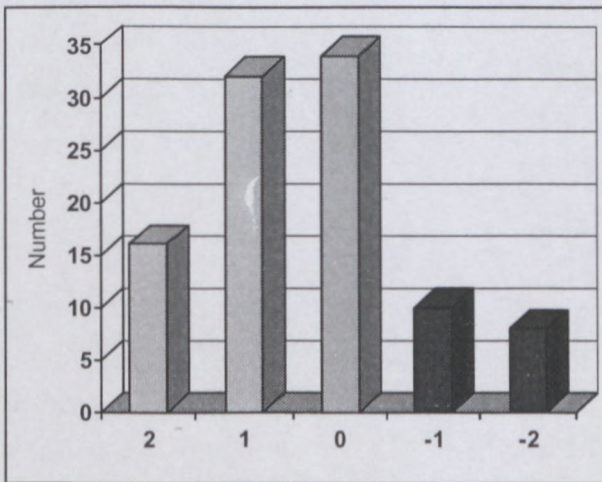


Figure 4.36

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to F55i

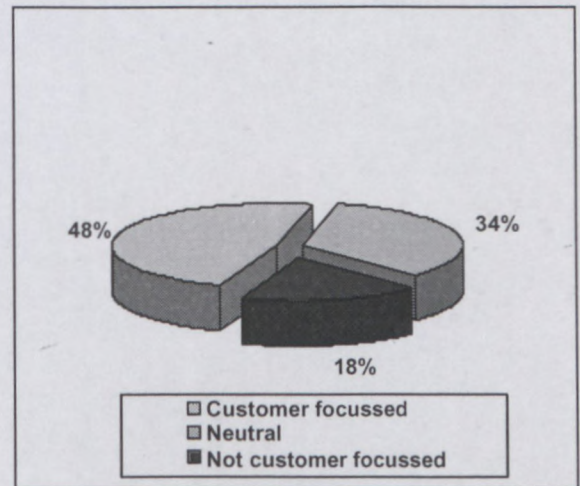


Figure 4.37

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction with F55i

**Overall mean score = 2.6** – responses on this item were slightly more negative

**Standard deviation = 1.11** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

A small majority of respondents (48%) described communication in The Utility as *customer focused*. The high percentage of respondents (34%) who were neutral to the statement is worrisome as internal communication is supposed to service internal customers.

The percentage of respondents who described communication in The Utility as *not customer focussed* was 18%.

#### 4.3.2.1 Gap analysis of communication climate's measurement items

The 'gap' refers to the degree to which positive responses exceed, or fail to exceed, the negative responses. The percentage of unsure responses is left out of the equation. However, in the case of measurement items where the unsure responses were very high, they were highlighted in the foregoing detailed analyses.

- An aspect is rated as '*Positive*' when the percentage of respondents that rated that aspect positively, minus the percentage of respondents that rated that aspect negatively (and not taking the respondents that were unsure or did not know into the calculation) exceeds 50%. An aspect is still regarded as positive when, for example, 70% of respondents were positive, 10% were unsure/didn't know and 20% were negative (different combinations also apply). These are items that were rated favourably by respondents.
- An aspect is rated as '*of some concern*' when the end rating is between 25-49%.

The items that were rated in this report, as '*of some concern*' are those that were rated neither positively, nor as '*of considerable concern*'.

- '*Of serious concern*' applies when the end rating is less than 25%.

The aspects that were rated in this report as '*of considerable concern*' are those identified by the respondents as negative.

**A) Gap analysis: Communication climate's measurement items B1 to B8 and F56**

Table 4.6: Gap analysis: Communication climate's measurement items

	Measurement item	Pos	Neg	Gap
B1	I am proud to be part of The Utility community	60	40	20
B2	The internal communication in The Utility encourages two-way feedback	58	36	22
B3	To what extent do you <u>trust</u> the internal communication process in The Utility?	58	38	20
B4	The internal communication processes make <u>me</u> more <u>committed</u> to achieve The Utility's goals	57	41	16
B6	The Utility's internal communication encourages a feeling that I have as much influence on my relationship with The Utility as they have on me	56	42	14
B7	The internal communication at The Utility creates a climate of transparency	46	47	-1
B8	The Utility's internal communication has improved during the last 12 months	61	36	25
F56	Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with internal communication in The Utility?	66	28	38

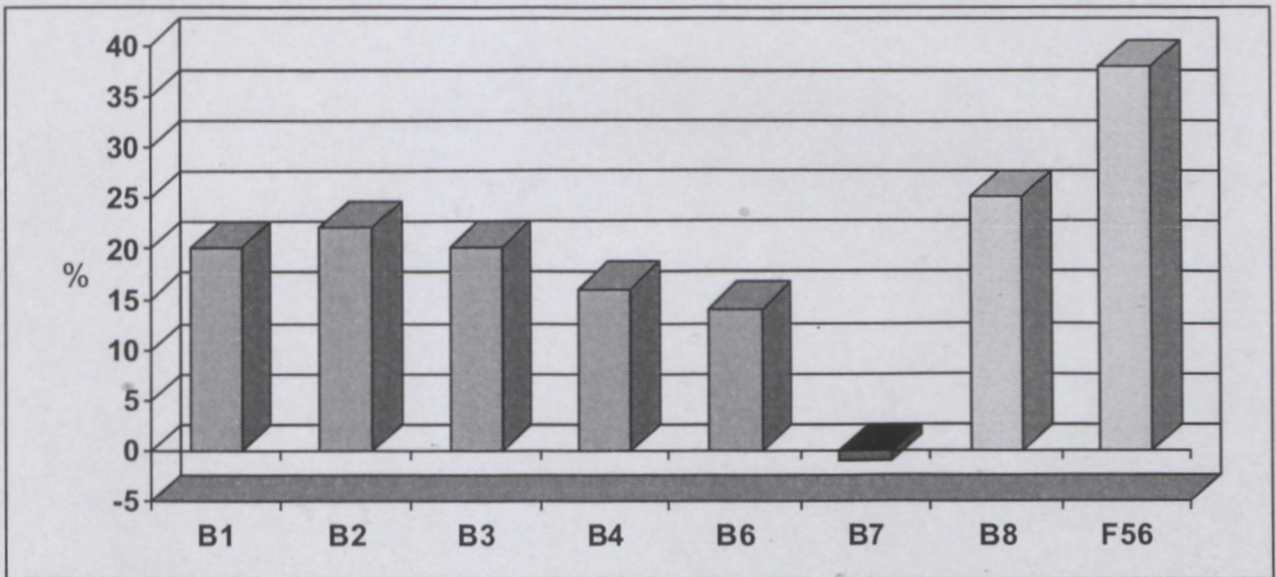


Figure 4.38: Gap analysis: Communication climate's measurement items B1 to B8 and F56

There were no positive aspects (>50%) amongst the responses of communication climate's measurement items B1 to B8 and F56.

Aspects of some concern (25% – 49%) amongst the responses of communication climate's measurement items B1 to B8 and F56 are:

The Utility's internal communication has improved during the last 12 months	26
Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with internal communication in The Utility?	38

Aspects of considerable concern (<25%) amongst the responses of communication climate's measurement items B1 to B8 and F56 are:

I am proud to be part of The Utility community	20
The internal communication in The Utility encourages two-way feedback	22
To what extent do you <u>trust</u> the internal communication process in The Utility?	20
The internal communication processes make <u>me</u> more <u>committed</u> to achieve The Utility's goals	16
The Utility's internal communication encourages a feeling that I have as much influence on my relationship with The Utility as they have on me	14
The internal communication at The Utility creates a climate of transparency	-1

**B) Gap analysis: Communication climate's measurement item F55**

Table 4.7: Gap analysis: Communication climate: measurement items F55

“Communication within The Utility is best described as:”

No	Differential Scale	Positive	Negative	Gap
F55 a	Reaches all staff – Only reaches certain staff	36	31	5
F55 b	Consistent - Inconsistent	35	29	6
F55 c	Speedy - Slow	27	37	-10
F55 d	Understandable - Confusing	51	13	38
F55 e	Credible – Questionable	42	16	26
F55 f	Purposeful – Not purposeful	50	14	36
F55 g	Relevant - Irrelevant	53	13	40
F55 h	Efficient - Inefficient	43	22	21
F55 i	Customer focused – Not customer focused	48	18	30

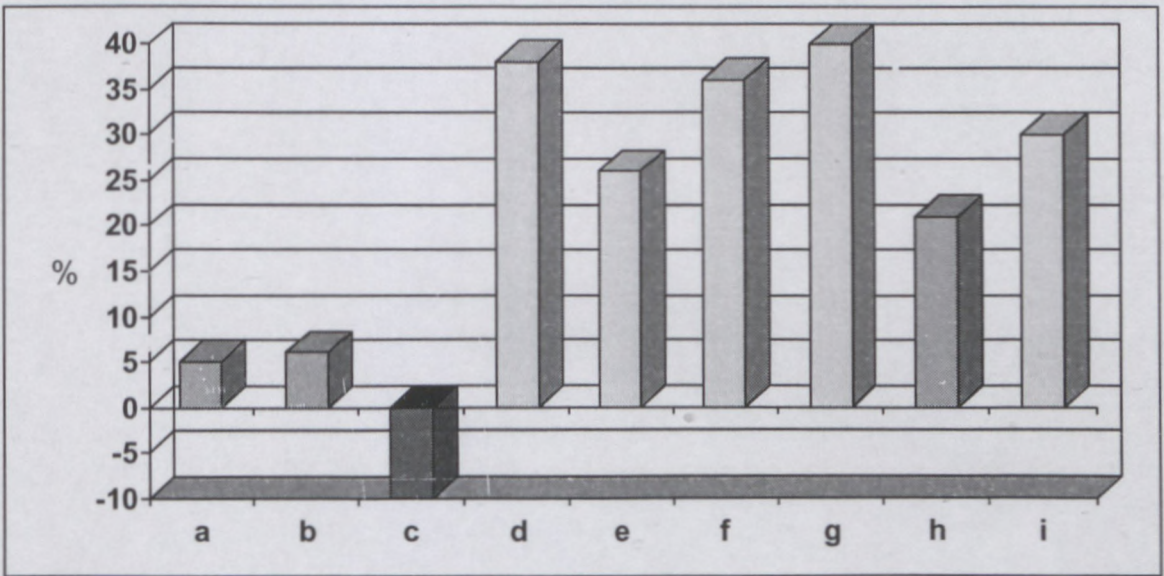


Figure 4.39: Gap analysis: Communication climate: measurement item F55

There were no positive aspects (>50%) amongst the responses relating to communication climate's measurement item F55.

Aspects of some concern (25% – 49%) amongst the responses relating to communication climate's measurement item F55 are:

Understandable - Confusing	38
Credible - Questionable	26
Purposeful – Not purposeful	36
Relevant - Irrelevant	40
Customer focused – Not customer focused	30

Aspects of considerable concern (<25%) amongst the responses relating to communication climate's measurement item F55 are:

Speedy – Slow	-10
Reaches all staff – Only reaches certain staff	5
Consistent - Inconsistent	6
Efficient - Inefficient	21

#### 4.3.2.2 Measures of central tendency and variability relating to communication climate

The measures of central tendency and variability scores of responses are illustrated below in table format. The measure of central tendency (mean) and measure of variability (standard deviation) can be interpreted accordingly:

- A mean score closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were in agreement with the measurement item or statement. It can also be said that these responses have a tendency towards being more 'positive'. A mean score closer to five (5) indicates respondents' disagreement with the statement and that those responses are more 'negative'.
- A standard deviation (SD) score closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were uniform in their degree of conviction. A SD score closer to five (5) indicate that the respondents had divergence in their degree of conviction.

Table 4.8: Mean scores and standard deviation (SD) relating to communication climate's measurement items

Measurement item		Mean	SD
B1	I am proud to be part of The Utility community	2.3	1.12
B2	The internal communication in The Utility encourages two-way feedback	2.4	1.10
B3	To what extent do you <u>trust</u> the internal communication process in The Utility?	2.4	1.06
B4	The internal communication processes make <u>me</u> more <u>committed</u> to achieve The Utility's goals	2.4	1.08
B6	The Utility's internal communication encourages a feeling that I have as much influence on my relationship with The Utility as they have on me	2.4	1.11
B7	The internal communication at The Utility creates a climate of transparency	2.6	1.06
B8	The Utility's internal communication has improved during the last 12 months	2.2	1.09
F55 a	Reaches all staff – Only reaches certain staff	3.0	1.17
F55 b	Consistent - Inconsistent	2.9	1.11
F55 c	Speedy - Slow	3.1	1.10
F55 d	Understandable - Confusing	2.6	0.97
F55 e	Credible - Questionable	2.7	1.01
F55 f	Purposeful – Not purposeful	2.6	0.99
F55 g	Relevant - Irrelevant	2.5	0.94
F55 h	Efficient - Inefficient	2.7	1.02
F55 i	Customer focused – Not customer focused	2.6	1.11

With the measurement items being scored as one (1) being positive and five (5) being negative, the analysis of Table 4.8 emphasises the following factors:

- There was no measurement item that received a more positive mean score for communication climate.
- Measurement items that received a slightly more negative mean score for communication climate are:
  - With a mean of 2.6 for measurement item B7, the internal *communication at The Utility seems not to create a climate of transparency*. The low standard deviation (1.06) indicates uniformity on the degree of conviction.

- Measurement item F55b's mean (2.9) indicates that that *communication in The Utility is best described as inconsistent* but the SD (1.11) shows that there is divergence of conviction amongst the respondents.
- Measurement items that received a more negative mean score for communication climate are:
  - The mean (3.0) for measurement item F55a indicates that *communication in The Utility is best described as only reaching certain staff*. In relation to the SDs of the other items which measured this construct, F55a's SD (1.17) shows that the respondents were more divergent in their conviction.
  - With a mean of 3.1 for measurement item F55c, the internal *communication at The Utility is best described as slow*. The relatively high standard deviation (1.10) indicates uniformity on the degree of conviction.

The overall mean for the construct of communication climate was 2.6 indicating that respondents were slightly more negative towards this construct. The low overall SD of 0.628341 indicated that respondents were uniform in their degree of conviction on communication climate.

#### 4.3.2.3 Conclusion

**The analysis of the descriptive statistics on communication climate led to the conclusion that, employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are slightly dissatisfied with communication climate.**

### 4.3.3 Findings of the supervisory communication construct

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The findings of the descriptive statistics conducted on the items representing the construct supervisory communication are presented and discussed in this section. In relation to Primary Objective 2, it describes quantitatively:

*... the extent to which there is satisfaction with regard to supervisory communication amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.*

Before going through the findings in this section, the explanations below should be noted.

- A mean score (measure of central tendency) closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were in *agreement* with the measurement item or statement, i.e. these responses have a tendency towards being more 'positive'. The mean scores closer to five (5) indicates respondents' *disagreement* with the statement, i.e. these responses have a tendency towards being more 'negative'.

A standard deviation score (measure of variance) closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were more uniform in their degree of conviction. A standard deviation score (SD) closer to five (5) indicates that the respondents had more divergence in their degree of conviction.

For example: The mean score of D15 (2.5) indicates that respondents were neither positive or negative towards this measurement item. In relation to the SDs of the other measurement items, D15's SD of 1.60 indicates the respondents were more divergent in their conviction.

- The discussion of the bar graphs indicates the category selected most often with regard to the specific statement i.e. Strongly agree, Agree, I don't know, Disagree and Strongly disagree.
- In the pie-chart, the 'Agree' segment is inclusive of percentages depicting responses to both 'Strongly agree' and 'Agree'. Likewise, the pie-chart segment 'Disagree' is inclusive of percentages depicting responses to both 'Strongly disagree' and 'Disagree'. Thus, with reference to D18, the 71% 'Agree' is inclusive of 27% respondents who strongly agreed and 44% of respondents who agreed. This approach is applied in all pie-charts and discussions of the descriptive statistics.

**D15 "Communication from Divisional, Departmental and Site management is:"**

Overall	SP	S	U	R	IR	Total
Number	35	67	40	10	57	209
Percentage	17	32	19	5	27	100

**Legend:** SP: Speedy SL: Slow U: Unsure/don't know R: Regular IR: Irregular

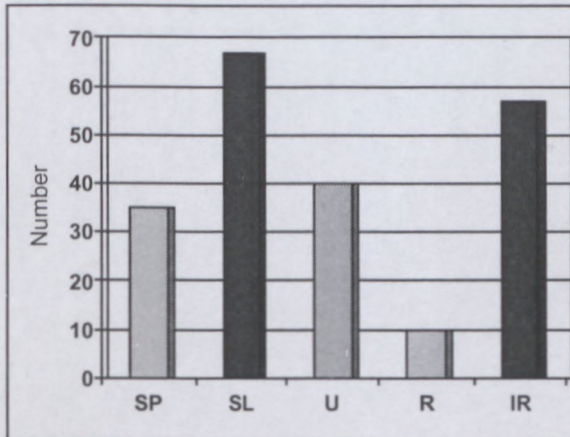


Figure 4.40

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to D15

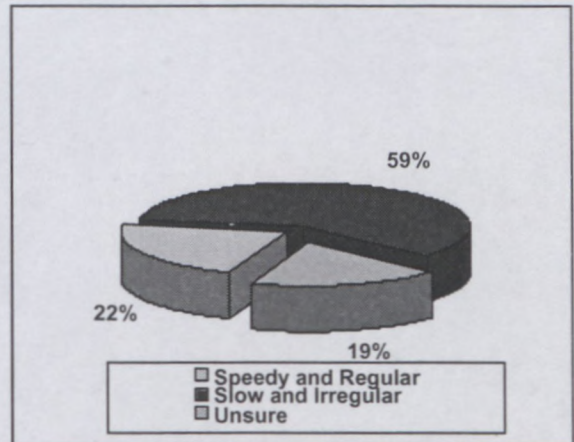


Figure 4.41

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to D15

**Mean score = 2.5** – responses on this item were neither negative nor positive

**Standard deviation = 1.60** – in relation to the SDs of the other items which measured this construct, this SD shows that the respondents were more divergent in their conviction of this item than with other items that measured this construct

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (67) selected with regard to this item was that communication from Divisional, Departmental and Site management is *slow*.

A majority of respondents (59%) said that communication from Divisional, Departmental and Site management is *slow and irregular*. The large number of respondents who opted for 'I'm unsure / I don't know' is also noteworthy. The categories *speedy* and *regular* received only 22% responses. Although the communication performance of line managers is seen in a positive light by most respondents (measurement item D16), it is of little help if such effective communication is slow and irregular. As line management communication is seen as the most important communication medium for most employees, the slowness and irregularity of communication from The Utility's Divisional, Departmental and Site management is of serious concern.

**D16 “How would you rate the communication performance of your line manager?”**

(Effective communication performance is good listening skills, briefing skills and feedback)

Overall	VG	G	A	P	VP	Total
Number	37	68	57	31	16	209
Percentage	18	32	27	15	8	100

**Legend:** VG: Very Good G: Good A: Average P: Poor VP: Very Poor

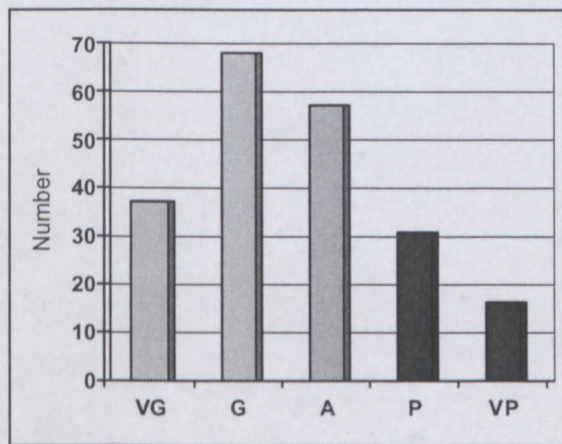


Figure 4.42

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to D16

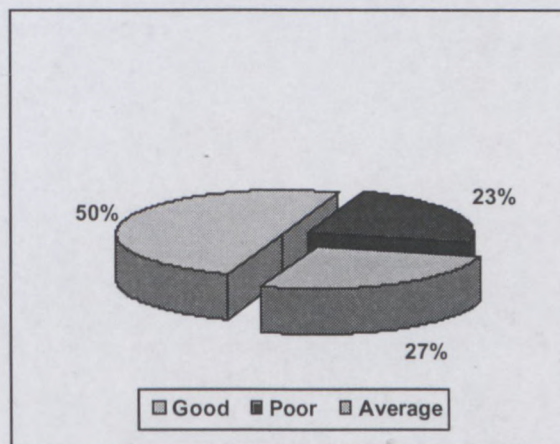


Figure 4.43

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to D16

**Mean score = 2.4** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.97** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (68) selected with regard to this item was that the communication performance of their line manager is *good*.

A majority of respondents (50%) rate the communication performance of their line manager as *good* and *very good*. Of concern is the very high number of respondents (27%) who were not sure about the communication performance of their managers. The categories *poor* and *very poor* received only 22% responses.

Considering the importance of optimal communication performance by line managers, there is room for improvement amongst the line managers of The Utility.

**D17 “How would you describe the communication style of your line manager?”**

Multiple choices permitted

Table 4.9 below indicates the predominant communication style of line managers as described by 209 respondents. As respondents could select more than one answer in this measurement item, the total number of responses and relevant percentages has not been calculated.

Table 4.9: Communication Style of Line Managers

Site	No
Approachable	94
Supportive	77
Distant	57
Involved	41
Leading	33
Disruptive	23
Other:	0

**Discussion**

The communication style of line managers is mostly described as *Approachable* (94) and *Supportive* (77). Of further significance is that the communication style of line managers is also seen as *Distant* (57) and that only a small number (33) see the communication style as *leading*.

**D18 "My line manager engages in dialogue with me"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	57	92	9	14	37	209
Percentage	27	44	4	7	18	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

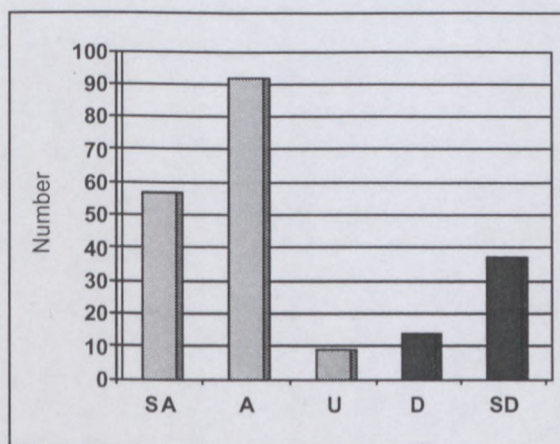


Figure 4.44

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to D18

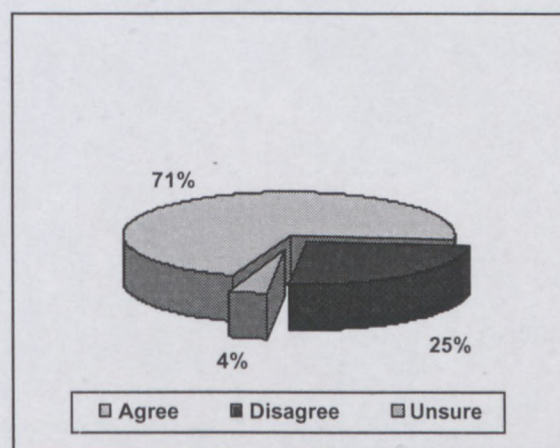


Figure 4.45

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to D18

**Mean score = 2.2** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.03** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (92) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A large majority of respondents (71%) said that their line manager engages in *dialogue* with them. However, the percentage of respondents (25%) who said their line managers do not engage in *dialogue* with them is relatively high.

**D19 "I can openly discuss work related issues with my line manager"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	70	93	5	11	30	209
Percentage	34	45	2	5	14	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

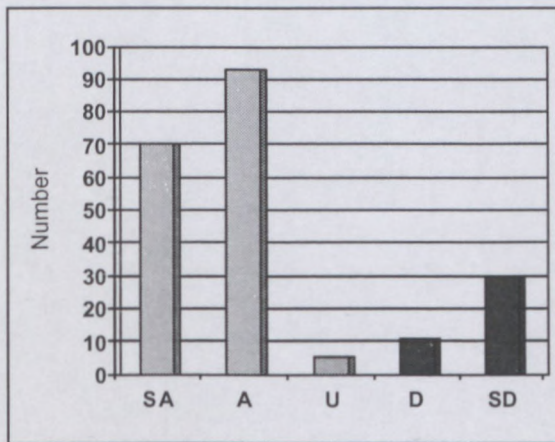


Figure 4.46

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to D19

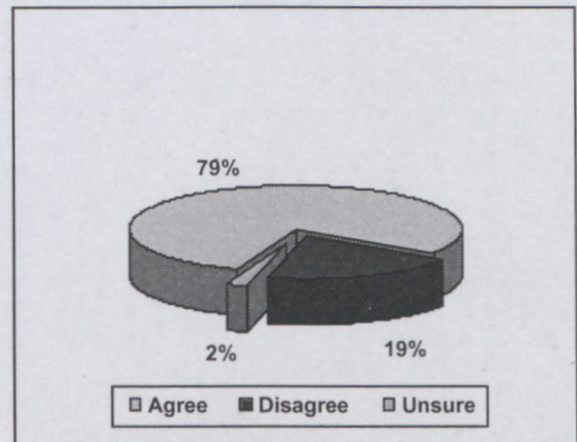


Figure 4.47

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to D19

**Mean score = 2.0** – responses on this item were more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.99** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (93) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A large majority of respondents (79%) said that they can *openly discuss work-related issues with their line managers*. As such, an open relationship between colleagues facilitates the achievement of The Utility's goals. This positive aspect should be nurtured and maintained.

It should, however, also be noted that 19% *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**D20 "My line manager has a good understanding of The Utility's business / policies and procedures to communicate effectively"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	57	86	9	33	24	209
Percentage	27	42	4	16	11	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree . A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

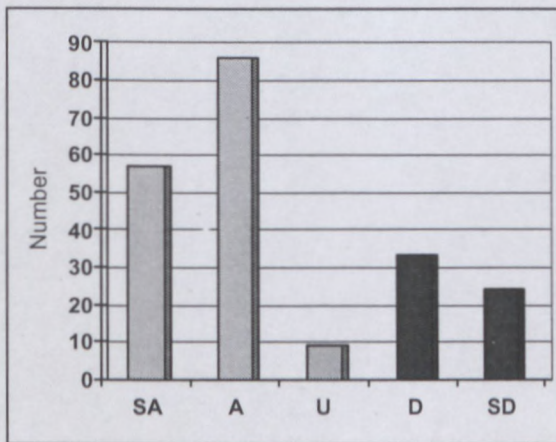


Figure 4.48

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to D20

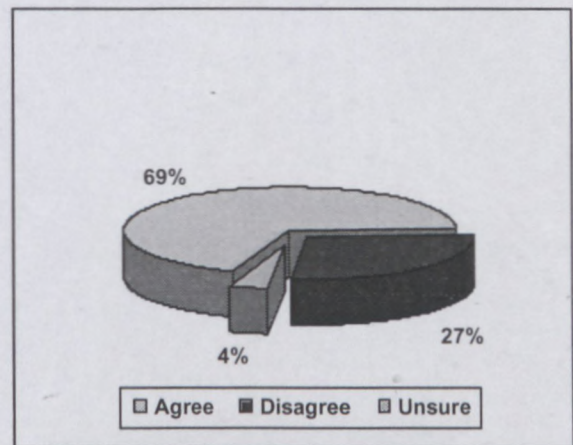


Figure 4.49

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to D20

**Mean score = 2.1** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.95** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

The category that most respondents (86) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A relatively high majority of respondents (69%) said that *their line manager has a good understanding of The Utility's business / policies and procedures to be able to communicate effectively*. This positive factor should be maintained or improved in an attempt to decrease the percentage of respondents (27%) who said that *their line manager does not have a good understanding of The Utility's business / policies and procedures to be able to communicate effectively*.

**D21 “My line manager’s communication skills display empathy (understanding / compassion) for my work related needs”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	52	73	9	27	48	209
Percentage	25	35	4	13	23	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

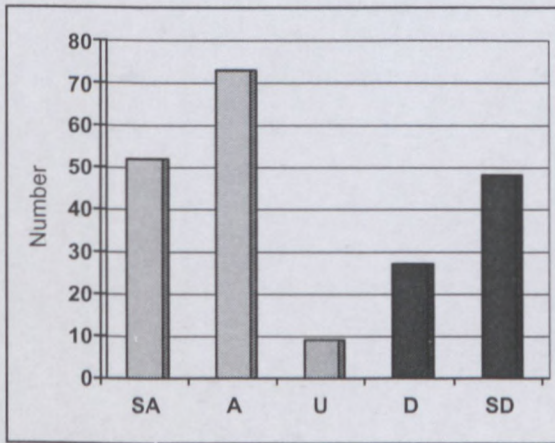


Figure 4.50

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to D21

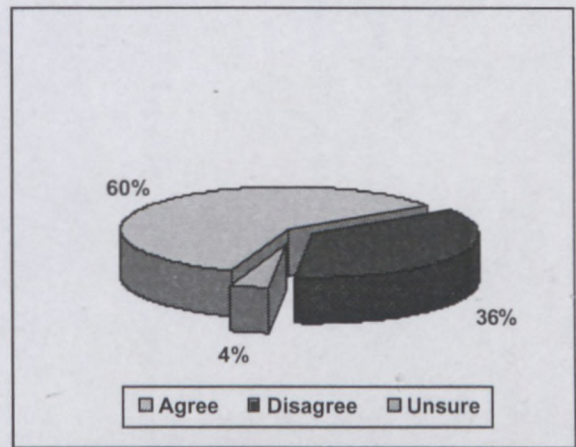


Figure 4.51

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to D21

**Mean score = 2.4** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.11** – in relation to the SDs of the other items which measured this construct, this SD shows that the respondents were more divergent in their conviction of this item than with other items that measured this construct.

### Discussion

The category that most respondents (73) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

The majority of respondents (60%) rated their *line manager's communication skills as empathetic towards their work-related needs*. It is, however, strongly recommended that a concerted effort should be made to decrease the high percentage of respondents (36%) who *disagreed and strongly disagreed* with the statement.

**D22 “My line manager communicates well upwards representing staffs’ needs raised at workplace meetings / green areas / other forums”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	35	67	15	47	45	209
Percentage	17	32	7	22	22	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

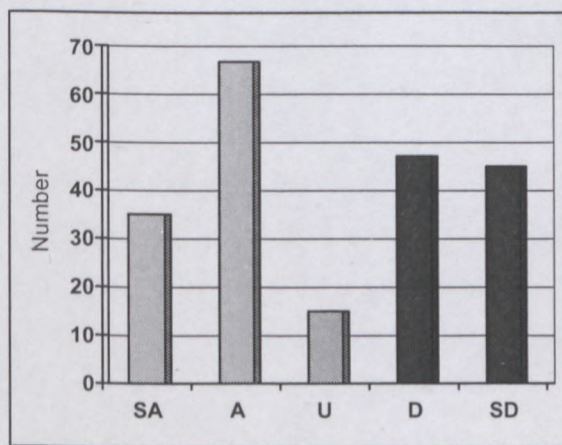


Figure 4.52

The actual number of respondents’ degree of conviction to D22

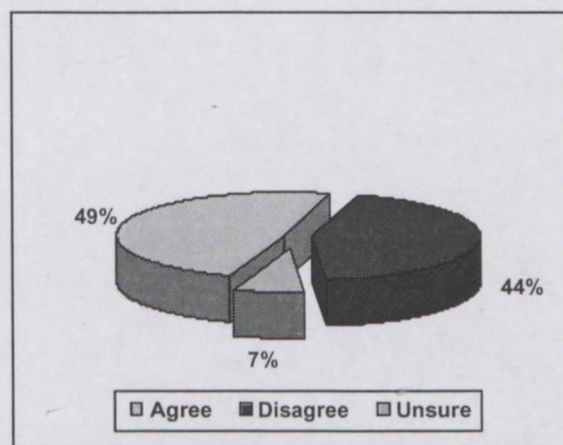


Figure 4.53

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to D22

**Mean score = 2.5** – responses on this item were neither negative nor positive

**Standard deviation = 1.03** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (67) selected with regard to this item was ‘Agree’.

A small majority (49%) said that their *line manager communicates well upwards, representing needs raised at workplace meetings / green areas / other forums*. Those respondents who did not know (7%) are slightly high and thus also of concern.

Of more concern is the high percentage of respondents (44%) who *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* that their line manager communicates well upwards, representing needs raised at workplace meetings / green areas / other forums. The fact that only a small majority of employees perceive that their line managers communicate well upwards indicates that top management might be deprived of valid and important operational information to assist in decision making.

**D23 “My line-manager always responds (give feedback) to my concerns, enquiries or suggestions”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	40	84	13	29	43	209
Percentage	19	40	6	14	21	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

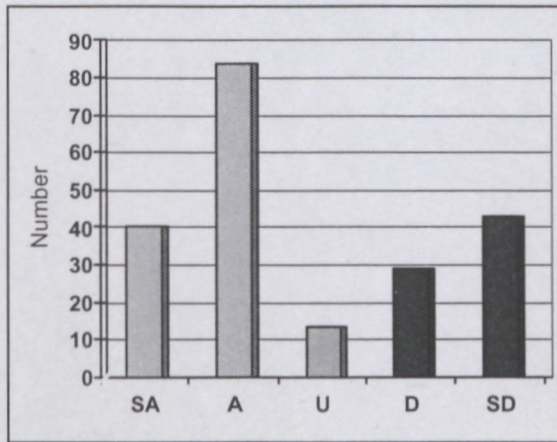


Figure 4.54

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to D23

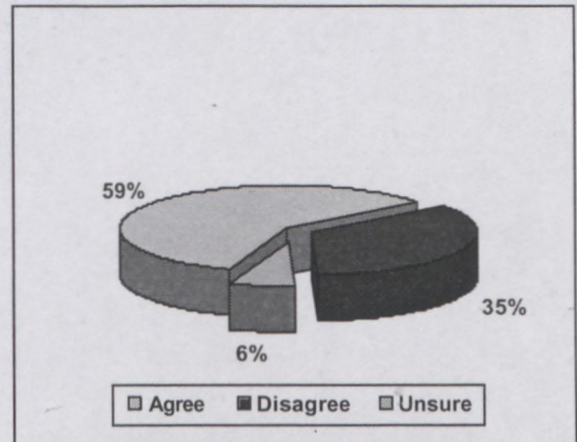


Figure 4.55

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to D23

**Mean score = 2.4** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.04** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (84) selected with regard to this item was ‘Agree’.

A majority of respondents (59%) *agreed* and *strongly agreed* that their *line manager always responds to their concerns, enquiries or suggestions*. This is a good indicator of relationship management and should be purposefully cultivated further to neutralise the worrying percentage of respondents (35%) who *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with the statement

#### 4.3.3.1 Gap analysis of supervisory communication's measurement items

The 'gap' refers to the degree to which positive responses exceed, or fail to exceed, the negative responses. The percentage of unsure responses is left out of the equation. However, in the case of measurement items where the unsure responses were very high, they were highlighted in the foregoing detailed analyses.

- An aspect is rated as '*Positive*' when the percentage of respondents that rated that aspect positively, minus the percentage of respondents that rated that aspect negatively (and not taking the respondents that were unsure or did not know into the calculation) exceeds 50%. An aspect is still regarded as positive when, for example, 70% of respondents were positive, 10% were unsure/didn't know and 20% were negative (different combinations also apply). These are items that were rated favourably by respondents.
- An aspect is rated as '*of some concern*' when the end rating is between 25-49%.

The items that were rated in this report, as '*of some concern*' are those that were rated neither positively, nor as '*of considerable concern*'.

- '*Of serious concern*' applies when the end rating is less than 25%.

The aspects that were rated in this report as '*of considerable concern*' are those identified by the respondents as negative.

Table 4.10: Gap analysis of supervisory communication

	Measurement item	Pos	Neg	Gap
D15	Communication from Divisional, Departmental and Site management is... slow and irregular	22	59	-37
D16	How would you rate the communication performance of your line manager?	50	23	27
D17	How would you describe the communication style of your line manager? Multiple choices permitted	-	-	-
D18	My line manager engages in dialogue with me	71	25	46
D19	I can openly discuss work related issues with my line manager	79	19	60
D20	My line manager has a good <u>understanding of The Utility's business / policies and procedures</u> to communicate effectively	69	27	42
D21	My line manager's communication skills display an empathy (understanding / compassion) for my work related needs	60	36	24
D22	My line manager communicates well upwards representing staffs' needs raised at workplace meetings / green areas / other forums	49	44	5
D23	My line-manager always responds (gives feedback) to my concerns, enquiries or suggestions	59	35	24

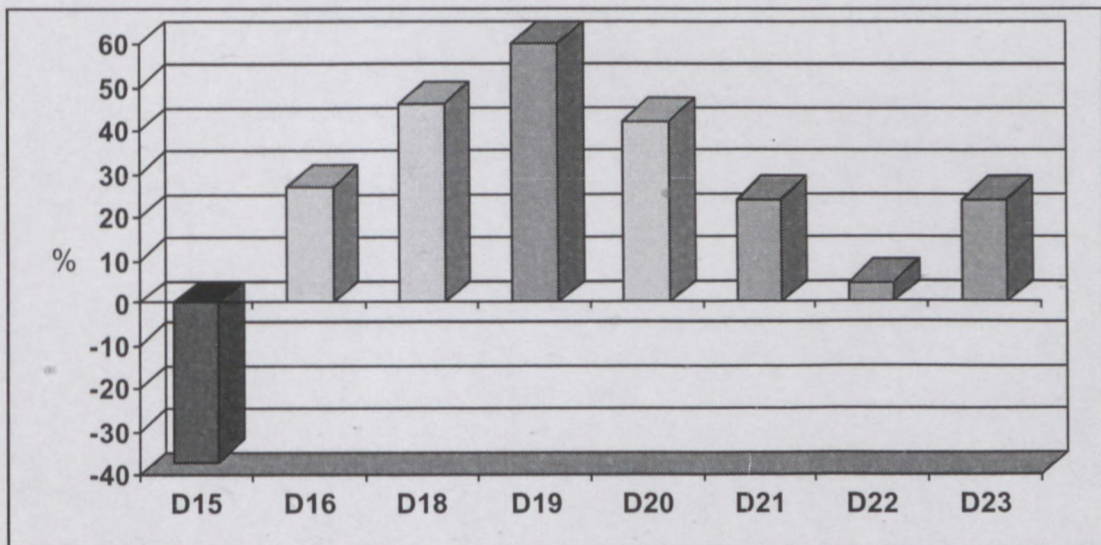


Figure 4.56: Gap analysis: supervisory communication

**A positive aspect (>50%) amongst the responses relating to supervisory communication is:**

I can openly discuss work-related issues with my line manager	60
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**Aspects of some concern (25% – 49%) amongst the responses relating to supervisory communication are:**

How would you rate the communication performance of your line manager?	27
My line manager engages in dialogue with me	46
My line manager has a good <u>understanding of The Utility's business / policies and procedures</u> to communicate effectively	42

**Aspects of considerable concern (<25%) amongst the responses relating to supervisory communication are:**

My line manager always responds (feedback) to my concerns, enquiries or suggestions	24
Communication from Divisional, Departmental and Site management is... slow and irregular	-37
My line manager's communication skills display an empathy (understanding / compassion) for my work-related needs	24
My line manager communicates well upwards, representing staffs' needs raised at workplace meetings / green areas / other forums	5

#### **4.3.3.2 Measures of central tendency and variability relating to supervisory communication**

The measures of central tendency and variability scores of responses are illustrated below in table format. The measure of central tendency (mean) and measure of variability (standard deviation) can be interpreted accordingly:

- A mean score closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were in agreement with the measurement item or statement. It can also be said that these responses have a tendency towards being more 'positive'. The mean scores closer to five (5) indicate respondents' disagreement with the statement and that those responses are thus more 'negative'.
- A standard deviation (SD) score closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were uniform in their degree of conviction. A SD score closer to five (5) indicate that the respondents had divergence in their degree of conviction.

Table 4.11: Mean scores and standard deviation (SD) of supervisory communication's measurement items

Measurement item		Mean	SD
D15	Communication from Divisional, Departmental and Site management is... slow and irregular	2.5	1.16
D16	How would you rate the communication performance of your line manager?	2.4	0.97
D17	How would you describe the communication style of your line manager? Multiple choices permitted	-	-
D18	My line manager engages in dialogue with me	2.2	1.03
D19	I can openly discuss work related issues with my line manager	2.0	0.99
D20	My line manager has a good <u>understanding of The Utility's business / policies and procedures</u> to communicate effectively	2.1	0.95
D21	My line manager's communication skills display an empathy (understanding / compassion) for my work related needs	2.4	1.11
D22	My line manager communicates well upwards representing staffs' needs raised at workplace meetings / green areas / other forums	2.5	1.03
D23	My line-manager always responds (feedback) to my concerns, enquiries or suggestions	2.4	1.04

**With the measurement items being scored as one (1) being positive and five (5) being negative, the analysis of Table 4.11 emphasises the following factors:**

- A Measurement items that received a more positive mean score for supervisory communication is:
  - Measurement item D19's mean (2.0) indicates that employees can openly discuss work related issues with their manager. The low standard deviation (0.99) indicates uniformity on the degree of conviction.
- Measurement items that received a slightly more positive mean score for supervisory communication are:
  - With a mean of 2.2 for measurement item D18 responses indicates that line managers engage in dialogue with employees to some degree. The low standard deviation (1.03) indicates uniformity on the degree of conviction.

- Measurement item D20's mean (2.1) indicates that line managers have a good understanding of The Utility's business / policies and procedures to be able to communicate effectively. The low standard deviation (0.95) indicates uniformity on the degree of conviction.

The overall mean for the construct of supervisory communication was 2.3 indicating that respondents were slightly more positive towards this construct. The low overall SD of 0.792017 indicated that respondents were uniform in their degree of conviction on supervisory communication.

#### **4.3.3.3 Conclusion**

The analysis of the descriptive statistics on supervisory communication led to the conclusion that employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are slightly satisfied with supervisory communication.

#### 4.3.4 Findings of the organisational integration construct

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The findings of the descriptive statistics conducted on the items representing the organisational integration construct are presented and discussed in this section. In relation to Primary Objective 2, it describes quantitatively:

*...the extent to which there is satisfaction with regard to organisational integration amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.*

Before going through the findings in this section, the explanations below should be noted.

- A mean score (measure of central tendency) closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were in *agreement* with the measurement item or statement, i.e. these responses have a tendency towards being more 'positive'. The mean scores closer to five (5) indicate respondents' *disagreement* with the statement, i.e. these responses have a tendency towards being more 'negative'.

A standard deviation score (measure of variance) closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were more uniform in their degree of conviction. A standard deviation score closer to five (5) indicate that the respondents had more divergence in their degree of conviction.

For example: The mean score of B1 (2.3) indicate that respondents were more positive towards this measurement item. In relation to the SDs of the other measurement items, B1's SD of 1.12 indicates the respondents were more divergent in their conviction.

- The discussion of the bar graphs indicates the category selected most often with regard to the specific statement i.e. Strongly agree, Agree, I don't know, Disagree and Strongly disagree.

In the pie-chart, the 'Agree' segment is inclusive of percentages depicting responses to both 'Strongly agree' and 'Agree'. Likewise, the pie-chart segment 'Disagree' is inclusive of percentages depicting responses to both 'Strongly disagree' and 'Disagree'. Thus, with reference to B1, the 60% 'Agree' is inclusive of 33% respondents who strongly agreed and 27% of respondents who agreed. This approach is applied in all pie-charts and discussions of the descriptive statistics.

**B1 "I am proud to be part of The Utility community"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	70	57	0	41	41	209
Percentage	33	27	0	20	20	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree = 5 A: Agree = 4 U: Unsure/don't know = 3 D: Disagree = 2 SD: Strongly Disagree = 1

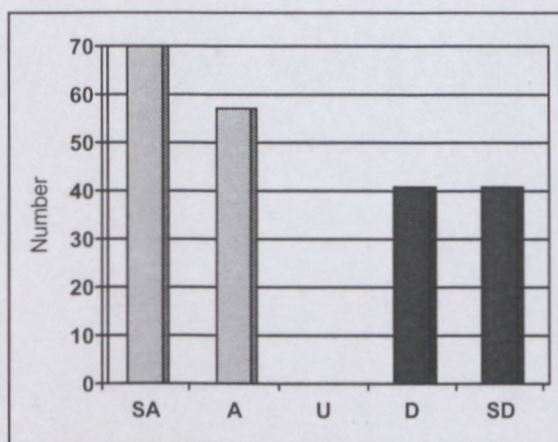


Figure 4.57

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to B1

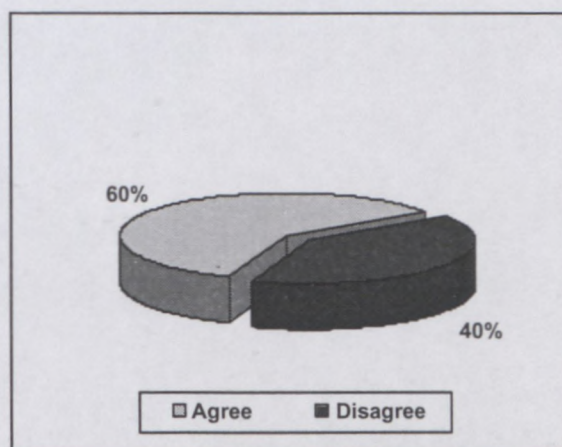


Figure 4.58

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to B1

**Mean score = 2.3** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.12** – in relation to the SDs of the other items which measured this construct, this SD shows that the respondents were more divergent in their conviction of this item than with other items that measured this construct.

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (70) selected with regard to this item was 'Strongly agree'.

The majority of respondents (60%) said that they are *proud to be part of The Utility community*. This is a relatively average score – but, represents a good reflection on the state of internal communication. Noteworthy to the responses to this measurement item was that there were no 'I don't know / I'm not sure' answers. Employees felt either proud or not proud to be part of The Utility community. Of concern is that a total of 40% of respondents *disagreed and strongly disagreed*.

**B4** “The internal communication processes make me more committed to achieve The Utility’s goals”

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	51	69	4	41	44	209
Percentage	24	33	2	20	21	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree = 5 A: Agree = 4 U: Unsure/don't know = 3 D: Disagree = 2 SD: Strongly Disagree = 1

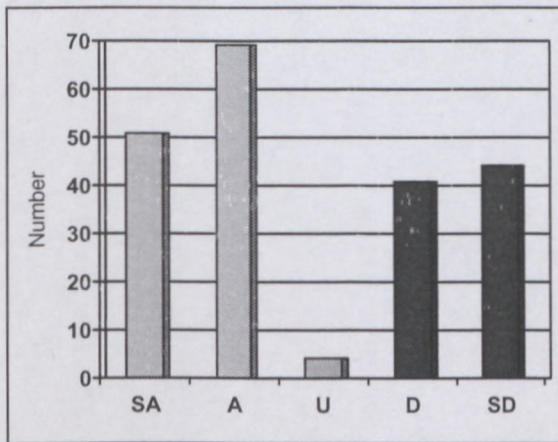


Figure 4.59

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to B4

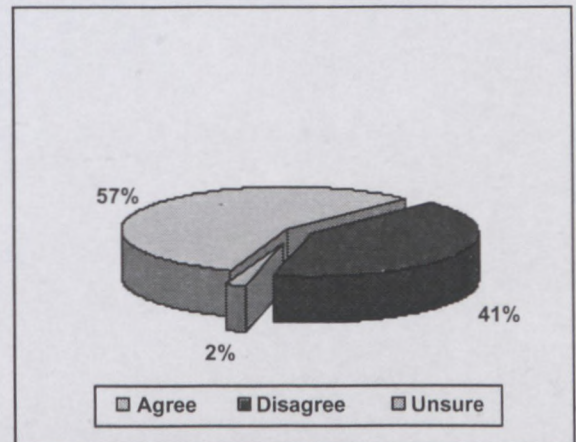


Figure 4.60

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to B4

**Mean score = 2.4** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.08** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

The category that most respondents (69) selected with regard to this item was ‘Agree’.

Although a majority of respondents (57%) said that the *internal communication processes make them more committed to achieve The Utility’s goals*, (41%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed*. This is of concern, since commitment is a vital dimension of relationship management - building a stronger, more committed workforce.

**C11 "I have a clear understanding of where my Division fits within The Utility"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	57	66	4	39	43	209
Percentage	27	31	2	19	21	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

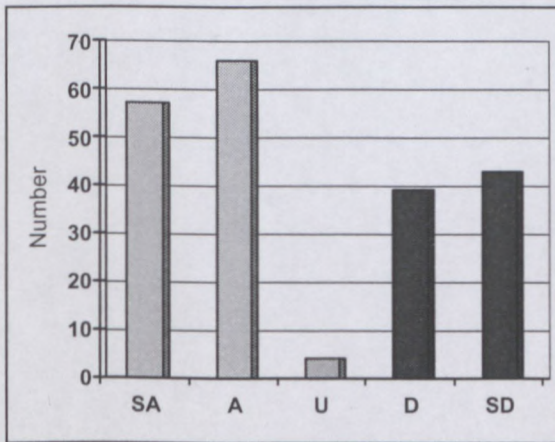


Figure 4.61

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to C11

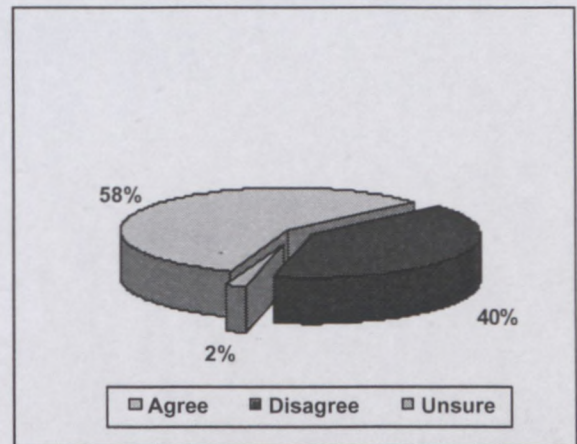


Figure 4.62

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to C11

**Mean score = 2.3** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.09** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (66) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A majority of respondents (58%) said that *they have a clear understanding of where their Division fits within The Utility*. Of some concern are the many respondents (40%) who said they do not have a clear understanding of where their Division fits within The Utility.

**C12 “Information about The Utility’s programmes (HIV/AIDS, Business Planning Processes, Employee Well-being, Employment Equity, etc) is sufficient”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	42	72	11	36	48	209
Percentage	20	35	5	17	23	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

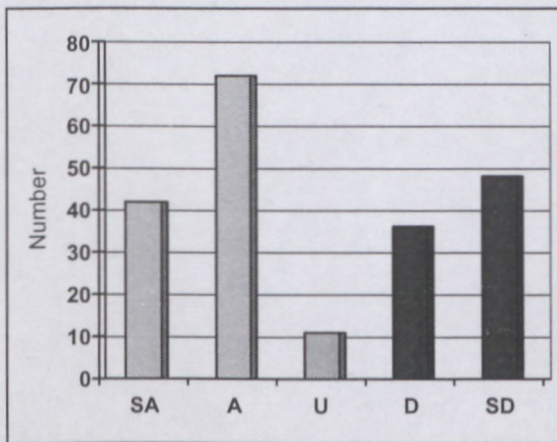


Figure 4.63

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to C12

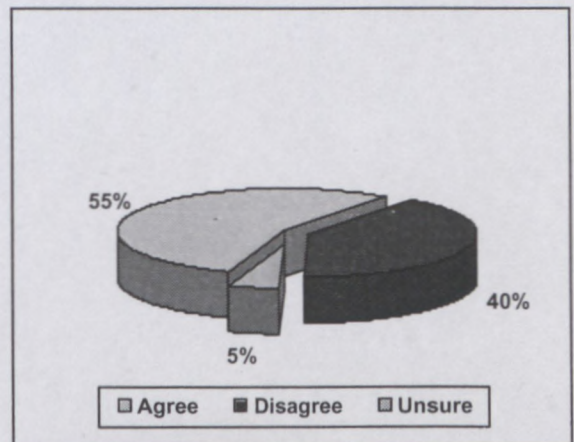


Figure 4.64

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to C12

**Mean score = 2.5** – responses on this item were neither negative nor positive

**Standard deviation = 1.07** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (72) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A majority of respondents (55%) said that *information about The Utility’s programmes is sufficient*. The many respondents who *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* (40%) with this statement are worrying, especially bearing in mind the resources spent on these programmes.

**C13 “On which of the topics below do you prefer to get more information?”**

Table 4.12 below indicates the topics on which further information is requested from the 209 respondents. As respondents could select more than one answer in this measurement item, the total number of responses and relevant percentages are not calculated.

Table 4.12: Topics on which further information is required

Topics	No
Crises at The Utility	110
Individual performance feedback	106
Major change (Restructures, etc.)	105
Your immediate team's performance	96
Personal development discussions	95
Job expectations	94
Business performance	88
Your immediate team's goals	88
Business goals (strategic objectives)	87
Policy updates (payroll, IT changes, etc.)	86
Vision and values	82
New services / business	81
Other - please specify	0

**Discussion**

Although requests for further information on almost all topics are fairly high, the topics that received a high number of requests were *Crises at The Utility* (110), *Individual performance feedback* (106) and *Major changes* (105). Of further significance is the relatively high number of requests for information on *personal and performance feedback* information: *Your immediate team's performance* (96), *Personal development discussions* (95) and *Job expectations* (94).

**C14 “The role and services of the Corporate Communication Division are clear to me”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	38	65	33	34	39	209
Percentage	18	31	16	16	19	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

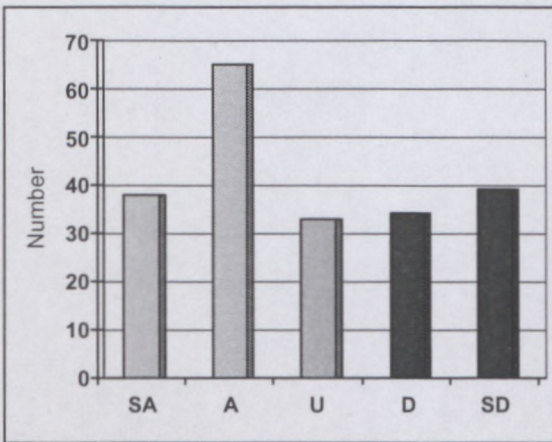


Figure 4.65

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to C14

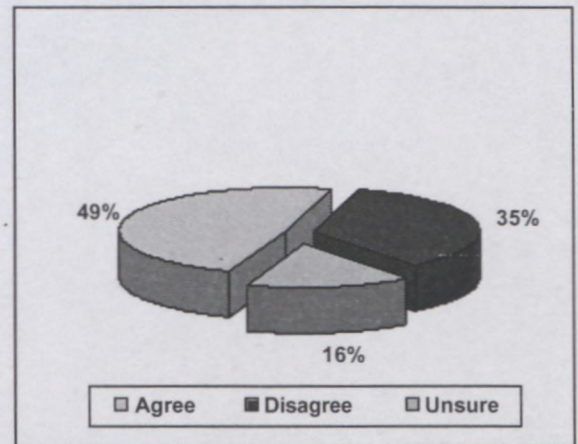


Figure 4.66

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to C14

**Mean score = 2.4** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.06** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (65) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A majority of respondents (49%) said that the *role and services of the Corporate Communication Division are clear to them*. However, there are too many respondents (35%) who are unclear about the role and services of the Corporate Communications Division.

#### 4.3.4.1 Gap analysis of organisational integration's measurement items

The 'gap' refers to the degree to which positive responses exceed, or fail to exceed, the negative responses. The percentage of unsure responses is left out of the equation. However, in the case of measurement items where the unsure responses were very high, they were highlighted in the foregoing detailed analyses.

- An aspect is rated as '*Positive*' when the percentage of respondents that rated that aspect positively, minus the percentage of respondents that rated that aspect negatively (and not taking the respondents that were unsure or did not know into the calculation) exceeds 50%. An aspect is still regarded as positive when, for example, 70% of respondents were positive, 10% were unsure/didn't know and 20% were negative (different combinations also apply). These are items that were rated favourably by respondents.
- An aspect is rated as '*of some concern*' when the end rating is between 25-49%.

The items that were rated in this report, as '*of some concern*' are those that were rated neither positively, nor as '*of considerable concern*'.

- '*Of serious concern*' applies when the end rating is less than 25%.

The aspects that were rated in this report as '*of considerable concern*' are those identified by the respondents as negative.

Table 4.13: Gap analysis relating to organisational integration's measurement items

Measurement item		Pos	Neg	Gap
B1	I am proud to be part of The Utility's community	60	40	20
B4	The internal communication processes make <u>me</u> more <u>committed</u> to achieve The Utility's goals	57	41	16
C11	I have a clear understanding of where my Division fits within The Utility	58	40	18
C12	Information about The Utility's programmes is sufficient	55	40	15
C13	On which of the topics below do you prefer to get more information?"	-	-	-
C14	The role and services of the Corporate Communication Division are clear to me	49	35	14

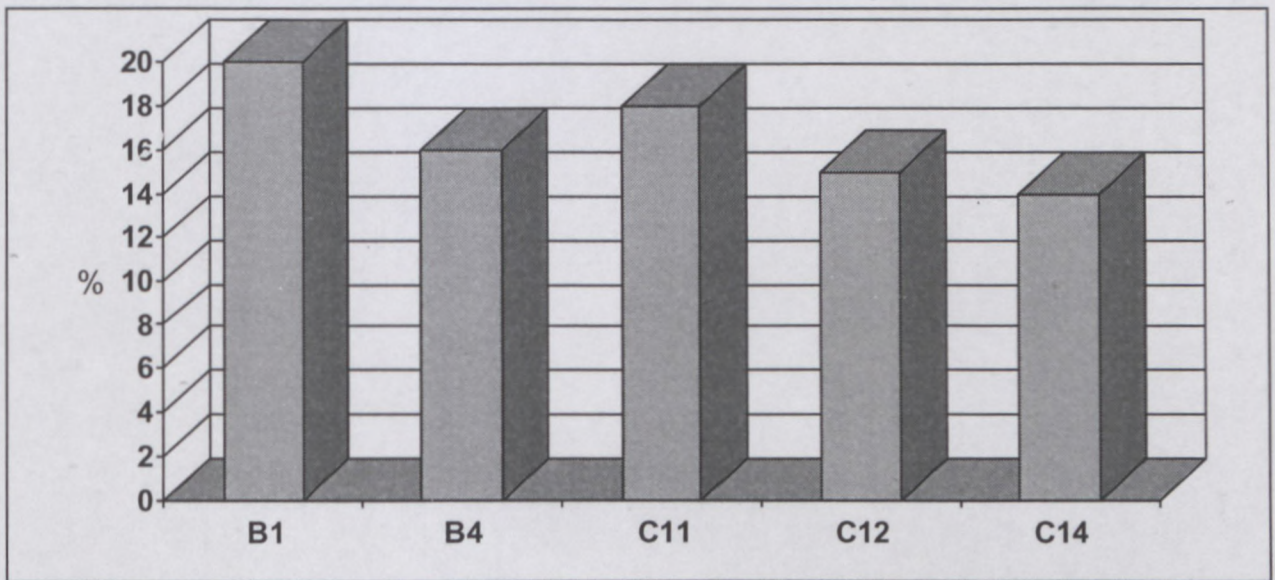


Figure 4.67: Gap analysis relating to organisational integration's measurement items

**There were no positive aspects (>50%) amongst the responses relating to the measurement items of organisational integration.**

**There were no aspects of some concern (25% – 49%) amongst the responses relating to the measurement items of organisational integration.**

**Aspects of considerable concern (<25%) amongst the responses relating to the measurement items of organisational integration:**

I am proud to be part of The Utility's community	20
The internal communication processes make <u>me</u> more <u>committed</u> to achieve The Utility's goals	16
I have a clear understanding of where my Division fits within The Utility	18
Information about The Utility's programmes is sufficient	15
The role and services of the Corporate Communication Division are clear to me	14

**4.3.4.2 Measures of central tendency and variability relating to organisational integration**

The measures of central tendency and variability scores of responses are illustrated below in table format. The measure of central tendency (mean) and measure of variability (standard deviation) can be interpreted accordingly:

- A mean score closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were in agreement with the measurement item or statement. It can also be said that these responses have a tendency towards being more 'positive'. The mean scores closer to five (5) indicate respondents' disagreement with the statement and that those responses are thus more 'negative'.
- A standard deviation (SD) score closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were uniform in their degree of conviction. A SD score closer to five (5) indicate that the respondents had divergence in their degree of conviction.

Table 4.14: Mean scores and standard deviation (SD) relating to organisational integration's measurement items

Measurement item		Mean	SD
B1	I am proud to be part of The Utility's community	2.3	1.12
B4	The internal communication processes make <u>me</u> more <u>committed</u> to achieve The Utility's goals	2.4	1.08
C11	I have a clear understanding of where my Division fits within The Utility	2.3	1.09
C12	Information about The Utility's programmes is sufficient	2.5	1.07
C13	On which of the topics below do you prefer to get more information?"	-	-
C14	The role and services of the Corporate Communication Division are clear to me	2.4	1.06

With the measurement items being scored as one (1) being positive and five (5) being negative, the analysis of Table 4.14 emphasises the following factors:

- Measurement items that received a slightly more positive mean score for organisational integration are:
  - With a mean of 2.3 for measurement item B1, employees seem to be proud of being part of The Utility community. However, the high standard deviation (1.12) indicates divergence of conviction amongst the respondents.
  - Measurement item C11's mean (2.3) indicates that employees have a clear understanding of where their Division fits within The Utility. But the standard deviation (1.09) shows that there is divergence of conviction amongst the respondents.

The overall mean for the construct of organisational integration was 2.4 indicating that respondents were slightly more positive towards this construct. The low overall SD of 0.719009 indicated that respondents were uniform in their degree of conviction on organisational integration.

#### 4.3.4.3 Conclusion

The analysis of the descriptive statistics on organisational integration led to the conclusion that employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are slightly satisfied with organisational integration.

### 4.3.5 Findings of the media quality construct

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The findings of the descriptive statistics conducted on the items representing the construct media quality are presented and discussed in this section. In relation to Primary Objective 2, it describes quantitatively:

*... the extent to which there is satisfaction with regard to media quality amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.*

Before going through the findings in this section, the explanations below should be noted.

- A mean score (measure of central tendency) closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were in *agreement* with the measurement item or statement, i.e. these responses have a tendency towards being more 'positive'. The mean scores closer to five (5) indicate respondents' *disagreement* with the statement, i.e. these responses have a tendency towards being more 'negative'.

A standard deviation score (measure of variance) closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were more uniform in their degree of conviction. A standard deviation score closer to five (5) indicate that the respondents had more divergence in their degree of conviction.

For example: The mean score of C9 (2.4) indicate that respondents were slightly more positive towards this measurement item. In relation to the SDs of the other measurement items, C9's SD of 1.15 indicates the respondents were more divergent in their conviction.

- The discussion of the bar graphs indicates the category selected most often with regard to the specific statement i.e. Strongly agree, Agree, I don't know, Disagree and Strongly disagree.

In the pie-chart, the 'Agree' segment is inclusive of percentages depicting responses to both 'Strongly agree' and 'Agree'. Likewise, the pie-chart segment 'Disagree' is inclusive of percentages depicting responses to both 'Strongly disagree' and 'Disagree'. Thus, with reference to C9, the 57% 'Agree' is inclusive of 29% respondents who strongly agreed and 28% of respondents who agreed. This approach is applied in all pie-charts and discussions of the descriptive statistics.

C9 “The quality (credibility and accuracy) of information in The Utility is sufficient for me to do my work effectively”

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	60	58	3	36	52	209
Percentage	29	28	1	17	25	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

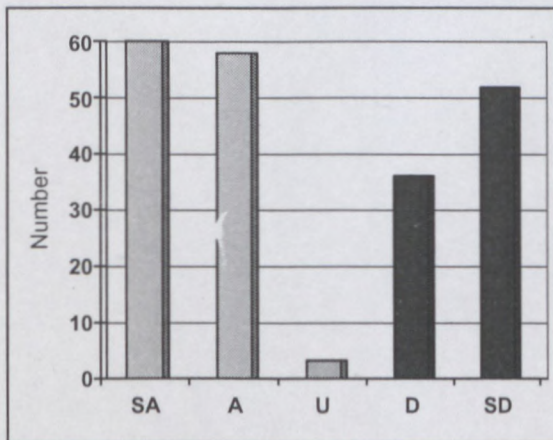


Figure 4.68

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to C9

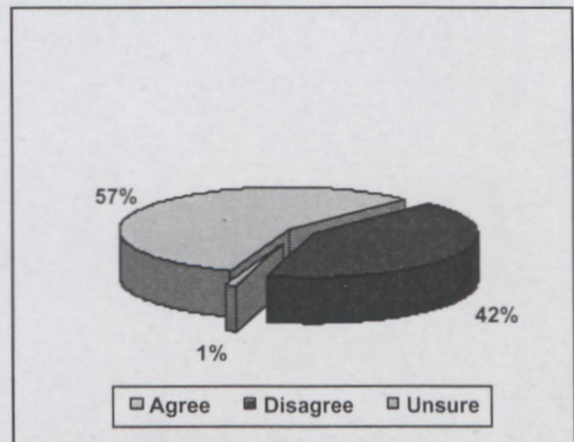


Figure 4.69

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to C9

**Mean score = 2.4** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.15** – in relation to the SDs of the other items which measured this construct, this SD shows that the respondents were more divergent in their conviction of this item than with other items that measured this construct.

### Discussion

The category that most respondents (60) selected with regard to this item was ‘*Strongly agree*’.

A majority of respondents (57%) said that the *quality of information in The Utility is sufficient for them to do their work effectively*. It should, however, be noted that the fact that many respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* (42%), could become a problem if not managed effectively.

**C10 “The quantity (amount) of information in The Utility is sufficient for me to do my work effectively”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	42	70	8	37	52	209
Percentage	20	33	4	18	25	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

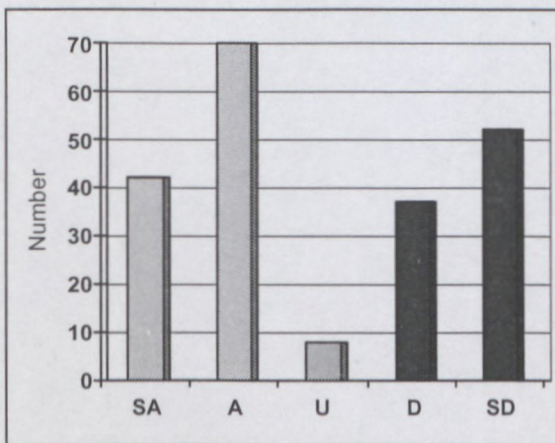


Figure 4.70

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to C10

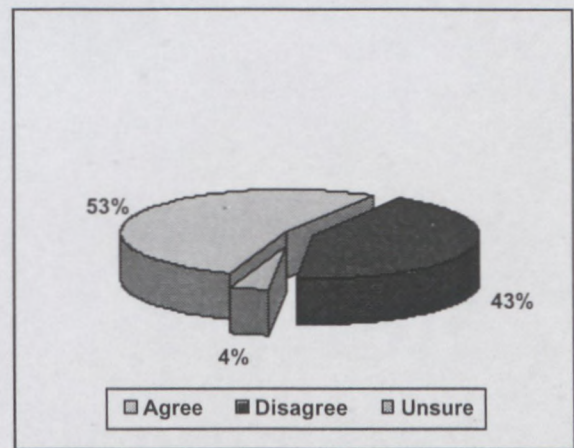


Figure 4.71

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to C10

**Mean score = 2.5** – responses on this item were neither negative nor positive

**Standard deviation = 1.09** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

The category that most respondents (70) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A slight majority of respondents (53%) said that the *quantity of information in The Utility is sufficient for them to do their work effectively*. The high percentage of respondents (43%) who said that the quantity of information in The Utility is insufficient for them to do their work effectively is of some concern.

**E24 “Communication mediums within The Utility are relevant for our purposes as employees “**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	34	125	7	23	20	209
Percentage	16	60	3	11	10	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

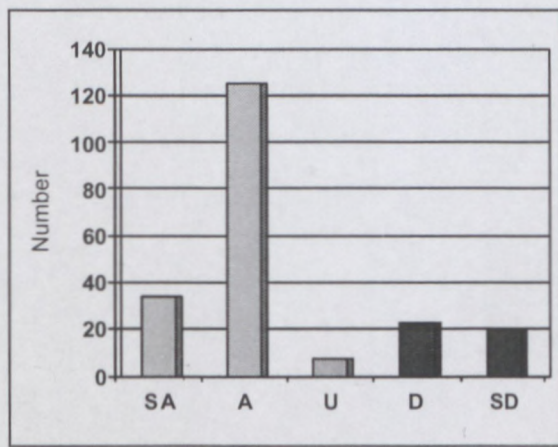


Figure 7.72

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E24

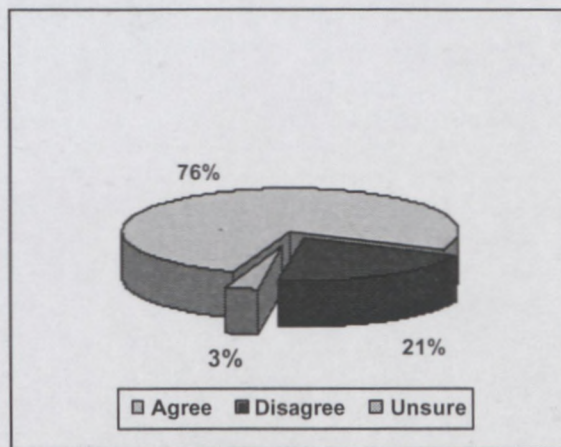


Figure 7.73

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E24

**Mean score = 2.1** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.81** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (125) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A majority of respondents (76%) said that the *communication mediums within The Utility are relevant for their purposes as employees*. However 21% of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**E25 “In dealing with other Divisions, Departments, Sections and Sites I know which internal communication medium to use to find the required information”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	17	96	10	37	49	209
Percentage	8	46	5	18	23	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

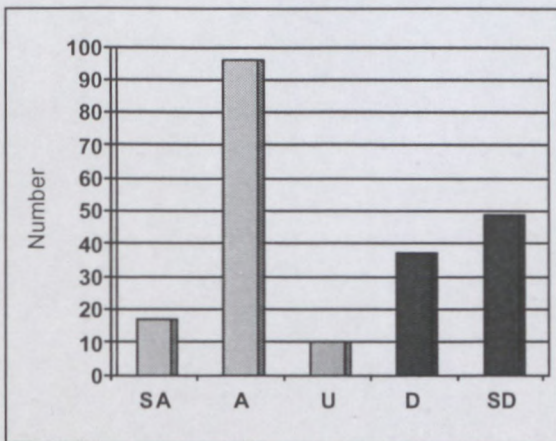


Figure 7.74

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E25

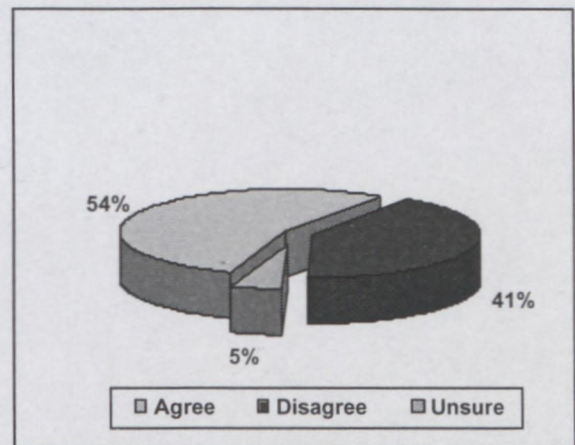


Figure 7.75

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E25

**Mean score = 2.6** – responses on this item were slightly more negative

**Standard deviation = 0.95** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

The category that most respondents (96) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A slight majority of respondents (54%) said that *when dealing with other Divisions, Departments, Sections and Sites they know which internal communication medium to use to find the required information*. However, much more effort is required here. The fact that more than a third of the respondents (41%) indicated that they do not know which internal communication medium to use when dealing with other Divisions, Departments, Sections and Sites is problematic.

E26 "In my Division, Department, Section or Site we regularly have 'green area' meetings / workplace meetings"

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	81	86	5	7	30	209
Percentage	39	42	2	3	14	100

Legend: SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

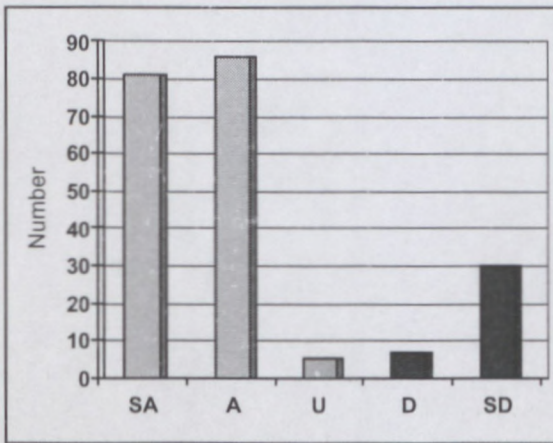


Figure 7.76

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E26

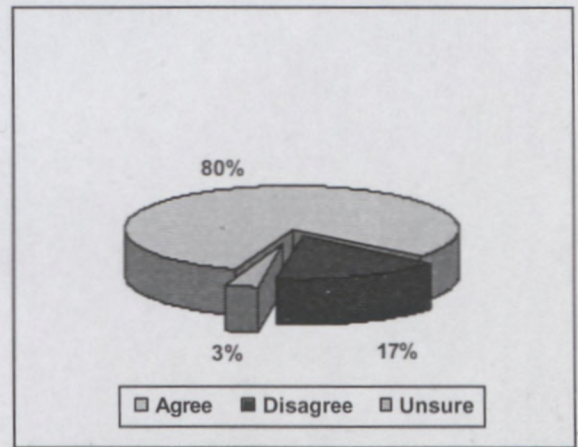


Figure 7.77

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E26

**Mean score = 1.9** – responses on this item were more positive

**Standard deviation = 1.00** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

The category that most respondents (86) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A large majority of respondents (80%) said that in *their Division, Department, Section or Site* they regularly have 'green area' meetings / workplace meetings. The regularity of such meetings forms an effective and practical conduit for information flow.

Seventeen percent (17%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**E27 “The ‘green area’ meetings / workplace meetings which I attend are participative”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	56	103	8	14	28	209
Percentage	27	49	4	7	13	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

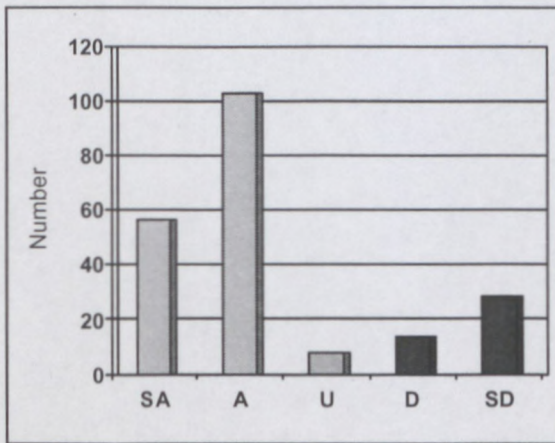


Figure 7.78

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E27

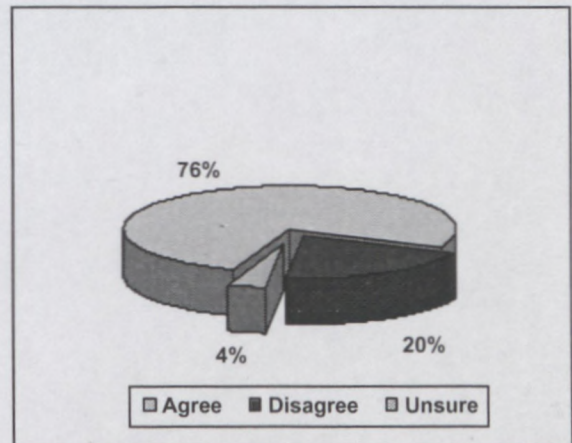


Figure 7.79

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E27

**Mean score = 2.1** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.95** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (103) selected with regard to this item was ‘Agree’.

A relatively high number of respondents (76%) rate the ‘green area’ meetings / workplace meetings which they attend as participative. The participatory nature of these meetings is conducive to relationship building and is an excellent technique for management to harvest information from their employees. Twenty per cent (20%) disagree and strongly disagree with the statement.

**E28 "I receive Aquavita monthly"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	62	108	8	9	22	209
Percentage	30	51	4	4	11	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

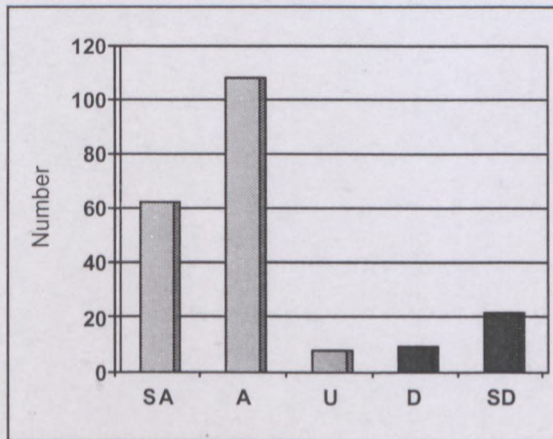


Figure 7.80

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E28

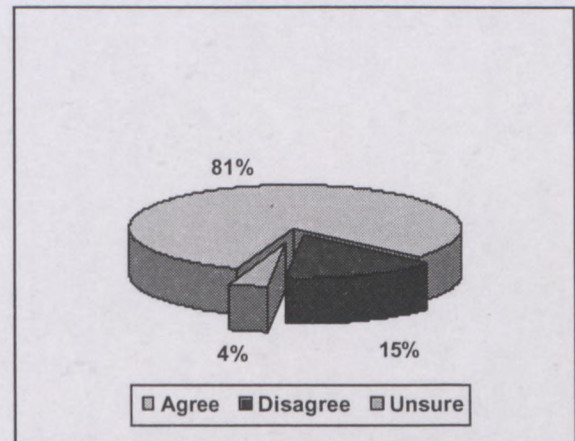


Figure 7.81

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E28

**Mean score = 2.0** – responses on this item were more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.89** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (108) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A relatively large majority of respondents (81%) *receive Aquavita monthly*. This is a good indication of the effective planning and distribution management effort that go into this communication medium. Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**E29 “I find the information of the *Aquavita* valuable”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	34	113	5	26	31	209
Percentage	16	55	2	12	15	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

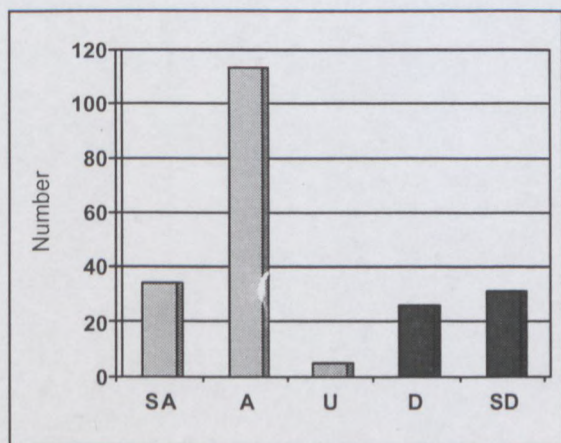


Figure 7.82

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E29

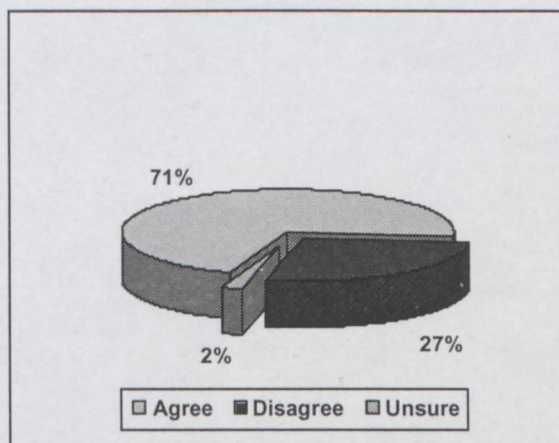


Figure 7.83

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E29

**Mean score = 2.3** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.91** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (113) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

The majority of respondents (71%) said that they *find the information in Aquavita valuable*. However, the number of respondents who *disagree* and *strongly disagree* with the statement (27%) should be seen as a serious challenge for The Utility's communication function.

**E30 "I find *Aquavita* easy to understand"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	45	143	1	16	4	209
Percentage	22	68	0	8	2	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

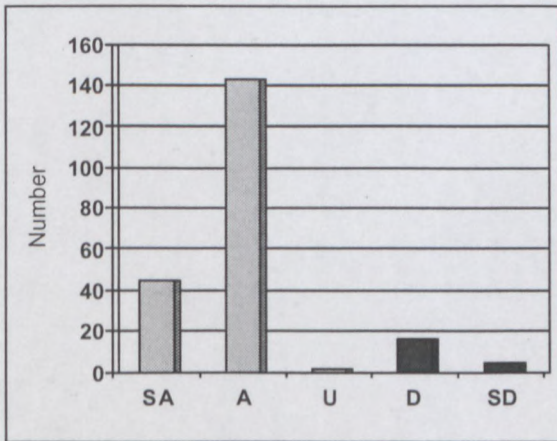


Figure 7.84

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E30

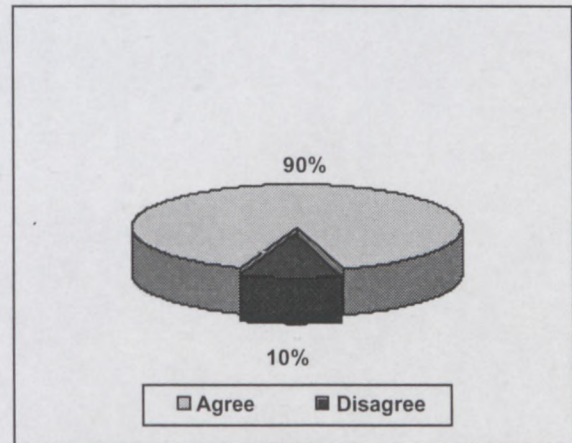


Figure 7.85

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E30

**Mean score = 1.9** – responses on this item were more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.60** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (143) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A very large majority of respondents (90%) *find Aquavita easy to understand*. This overwhelming positive perception is a feather in the cap of The Utility's communication function. It is obvious that a lot of effort and commitment go into the writing and editing of this publication and the positive perception is proof that they are giving employees comprehensible information. Ten percent (10%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**E31 "I receive H<sub>2</sub>O monthly (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	27	61	40	33	48	209
Percentage	13	29	19	16	23	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

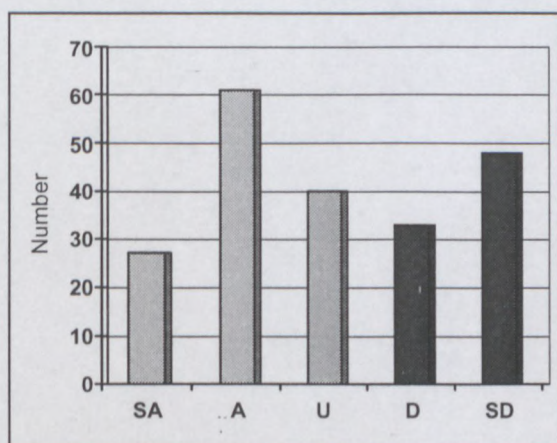


Figure 7.86

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E31

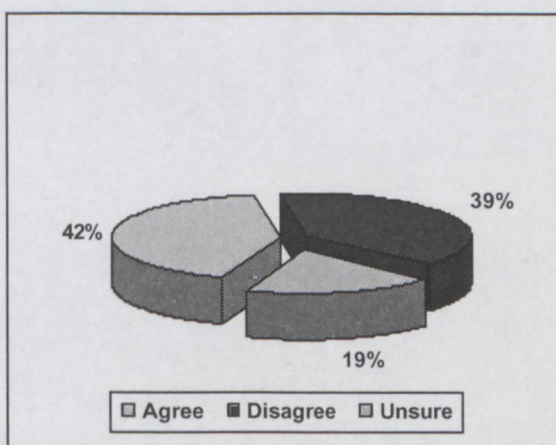


Figure 7.87

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E31

**Mean score = 2.6** – responses on this item were slightly more negative

**Standard deviation = 1.06** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (61) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

Although the majority of respondents (42%) *receive H<sub>2</sub>O monthly*, almost as many (39%) do not receive it monthly. The number of respondents who are not sure (19%) is also quite high.

All three of the pointers indicate that strategic intervention is needed to neutralise the uncertainty and possible confusion caused by this publication.

**E32** "I find the information of  $H_2O$  valuable (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)"

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	24	62	18	85	20	209
Percentage	11	30	9	40	10	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

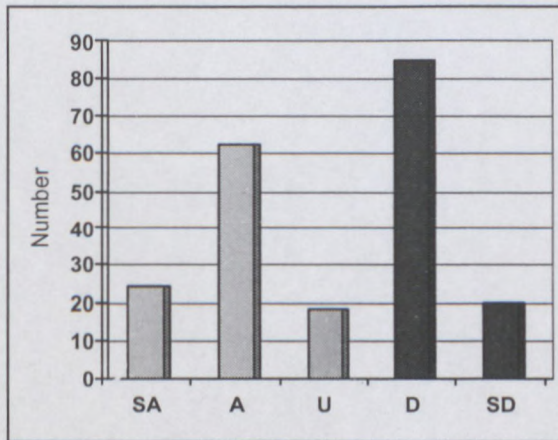


Figure 7.88

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E32

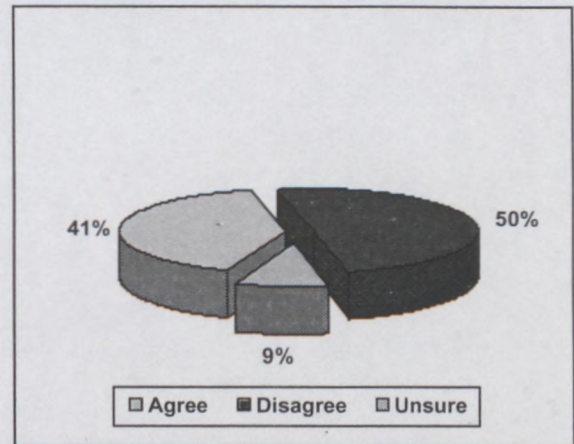


Figure 7.89

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E32

**Mean score = 2.5** – responses on this item were neither negative nor positive

**Standard deviation = 0.84** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

The category that most respondents (62) selected with regard to this item was 'Disagree'.

Although most respondents (50%) do not find the *information in  $H_2O$  valuable*, 41% do find it valuable.

The fact that most respondents do not find  $H_2O$  valuable is compounded by respondents' confusion around the publication's frequency (measurement item E31) and the fact that the information it carries is mostly incomprehensible (measurement item E33).

**E33 “I find  $H_2O$  easy to understand (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	23	70	16	82	18	209
Percentage	11	33	8	39	9	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

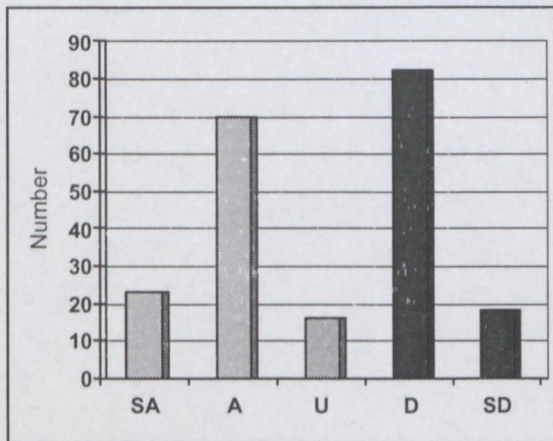


Figure 7.90

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E33

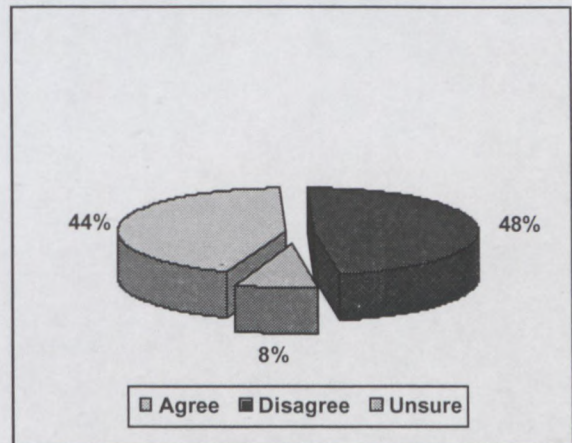


Figure 7.91

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E33

**Mean score = 2.5** – responses on this item were neither negative nor positive

**Standard deviation = 0.82** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

The category that most respondents (82) selected with regard to this item was ‘Disagree’.

The difference between respondents who find the *information in  $H_2O$  understandable* is very small in that 48% of respondents find the information incomprehensible in comparison to 44% who understand it.

This could indicate that the little understood information in  $H_2O$  is not valuable (measurement item E32). It could also mean that  $H_2O$  is ineffective.

**E34 "I receive *Lerothodi* monthly"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	75	113	4	7	10	209
Percentage	36	54	2	3	5	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

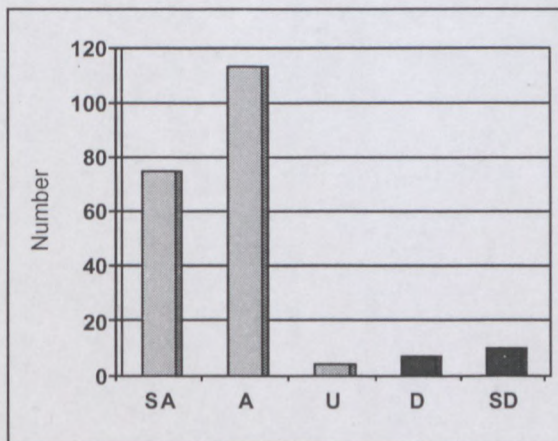


Figure 7.92

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E34

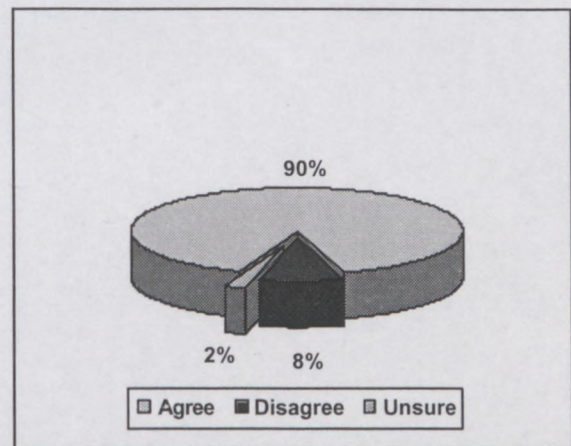


Figure 7.93

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E34

**Mean score = 1.8** – responses on this item were more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.73** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (113) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A large majority of respondents (90%) *receive Lerothodi monthly*. This is another excellent example of an effective planning and distribution management effort. Ten percent (10%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**E35 "I find the information in *Lerothodi* valuable"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	62	105	4	25	13	209
Percentage	30	50	2	12	6	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

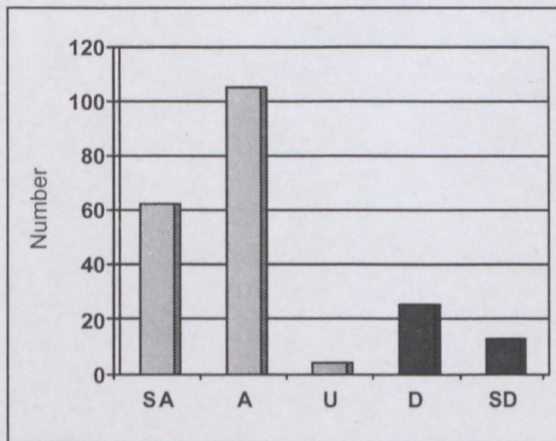


Figure 7.94

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E35

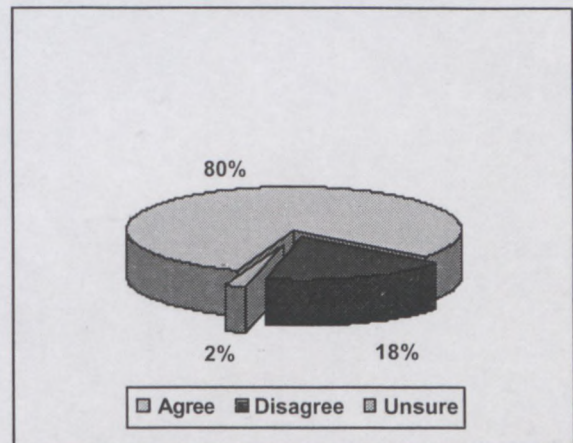


Figure 7.95

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E35

**Mean score = 1.9** – responses on this item were more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.82** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (105) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A large majority of respondents (80%) *find the information in Lerothodi valuable*. Twenty percent (20%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**E36 "I find *Lerotherodi* easy to understand"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	56	124	2	13	14	209
Percentage	27	59	1	6	7	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

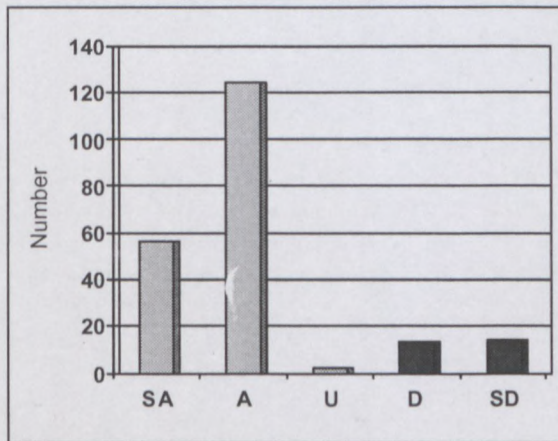


Figure 7.96

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E36

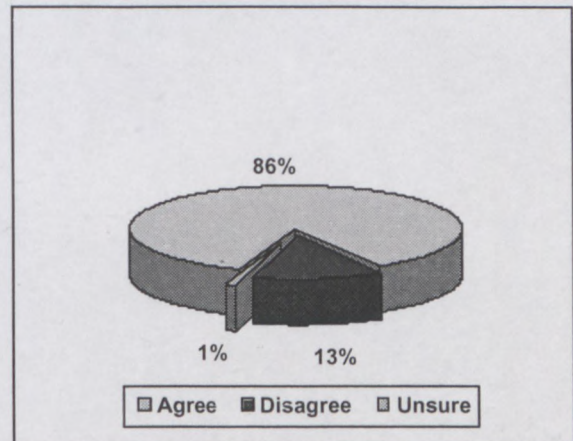


Figure 7.97

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E36

**Mean score = 1.8** – responses on this item were more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.77** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (124) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A majority of respondents (86%) *find Lerotherodi easy to understand*. Thirteen percent (13%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**E43 "I find it easy to get hold of the communication mediums in The Utility"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	8	92	12	49	48	209
Percentage	4	44	6	23	23	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

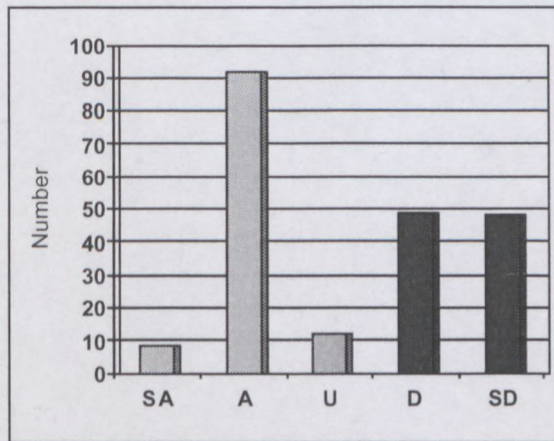


Figure 7.98

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E43

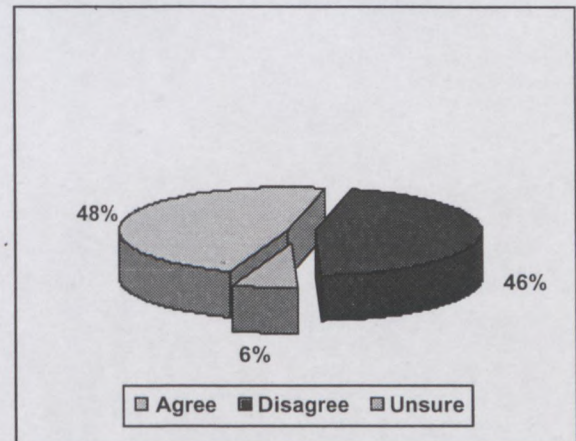


Figure 7.99

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E43

**Mean score = 2.7** – responses on this item were slightly more negative

**Standard deviation = 0.88** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (92) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

The majority of respondents (48%) find it easy to get hold of the communication mediums in *The Utility*. Apart from meaningful and understandable messages, effective communication is also very much dependent on the availability of, and access to, those messages.

Forty six percent (46%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**E44 “Notice boards (including electronic notice boards where applicable) are useful sources of work related information.”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	48	128	5	10	18	209
Percentage	23	61	2	5	9	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

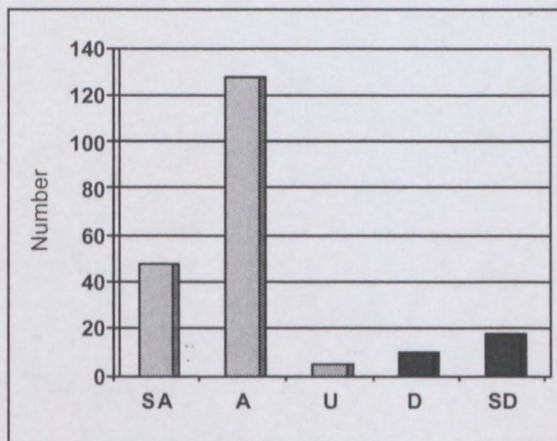


Figure 7.100

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E44

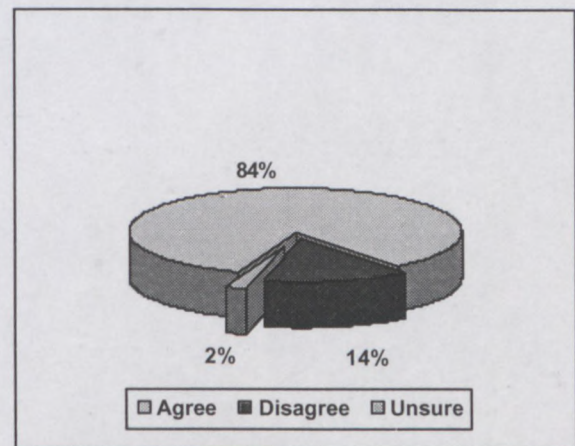


Figure 7.101

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E44

**Mean score = 2.0** – responses on this item were more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.80** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

The category that most respondents (128) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A large majority of respondents (84%) said that *notice boards (including electronic notice boards where applicable) are useful sources of work related information*. Fourteen percent (14%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**E45 “The Utility’s e-mail system is a useful source of work related information”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	76	104	8	14	7	209
Percentage	36	50	4	7	3	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

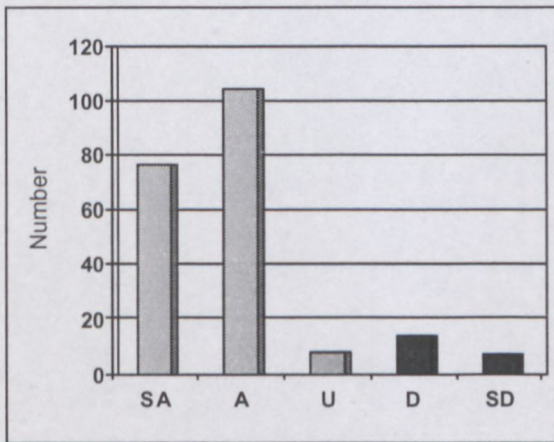


Figure 7.102

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E45

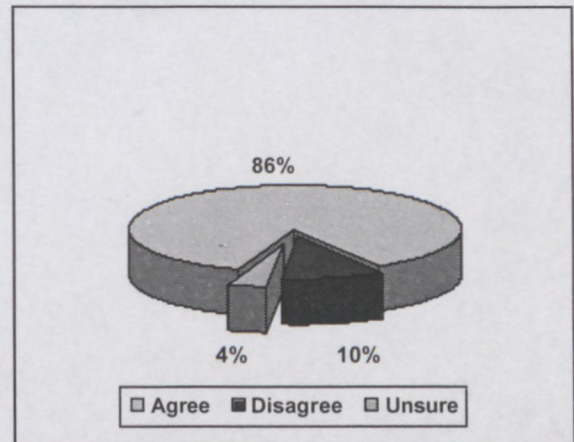


Figure 7.103

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E45

**Mean score = 1.8** – responses on this item were more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.72** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (104) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A large majority of respondents (86%) said that *The Utility's e-mail system is a useful source of work related information*. Ten percent (10%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**E46 "The Utility's e-mail system is a reliable source of work related information"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	45	100	18	24	22	209
Percentage	22	47	9	11	11	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

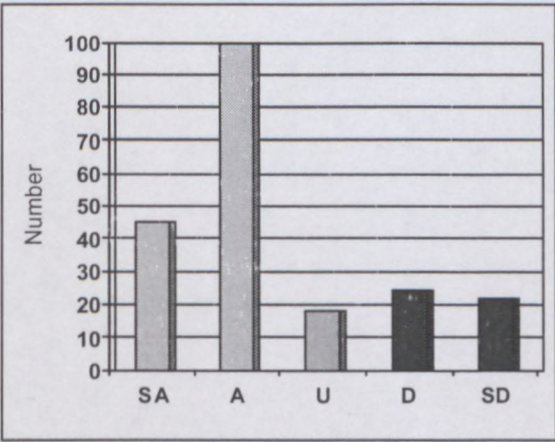


Figure 7.104

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E46

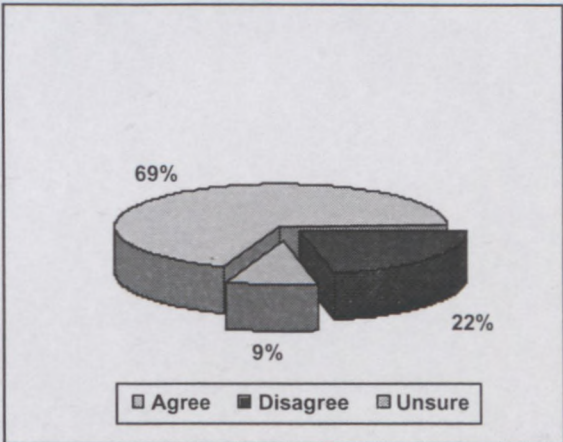


Figure 7.105

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E46

**Mean score = 2.1** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.90** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (100) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A majority of respondents (69%) said that *The Utility's e-mail system is a reliable source of work related information*. Twenty two percent (22%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**E47 "I use The Utility's Intranet"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	40	120	15	10	24	209
Percentage	19	58	7	5	11	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

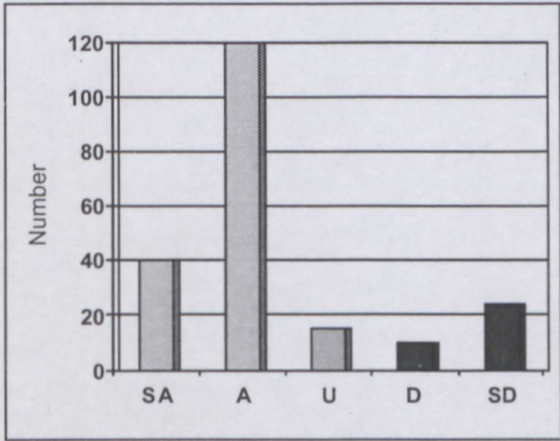


Figure 7.106

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E47

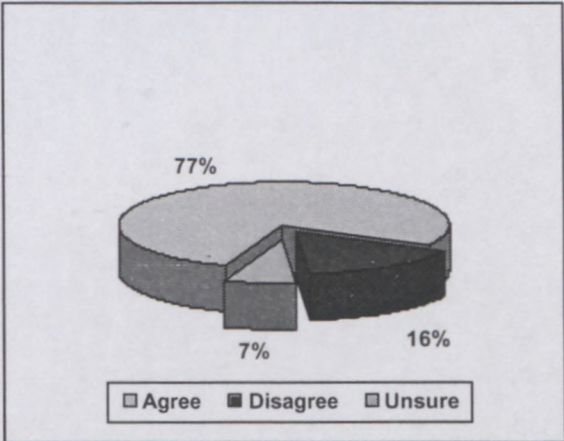


Figure 7.107

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E47

**Mean score = 2.1** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.86** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (120) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A large majority of respondents (77%) use *The Utility's Intranet*. Sixteen percent (16%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**E48 “The Utility Intranet is easy to use”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	23	111	11	32	32	209
Percentage	11	54	5	15	15	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

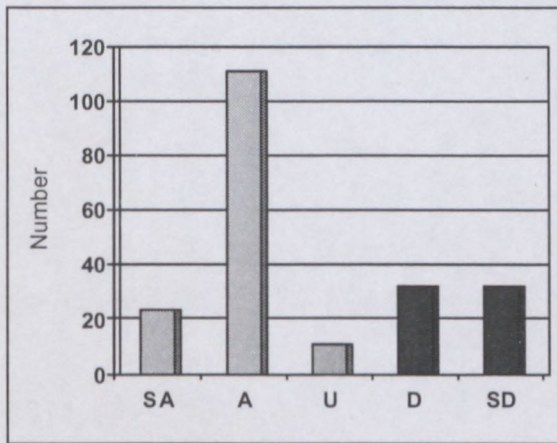


Figure 7.108

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E48

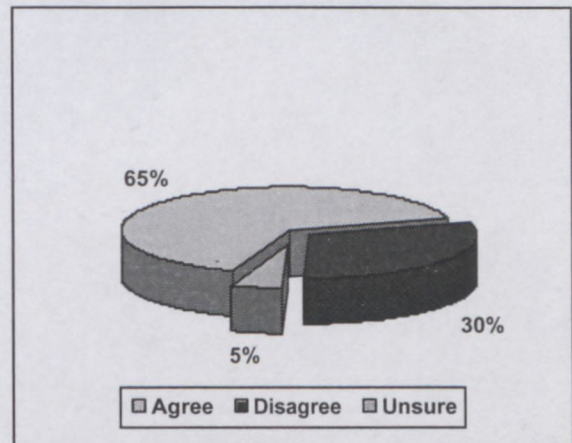


Figure 7.109

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E48

**Mean score = 2.4** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.89** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (111) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

Although 65% of respondents said that *The Utility Intranet is easy to use*, (30%) *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed*. This is a source of concern which should be addressed.

**E49 “PCP forums (Site Forums, Stakeholder Forums and Steering Committees) are a useful communication mediums”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	18	96	10	50	35	209
Percentage	9	45	5	24	17	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

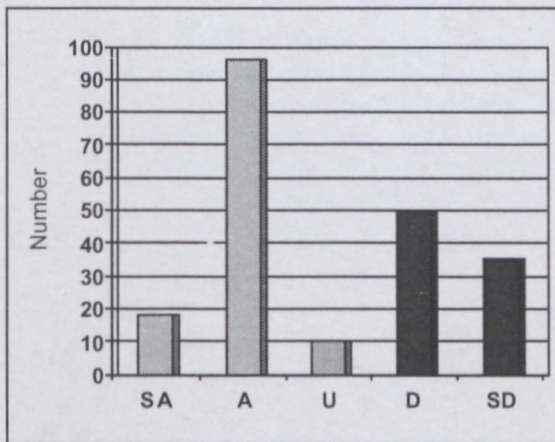


Figure 7.110

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E49

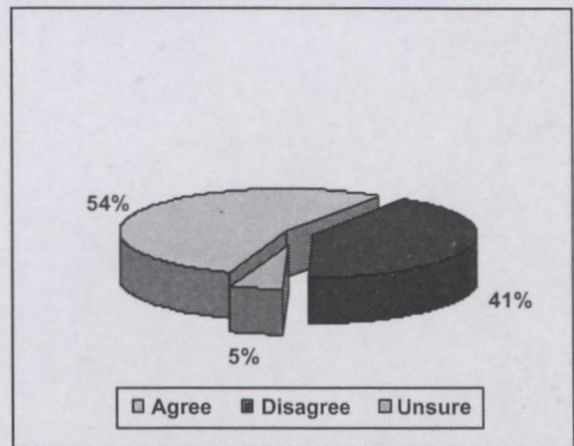


Figure 7.111

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E49

**Mean score = 2.5** – responses on this item were neither negative nor positive

**Standard deviation = 0.88** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (96) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

Fifty-four percent (54%) of respondents rated the *PCP forums as useful communication mediums*. There is, however, also a notably high number of respondents (41%) who *disagree* and *strongly disagree* with this statement.

**E50 "Corporate Imbizos / road shows are a useful communication medium"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	53	98	13	15	30	209
Percentage	25	48	6	7	14	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

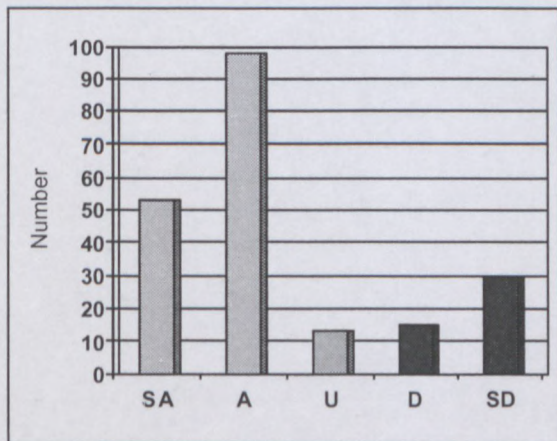


Figure 7.112

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E50

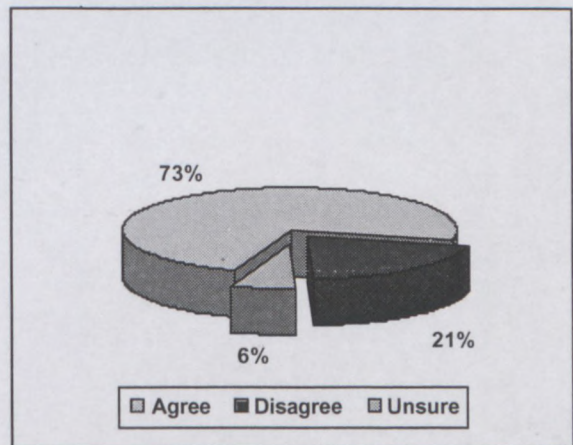


Figure 7.113

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E50

**Mean score = 2.1** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.97** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (98) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A majority of respondents (73%) rated *corporate Imbizos / road shows* as a useful communication medium. The value of face-to-face communication is reinforced by this positive perception. Twenty-one percent (21%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

**E51 “Cloakroom posters are a useful communication medium”**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	34	128	8	24	15	209
Percentage	16	62	4	11	7	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

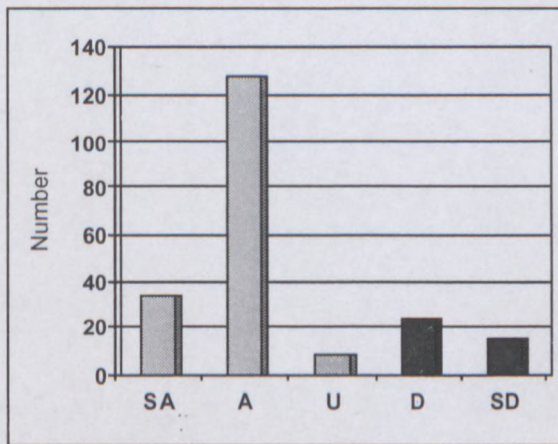


Figure 7.114

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E51

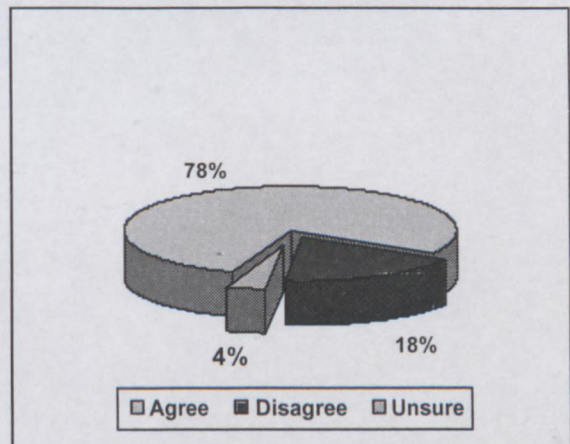


Figure 7.115

Percentages of respondents that agreed/dis agreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E51

**Mean score = 2.1** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.76** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (128) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A majority of respondents (78%) rated *cloakroom posters as a useful communication medium* and eighteen percent (18%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

E52 "I have access to a communication medium (newsletter, suggestion box, line managers, etc.) if I need to convey messages to management "

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	18	115	14	19	43	209
Percentage	9	54	7	9	21	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

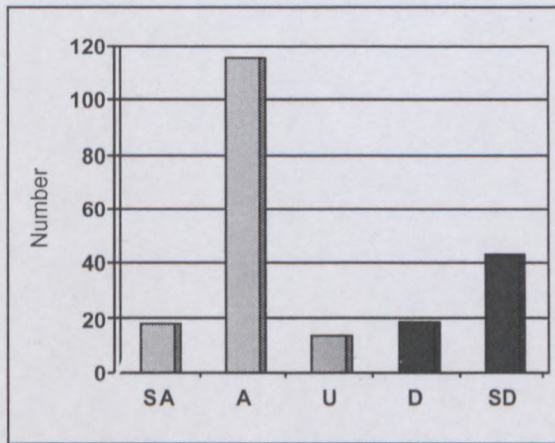


Figure 7.116

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E52

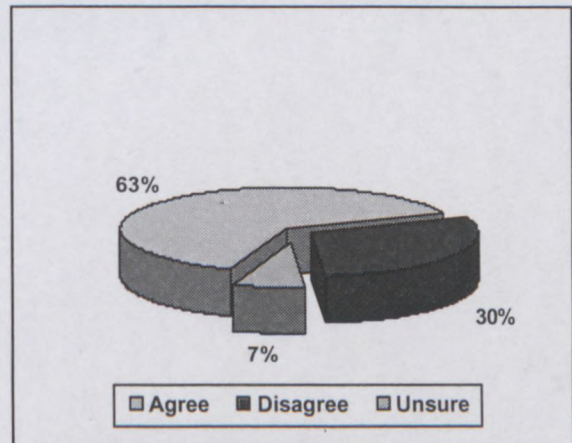


Figure 7.117

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E52

**Mean score = 2.4** – responses on this item were slightly more positive

**Standard deviation = 0.93** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

The category that most respondents (114) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A majority of respondents (63%) have *access to a communication medium* (newsletter, suggestion box, line managers, etc.) if they need to convey messages to management. However, the relatively high number of respondents (30%) who *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with the statement is a concern.

**E53 "I often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, unofficial internal sources"**

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	16	91	10	33	59	209
Percentage	8	43	5	16	28	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

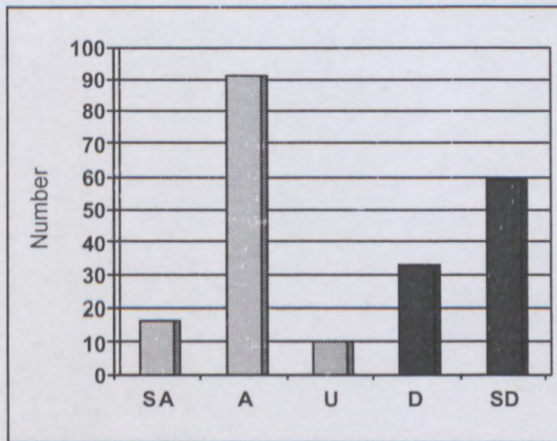


Figure 7.118

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E53

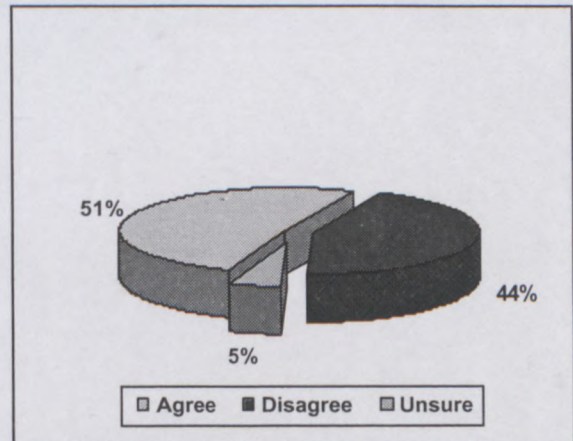


Figure 7.119

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E53

**Mean score = 2.7** – responses on this item were slightly more negative

**Standard deviation = 0.98** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

**Discussion**

The category that most respondents (91) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A very slight majority of respondents (51%) *often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, unofficial internal sources*. Forty-four percent (44%) of respondents *disagreed* and *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

The fact that many The Utility employees receive information relevant to The Utility via the grapevine rather than from official The Utility sources indicates a lack in control of information that can lead to a negative internal communication climate.

E54 "I often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, official external sources (mass media)"

Overall	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Number	11	83	6	30	79	209
Percentage	5	40	3	14	38	100

**Legend:** SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree U: Unsure/don't know D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

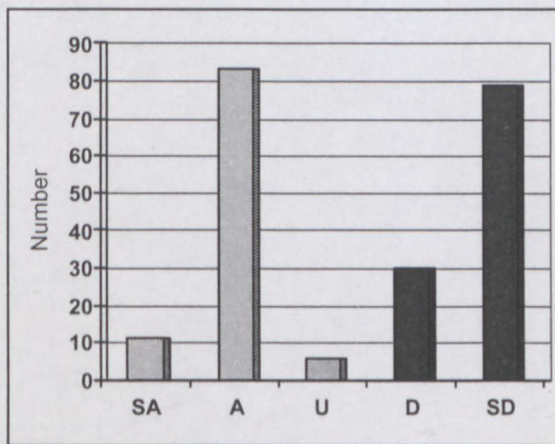


Figure 7.120

The actual number of respondents' degree of conviction to E54

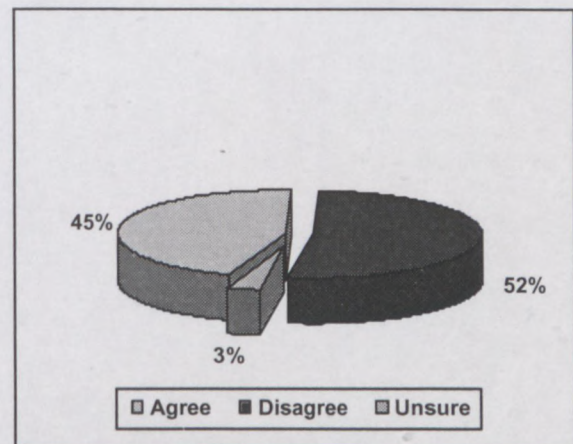


Figure 7.121

Percentages of respondents that agreed/disagreed irrespective of their degree of conviction to E54

**Mean score = 2.9** – responses on this item were slightly more negative

**Standard deviation = 1.00** – there was uniformity in the conviction of responses

### Discussion

The category that most respondents (83) selected with regard to this item was 'Agree'.

A very slight majority of respondents (52%) *seldom receive information relevant to The Utility from other, official external sources (mass media)*. It should, however, also be noted that a large number of respondents (45%) do often receive information relevant to The Utility from those sources (mass media).

It is vital to communicate news internally before communication with external stakeholders and the media takes place.

#### 4.3.5.1 Gap analysis of media quality's measurement items

The 'gap' refers to the degree to which positive responses exceed, or fail to exceed, the negative responses. The percentage of unsure responses is left out of the equation. However, in the case of measurement items where the unsure responses were very high, they were highlighted in the foregoing detailed analyses.

- An aspect is rated as '*Positive*' when the percentage of respondents that rated that aspect positively, minus the percentage of respondents that rated that aspect negatively (and not taking the respondents that were unsure or did not know into the calculation) exceeds 50%. An aspect is still regarded as positive when, for example, 70% of respondents were positive, 10% were unsure/didn't know and 20% were negative (different combinations also apply). These are items that were rated favourably by respondents.
- An aspect is rated as '*of some concern*' when the end rating is between 25-49%.

The items that were rated in this report, as '*of some concern*' are those that were rated neither positively, nor as of '*considerable concern*'.

- '*Of serious concern*' applies when the end rating is less than 25%.

The aspects that were rated in this report as '*of considerable concern*' are those identified by the respondents as negative.

Table 4.15: Gap analysis relating to media quality's measurement items

	Question	Pos	Neg	Gap
C9	The <u>quality</u> (credibility and accuracy) of information in The Utility is sufficient for me to do my work effectively	57	42	15
C10	The <u>quantity</u> (amount) of information in The Utility is sufficient for me to do my work effectively	53	43	10
E24	Communication mediums <u>within</u> The Utility are relevant for our purposes as employees	76	21	55
E25	In dealing with other Divisions, Departments, Sections and Sites, I know which internal communication medium to use to find the required information	54	41	13
E26	In my Division, Department, Section or Site we regularly have 'green area' meetings / workplace meetings	80	17	63
E27	The 'green area' meetings / workplace meetings which I attend are participative	76	20	56
E28	I receive <i>Aquavita</i> monthly	81	15	66
E29	I find the information of the <i>Aquavita</i> valuable	71	27	44
E30	I find <i>Aquavita</i> easy to understand	90	10	80
E31	I receive <i>H<sub>2</sub>O</i> monthly (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)	42	39	3
E32	I find the information of <i>H<sub>2</sub>O</i> valuable (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)	41	50	-9
E33	I find <i>H<sub>2</sub>O</i> easy to understand (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)	44	48	-4
E34	I receive <i>Lerothodi</i> monthly	90	8	82
E35	I find the information of <i>Lerothodi</i> valuable	80	18	62
E36	I find <i>Lerothodi</i> easy to understand	86	13	73
E43	I find it easy to get hold of the communication mediums in The Utility	48	46	2
E44	Notice boards (including electronic notice boards were applicable) are useful sources of work related information.	84	14	70
E45	The Utility's e-mail system is a useful source of work-related information	86	10	76
E46	The Utility's email system is a reliable source of work-related information	69	22	47
E47	I use The Utility's Intranet	77	16	61

E48	The Utility Intranet is easy to use	65	30	<b>35</b>
E49	PCP forums (Site Forums, Stakeholder Forms and Steering Committee) are a useful communication medium	54	41	<b>13</b>
E50	Corporate Imbizos / road shows are a useful communication medium	73	21	<b>52</b>
E51	Cloakroom posters are a useful communication medium	78	18	<b>60</b>
E52	I have access to a communication medium (newsletter, suggestion box, line managers, etc.) if I need to convey messages to management	63	30	<b>33</b>
E53	I often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, <u>unofficial internal</u> sources	51	44	<b>7</b>
E54	I often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, <u>official external</u> sources (mass media)	45	52	<b>-7</b>

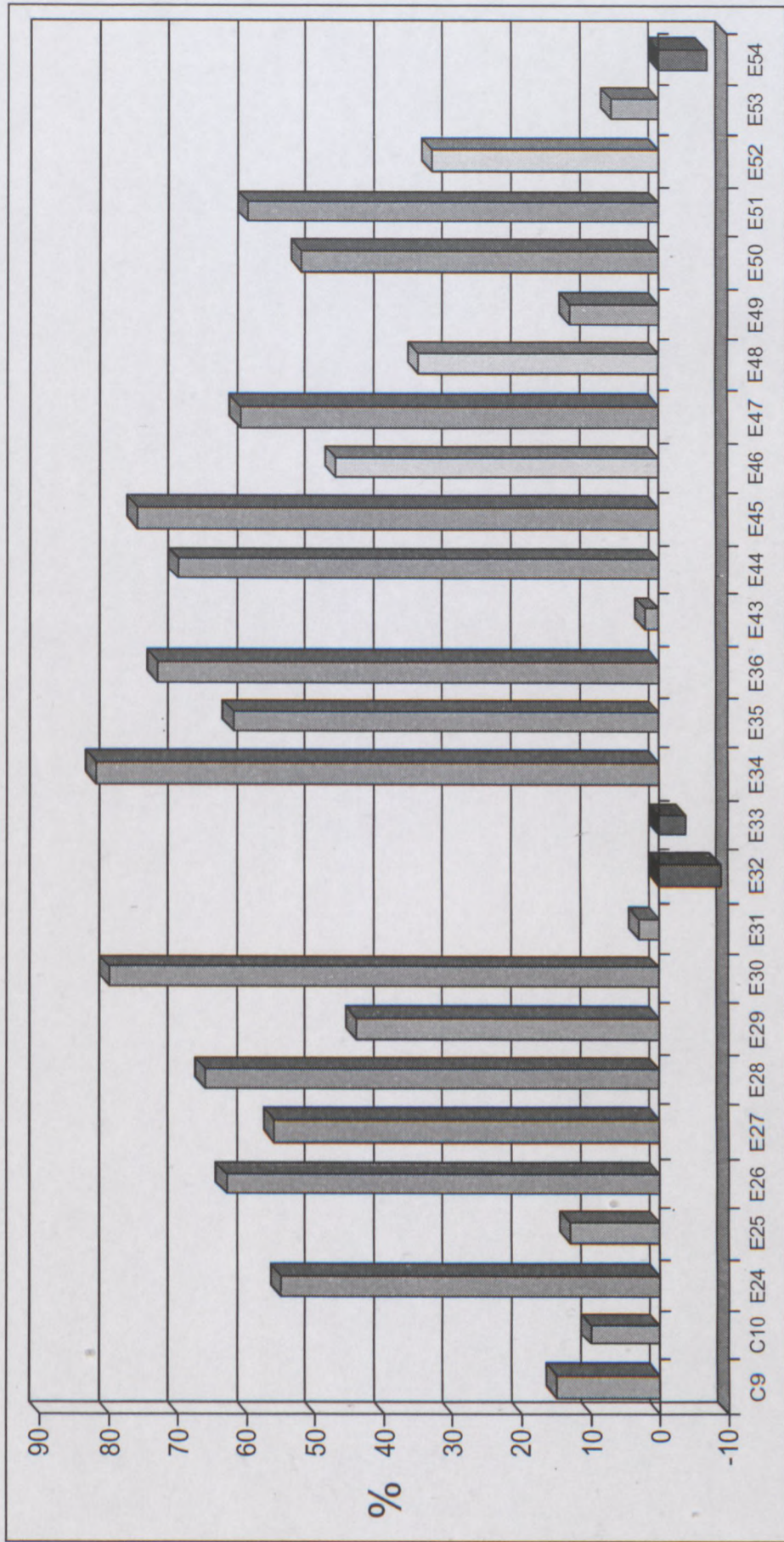


Figure 4.122: Gap analysis of media quality's measurement items

**Positive aspects (>50%) amongst the results relating to media quality are:**

Communication mediums <u>within</u> The Utility are relevant for our purposes as employees	55
In my Division, Department, Section or Site we regularly have 'green area' meetings / workplace meetings	63
The 'green area' meetings / workplace meetings which I attend are participative	56
I receive <i>Aquavita</i> monthly	66
I find <i>Aquavita</i> easy to understand	80
I receive <i>Lerothodi</i> monthly	82
I find the information of <i>Lerothodi</i> valuable	62
I find <i>Lerothodi</i> easy to understand	73
Notice boards (including electronic notice boards were applicable) are useful sources of work-related information.	70
The Utility's e-mail system is a useful source of work-related information	76
I use The Utility's Intranet	61
Corporate Imbizos / road shows are a useful communication medium	52
Cloakroom posters are a useful communication medium	60

**Aspects of some concern (25% – 49%) amongst the results relating to media quality are:**

I find the information of the <i>Aquavita</i> valuable	44
The Utility's e-mail system is a reliable source of work-related information	47
The Utility Intranet is easy to use	35
I have access to a communication medium (newsletter, suggestion box, line managers, etc.) if I need to convey messages to management	33

**Aspects of considerable concern (<25%) amongst the results relating to media quality are:**

The <u>quality</u> (credibility and accuracy) of information in The Utility is sufficient for me to do my work effectively	15
The <u>quantity</u> (amount) of information in The Utility is sufficient for me to do my work effectively	10
In dealing with other Divisions, Departments, Sections and Sites I know which internal communication medium to use to find the required information	13
I receive <i>H<sub>2</sub>O</i> monthly (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)	3
I find the information of <i>H<sub>2</sub>O</i> valuable (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)	-9
I find <i>H<sub>2</sub>O</i> easy to understand (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)	-4
I find it easy to get hold of the communication mediums in The Utility	2
PCP forums (Site Forums, Stakeholder Forms and Steering Committee) are a useful communication mediums	13
I often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, <u>unofficial internal</u> sources	7
I often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, <u>official external</u> sources (mass media)	-7

**4.3.5.2 Measures of central tendency and variability relating to media quality**

The measures of central tendency and variability scores of responses are illustrated below in table format. The measure of central tendency (mean) and measure of variability (standard deviation) can be interpreted accordingly:

- A mean score closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were in agreement with the measurement item or statement. It can also be said that these responses have a tendency towards being more 'positive'. Mean scores closer to five (5) indicate respondents' disagreement with the statement and those responses are thus more 'negative'.
- A standard deviation (SD) score closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were uniform in their degree of conviction. A SD score closer to five (5) indicate that the respondents had divergence in their degree of conviction.

Table 4.16: Mean scores and standard deviation (SD) relating to media quality's measurement items

	Measurement item	Mean	SD
C9	The <u>quality</u> (credibility and accuracy) of information in The Utility is sufficient for me to do my work effectively	2.4	1.15
C10	The <u>quantity</u> (amount) of information in The Utility is sufficient for me to do my work effectively	2.5	1.09
E24	Communication mediums <u>within</u> The Utility are relevant for our purposes as employees	2.1	0.81
E25	In dealing with other Divisions, Departments, Sections and Sites I know which internal communication medium to use to find the required information	2.6	0.95
E26	In my Division, Department, Section or Site we regularly have 'green area' meetings / workplace meetings	1.9	1.00
E27	The 'green area' meetings / workplace meetings which I attend are participative	2.1	0.95
E28	I receive <i>Aquavita</i> monthly	2.0	0.89
E29	I find the information of the <i>Aquavita</i> valuable	2.3	0.91
E30	I find <i>Aquavita</i> easy to understand	1.9	0.60
E31	I receive <i>H<sub>2</sub>O</i> monthly (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)	2.6	1.06
E32	I find the information of <i>H<sub>2</sub>O</i> valuable (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)	2.5	0.84
E33	I find <i>H<sub>2</sub>O</i> easy to understand (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)	2.5	0.82
E34	I receive <i>Lerothodi</i> monthly	1.8	0.73
E35	I find the information of <i>Lerothodi</i> valuable	1.9	0.82
E36	I find <i>Lerothodi</i> easy to understand	1.8	0.77
E43	I find it easy to get hold of the communication mediums in The Utility	2.7	0.88
E44	Notice boards (including electronic notice boards were applicable) are useful sources of work-related information.	2.0	0.80
E45	The Utility's e-mail system is a useful source of work-related information	1.8	0.72
E46	The Utility's e-mail system is a reliable source of work-related information	2.1	0.90
E47	I use The Utility's Intranet	2.1	0.86

E48	The Utility Intranet is easy to use	2.4	0.89
E49	PCP forums (Site Forums, Stakeholder Forms and Steering Committee) are a useful communication mediums	2.5	0.88
E50	Corporate Imbizos / road shows are a useful communication medium	2.1	0.97
E51	Cloakroom posters are a useful communication medium	2.1	0.76
E52	I have access to a communication medium if I need to convey messages to management	2.4	0.93
E53	I often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, <u>unofficial internal</u> sources	2.7	0.98
E54	I often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, <u>official external</u> sources (mass media)	2.9	1.00

**With the measurement items being scored as one (1) being positive and five (5) being negative, the analysis of Table 4.16 emphasises the following factors:**

- Measurement items which received a more positive mean score for media quality are:
  - Measurement item E34's mean (1.8) indicate that employees receive Lerothodi monthly and the SD (0.73) shows that there is uniformity in the degree of conviction.
  - With a mean of 1.8 for measurement item E36, employees seem to find Lerothodi easy to understand. The low standard deviation (0.77) indicates uniformity in the degree of conviction.
  - The mean for measurement item E45 is 1.8 which indicates that respondents find The Utility's e-mail system a useful source of work related information. An SD of 0.72 indicates that there is uniformity in the respondents' degree of conviction.
  - Measurement item E26's mean (1.9) indicates that in their Divisions, Departments, Sections or Sites, respondents regularly have 'green area' meetings / workplace meetings. The SD (1.0) shows that there is uniformity in the degree of conviction.
  - The mean for measurement item E30 is 1.9. This indicates that respondents find Aquavita easy to understand. An SD of 0.60 indicates that there is high uniformity in the respondents' degree of conviction.
  - The mean for measurement item E35 is 1.9. This indicates that respondents find the information in Lerothodi valuable. With the SD at 0.82 it indicates that there is uniformity in the respondents' degree of conviction.
  - With a mean of 2.0 for measurement item E28, respondents seem to receive Aquavita monthly. The low standard deviation (0.89) indicates uniformity in the degree of conviction.

- The mean for measurement item E44 is 2.0. This indicates that respondents find notice boards (including electronic notice boards where applicable) useful sources of work related information. The SD of 0.80 indicates that there is high uniformity in the respondents' degree of conviction.
- Measurement items which received a slightly more negative mean score for media quality are:
  - The mean for measurement item E54 is 2.9 which indicates that respondents do not often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, official external sources (mass media). With the SD at 1.0 it indicates that there is uniformity in the respondent's degree of conviction.
  - The mean for measurement item E53 is 2.7. This indicates that respondents do not often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, unofficial internal sources find. The SD of 0.98 indicates that there is high uniformity in the respondent's degree of conviction.
  - Measurement item E43's mean (2.7) indicates that respondents do not find it easy to get hold of the communication mediums in The Utility. The SD (.88) shows that there is uniformity in the degree of conviction.

The overall mean for the construct of media quality was 2.2 indicating that respondents were slightly more positive towards this construct. The low overall SD of 0.449677 indicated that respondents were uniform in their degree of conviction on organisational integration.

#### **4.3.5.3 Conclusion**

**The analysis of the descriptive statistics on media quality led to the conclusion that employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are slightly satisfied with media quality.**

The overall mean score inclusive of all the measurement items on communication satisfaction is 2.4, indicating that respondents were overall slightly more positive.

The overall standard deviation score inclusive of all the measurement items on communication satisfaction is 0.43, indicating a high degree of conviction amongst the respondents.

## INFERENTIAL STATISTICS FINDINGS

This section presents the findings of the inferential statistics analysis. It is presented according to the constructs of communication satisfaction, in the order indicated below.

Order of findings	Number of hypothesis	Number of corresponding sub-section
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings of the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha.</li> </ul>		4.3.6
<b>Hypotheses testing</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings of employee satisfaction (job levels K to P of The Utility) with regard to <u>communication</u>.</li> </ul>	H <sub>1</sub>	4.3.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings of employee satisfaction (on job levels K to P of The Utility) with regard to the construct <u>communication climate</u>.</li> </ul>	H <sub>2</sub>	4.3.8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings of employee satisfaction (on job levels K to P of The Utility) with regard to the construct <u>supervisory communication</u>.</li> </ul>	H <sub>3</sub>	4.3.9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings of employee satisfaction (on job levels K to P of The Utility) with regard to the construct <u>organisational integration</u>.</li> </ul>	H <sub>4</sub>	4.3.10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings of employee satisfaction (on job levels K to P of The Utility) with regard to the construct <u>media quality</u>.</li> </ul>	H <sub>5</sub>	4.3.11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings of employee satisfaction (on job levels K to P of The Utility) with regard to the constructs <u>supervisory communication</u> versus <u>communication climate</u>.</li> </ul>	H <sub>6</sub>	4.3.12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings of employee satisfaction (on job levels K to P of The Utility) with regard to the constructs <u>supervisory communication</u> versus <u>organisational integration</u>.</li> </ul>	H <sub>7</sub>	4.3.13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings of employee satisfaction (on job levels K to P of The Utility) with regard to the constructs <u>supervisory communication</u> versus <u>media quality</u>.</li> </ul>	H <sub>8</sub>	4.3.14

### 4.3.6 Findings of the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha

The Cronbach Coefficient Alpha was used to test reliability, i.e. to check internal consistency of the questionnaire. It is a measure of squared correlation between observed scores and true scores. Reliability was thus measured in terms of the ratio of true score variance to observed score variance. It minimised the measurement error so that the error is not highly correlated with the true score and tested the strength of the relationship between true score and observed score. The Cronbach Coefficient Alpha was conducted firstly on the whole set of measurement items and then on the items representing the four different constructs of communication satisfaction.

#### 4.3.6.1 Findings of the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha on all the measurement items

The initial Cronbach's Alpha for standardised variables was: 0.904216. Detailed output of this first round of the Alpha can be seen in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17: Cronbach Coefficient Alpha on the whole item set of communication satisfaction

for RAW variables : 0.897582  
for STANDARDISED variables: 0.904216

Deleted Variable	Raw Variables		Std. Variables	
	Correlation with Total	Alpha	Correlation with Total	Alpha
B1	0.130876	0.898758	0.124876	0.905098
B2	0.088675	0.899251	0.080796	0.905551
B3	0.147218	0.898389	0.134815	0.904996
B4	0.230358	0.897408	0.225545	0.904058
B6	0.144803	0.898566	0.145112	0.904890
B7	0.194434	0.897812	0.190495	0.904421
B8	0.143433	0.898527	0.141250	0.904929
C9	0.270056	0.897024	0.265850	0.903638
C10	0.257774	0.897083	0.254306	0.903759
C11	0.097005	0.899105	0.092464	0.905431
C12	0.150562	0.898387	0.144191	0.904899
C14	0.105673	0.898882	0.096527	0.905389
D15	0.112904	0.899117	0.117495	0.905174
D16	0.426664	0.895020	0.427729	0.901939
D18	0.327219	0.896174	0.329637	0.902972
D19	0.327224	0.896156	0.330500	0.902963
D20	0.392167	0.895423	0.390020	0.902337
D21	0.448816	0.894646	0.444919	0.901757
D22	0.547791	0.893488	0.546099	0.900681
D23	0.404952	0.895233	0.404870	0.902181

Deleted Variable	Raw Variables		Std. variables	
	Correlation with Total	Alpha	Correlation with Total	Alpha
E24	0.454553	0.894963	0.463371	0.901562
E25	0.515274	0.894050	0.531111	0.900841
E26	0.409608	0.895193	0.414347	0.902081
E27	0.506146	0.894157	0.511892	0.901046
E28	0.326878	0.896150	0.338883	0.902875
E29	0.495825	0.894344	0.516264	0.900999
E30	0.430788	0.895635	0.450649	0.901697
E31	0.460904	0.894528	0.476119	0.901427
E32	0.478863	0.894662	0.493791	0.901239
E33	0.453500	0.894952	0.466320	0.901531
E34	0.429945	0.895335	0.450871	0.901694
E35	0.534047	0.894173	0.561287	0.900519
E36	0.447575	0.895102	0.471087	0.901480
E43	0.410322	0.895290	0.420612	0.902014
E44	0.346902	0.895992	0.357367	0.902681
E45	0.334336	0.896160	0.353053	0.902726
E46	0.348088	0.895927	0.369298	0.902555
E47	0.138796	0.898026	0.152030	0.904818
E48	0.233074	0.897114	0.246075	0.903844
E49	0.462994	0.894743	0.467474	0.901518
E50	0.308232	0.896365	0.327045	0.902999
E51	0.315086	0.896304	0.324086	0.903030
E52	0.399816	0.895354	0.410349	0.902123
E53	-.134670	0.901336	-.126573	0.907656
E54	0.189401	0.897749	0.191678	0.904409
F55A	0.505461	0.893829	0.489162	0.901288
F55B	0.540702	0.893434	0.530024	0.900853
F55C	0.528679	0.893604	0.516053	0.901002
F55D	0.518447	0.893964	0.513267	0.901031
F55E	0.607393	0.892829	0.609610	0.900001
F55F	0.585389	0.893149	0.589619	0.900215
F55G	0.562483	0.893552	0.562113	0.900510
F55H	0.580232	0.893130	0.573119	0.900392
F55I	0.559571	0.893192	0.556860	0.900566
F56	0.597170	0.893137	0.606151	0.900038

The researcher decided to delete the items indicated in bold above in the left hand column, since they were considered to threaten the internal stability. The improved Alpha (standardised variables) after each of these variables are deleted, are indicated in bold in the right hand column.

A summary of the deleted variables are provided in Table 4.18 below.

Table 4.18: Cronbach Coefficient Alpha: Variables deleted from analysis

Variable/measurement item		Alpha
• B2:	The internal communication in The Utility encourages two-way feedback	0.905551
• C11:	I have a clear understanding of where my Division fits within The Utility	0.905431
• C14:	The role and services of the Corporate Communication Division is clear to me	0.905389
• E53:	I often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, unofficial internal sources	0.907656

Eight other items in Table 4.19 also threatened the internal stability, but not to the same extent as the four items mentioned above. If these eight variables indicated below were indeed to be deleted, measurement items important to The Utility would have been lost. Furthermore, it would have weakened the constructs of communication climate (items B1, B3, B6, B7 and B8) and organisational integration (items C12, D15 and E45). Therefore it was decided not to delete these items.

Table 4.19: Cronbach Coefficient Alpha: Variables not deleted (but could have been)

Variable/measurement item	Alpha
• B1	0.905098
• B3	0.904996
• B6	0.904890
• B7	0.904421
• B8	0.904929
• C12	0.904899
• D15	0.905174
• E47	0.904818

Having deleted only the four variables indicated in Table 4.18, a Cronbach Coefficient Alpha was again computed on the remaining item set. The new improved standardised Alpha was 0.918723. The table containing the whole item set can be viewed in Addendum 7.3.

#### 4.3.6.2 Findings of the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha on communication climate

The Cronbach's Alpha for standardised variables computed on the construct of communication climate (after the four variables were deleted) was 0.891233. This is slightly lower than the overall improved Alpha of 0.918723.

Table 4.20: Improved Cronbach Coefficient Alpha on communication climate

for RAW variables : 0.879042  
 for STANDARDISED variables: 0.891233

Deleted Variable	Raw variables		Std. variables	
	Correlation with Total	Alpha	Correlation with Total	Alpha
B1	0.174722	0.887256	0.176807	0.898385
B3	0.151538	0.887353	0.152862	0.899227
B4	0.158853	0.887310	0.160940	0.898944
B6	0.104070	0.890117	0.105363	0.900886
B7	0.208425	0.885056	0.208584	0.897261
F55A	0.676337	0.864745	0.679163	0.879749
F55B	0.741366	0.861926	0.745477	0.877147
F55C	0.708289	0.863532	0.709920	0.878546
F55D	0.668559	0.866167	0.676553	0.879850
F55E	0.730237	0.863305	0.739378	0.877388
F55F	0.724737	0.863729	0.736912	0.877485
F55G	0.667213	0.866516	0.675010	0.879910
F55H	0.772701	0.861368	0.779965	0.875781
F55I	0.688201	0.864452	0.697264	0.879042
F56	0.610311	0.868675	0.643049	0.881151

#### 4.3.6.3 Findings of the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha on supervisory communication

The Cronbach's Alpha for standardised variables computed on the construct of supervisory communication climate (after the four variables were deleted) was 0.916839. This is marginally lower than the overall improved Alpha of 0.918723, indicating supervisory communication to be the most stable construct.

Table 4.21: Improved Cronbach Coefficient Alpha on supervisory communication

for RAW variables : 0.905453  
for STANDARDISED variables: 0.916839

Deleted Variable	Raw Variables		Std. Variables	
	Correlation with Total	Alpha	Correlation with Total	Alpha
D15	0.177723	0.934257	0.192992	0.939906
D16	0.674245	0.895277	0.698586	0.907964
D18	0.737954	0.890451	0.747472	0.904632
D19	0.681498	0.894728	0.696125	0.908131
D20	0.682635	0.894742	0.690628	0.908503
D21	0.819449	0.883656	0.829377	0.898948
D22	0.789942	0.886450	0.799894	0.901008
D23	0.748102	0.889655	0.759170	0.903828

#### 4.3.6.4 Findings of the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha on organisational integration

The Cronbach's Alpha for standardised variables computed on the construct of organisational integration (after the four variables were deleted) was 0.725554. As this is considerably lower than the overall improved Alpha of 0.918723, it indicates a construct with much less internal stability than the preceding two constructs. This is however logical considering that organisational integration was one of the constructs that contained a number of items which could have been deleted after conducting the first round of the Cronbach's Alpha reliability test.

Table 4.22: Improved Cronbach Coefficient Alpha on organisational integration

for RAW variables : 0.666173  
for STANDARDISED variables: 0.725554

Deleted Variable	Raw Variables		Std. Variables	
	Correlation with Total	Alpha	Correlation with Total	Alpha
B1	0.343624	0.677110	0.391546	0.734270
B4	0.301159	0.700194	0.346844	0.758226
C12	0.368986	0.654949	0.416880	0.720376

#### 4.3.6.5 Findings of the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha on media quality

The Cronbach's Alpha for standardised variables computed on the construct of media quality (after the four variables were deleted) was 0.886969. This is slightly lower than the overall improved Alpha of 0.918723, indicating a stable construct.

Table 4.23: Improved Cronbach Coefficient Alpha on media quality

for RAW variables : 0.872464  
 for STANDARDISED variables: 0.886969

Deleted Variable	Raw Variables		Std. Variables	
	Correlation with Total	Alpha	Correlation with Total	Alpha
C10	0.218226	0.875406	0.220067	0.888443
E24	0.412830	0.868380	0.420804	0.883732
E25	0.530794	0.864897	0.539697	0.880875
E26	0.385255	0.869463	0.387874	0.884515
E27	0.469002	0.866775	0.472707	0.882491
E28	0.380241	0.869295	0.386500	0.884547
E29	0.517491	0.865377	0.537308	0.880933
E30	0.502141	0.867171	0.514798	0.881478
E31	0.506774	0.865602	0.512911	0.881523
E32	0.606777	0.863152	0.602125	0.879355
E33	0.594752	0.863610	0.585208	0.879768
E34	0.518622	0.866009	0.531161	0.881082
E35	0.633014	0.862590	0.649004	0.878204
E36	0.509595	0.866043	0.526945	0.881184
E43	0.430922	0.867879	0.432589	0.883451
E44	0.381689	0.869169	0.389208	0.884483
E45	0.398713	0.868806	0.413009	0.883918
E46	0.426177	0.868016	0.443958	0.883180
E47	0.240626	0.872986	0.241611	0.887944
E48	0.295137	0.871644	0.300881	0.886563
E49	0.449918	0.867348	0.446390	0.883122
E50	0.389058	0.869233	0.398571	0.884261
E51	0.299948	0.871107	0.310236	0.886344
E52	0.353896	0.870161	0.359828	0.885178
E54	0.180374	0.875727	0.182122	0.889317

## Hypothesis testing

The results of the testing of the first eight (of nine) hypotheses formulated in Chapter 1, are discussed below. The concepts and constructs that each hypothesis tested, are the following:

- $H_1$  tested the major concept of employee communication satisfaction.
- $H_2$  tested employee satisfaction with the construct of communication climate.
- $H_3$  tested employee satisfaction with the construct of supervisory communication.
- $H_4$  tested employee satisfaction with the construct of organisational integration.
- $H_5$  tested employee satisfaction with the construct of media quality.
- $H_6$  tested employee satisfaction with the construct of supervisory communication versus the construct of communication climate.
- $H_7$  tested employee satisfaction with the construct of supervisory communication versus the construct of organisational integration.
- $H_8$  tested employee satisfaction with the construct of supervisory communication versus the construct of media quality.

In testing hypotheses, the aim is to examine whether a particular proposition concerning the population is likely to hold or not. A hypothesis is thus a statement regarding a population that may or may not be true (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997:130). To determine whether the hypotheses set for this study could be accepted or not, particular tests were used.

The parametric t-test was used to test  $H_1$  to  $H_5$ . To apply a parametric test, the original ordinal scaled variable (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) was transformed into a ratio scaled variable (100%, 66.7%, 33.3% & 0%). Since the first five hypotheses were formulated as single sample, one variable hypothesis, a benchmark of 70% was set to be able to compare the means.

The overall mean for the major concept and each of the four constructs were calculated and the 70% benchmark subtracted from this value. Whether the resulting value was significantly different to zero (difference between the overall mean and the benchmark) was then tested.

The rationale behind a benchmark of 70% was explained in Chapter 3, but shortly summarised here for clarity:

- The current benchmark in industry for studies of this nature varies between 63% and 75%, the figure of 70% thus being regarded by the researcher as a suitable average.
- In transforming the original ordinal scaled variables to ratio scaled variables, 'Strongly Agree' became 100% while 'Agree' became 66.7%. This latter figure was rounded off to 70%, thus agreeing with the above.
- Sufficient communication satisfaction would thus be seen to exist if the average response was significantly higher than 70%.

A 95% level of confidence was set, and the null hypotheses rejected when the p-value was smaller than the level of significance selected, namely 0.05. If the p-value was higher than the level of significance selected, the null hypotheses were accepted.

#### 4.3.7 Hypothesis 1 (communication satisfaction)

According to Primary Objective 2,  $H_1$  tested *the extent to which there is communication satisfaction amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.*

The findings of  $H_1$  are presented and discussed below.

Hypotheses		Findings
$H_0$	There is no significant difference between the average response on <u>communication satisfaction</u> amongst employees on job levels K to P of The Utility, and the benchmark of 70%.	<b>Rejected</b>
$H_1$	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on communication satisfaction.	<b>Accepted</b>

Due to the importance of the major concept of communication satisfaction to this study,  $H_1$  (which tested the existence of communication satisfaction amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility) was tested in two ways, using different variables. This enabled a comparison between the findings of the two different tests, obtaining even more support for the finding, in the case that they agreed.

1. Based on theory, the concept of communication satisfaction was seen to consist of four constructs for the purposes of this research. Thus, in the first instance,  $H_1$  was tested by computing the average mean of all four the constructs and then conducting the hypothesis test based on that average mean.

2. A single measurement question (item F56) asked respondents to indicate their communication satisfaction (as a ratio scaled variable). In the second instance,  $H_1$  was thus tested by using the average response on measurement item F56 (measuring respondents' overall communication satisfaction directly).

The findings of the different statistical methods used to test  $H_1$  are discussed below.

1. The findings of the first testing of  $H_1$  (computing the average mean of all four the constructs) are the following:

**Table 4.24:** Statistics of the t-test on communication satisfaction according to the overall mean of all four constructs

**Communication satisfaction**

N Obs	Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev	T	Prob> T
209	COM_CLIM	209	49.5650161	16.4756958	43.4915244	0.0001
	SUP_COMM	209	56.2715587	24.3967058	33.3450137	0.0001
	ORG_INT	209	54.5708692	23.4546946	33.6359912	0.0001
	COMM_MED	209	59.0873860	13.5652758	62.9708120	0.0001
	OVERALL	209	54.8737075	13.0585714	60.7493700	0.0001
	HCOP_CLI	209	-20.4349839	16.4756958	-17.9309656	0.0001
	HSUP_COM	209	-13.7284413	24.3967058	-8.1351054	0.0001
	HORG_INT	209	-15.4291308	23.4546946	-9.5100943	0.0001
	HCOP_MED	209	-10.9126140	13.5652758	-11.6298285	0.0001
	HOVERALL	209	-15.1262925	13.0585714	-16.7459569	0.0001

According to the above, the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility is interpreted to be 54.9%.

- Because the t-test for equal variances indicates a probability value less than 0.05:  $\text{Prob}>|T| = 0.0001$  (sum of one tail) the null hypothesis was rejected.
- Because of the strong evidence against the null hypothesis, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, namely that the benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than the average response on communication satisfaction (54.9%).
- According to the statistics indicated in Table 4.24, the benchmark of 70% was indeed 15.1% higher than the average response of employees on job levels K to P of The Utility, (when summing the means of the four constructs of communication satisfaction and computing an average) which came to 54.9%.

**The conclusion is therefore reached that insufficient communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.**

2. The findings of  $H_1$ , tested based on measurement item F56, are the following:

Table 4.25: Statistics of the t-test on communication satisfaction (measurement item F56)

Communication satisfaction

N Obs	Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev	T	Prob> T
209	F56	197	51.7918782	31.7680101	22.8825680	0.0001
	HYP_56	197	-18.2081218	31.7680101	-8.0446703	0.0001

According to the above, the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility is interpreted to be 51.8%.

- Because the t-test for equal variances indicates a probability value less than 0.05:  $\text{Prob}>|T| = 0.0001$  (sum of one tail) the null hypothesis was rejected.
- Because of the strong evidence against the null hypothesis, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, namely that the benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than the average response on communication satisfaction.
- According to the statistics indicated in Table 4.25, the benchmark of 70% was indeed 18.2% higher than the average response of employees' on job levels K to P of The Utility, indicated as 51.8%.

The conclusion is therefore reached that insufficient communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.

#### 4.3.8 Hypothesis 2 (communication climate)

Relevant to Primary Objective 2,  $H_2$  tested *the extent to which there is satisfaction with regard to communication climate amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.*

The findings of  $H_2$  are presented and discussed below.

Hypotheses		Findings
$H_0$	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>communication climate</u> and the benchmark of 70%.	Rejected
$H_2$	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>communication climate</u> .	Accepted

Table 4.26: Statistics of the t-test on communication climate's measurement items

Communication climate

N Obs	Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev	T	Prob> T
209	B1	209	58.2392344	37.4444485	22.4854385	0.0001
	B3	200	52.2400000	35.5406541	20.7870447	0.0001
	B4	205	54.0292683	36.1072629	21.4245372	0.0001
	B6	203	52.2758621	37.2924323	19.9723199	0.0001
	B7	195	45.3435897	35.4996718	17.8364683	0.0001
	F55A	209	50.1196172	29.4682040	24.5882274	0.0001
	F55B	209	51.6746411	27.9003960	26.7756638	0.0001
	F55C	209	46.4114833	27.7184169	24.2063979	0.0001
	F55D	209	60.5263158	24.4499199	35.7882071	0.0001
	F55E	209	57.8947368	25.3080715	33.0714453	0.0001
	F55F	209	60.4066986	24.8060196	35.2047416	0.0001
	F55G	209	61.8421053	23.5202234	38.0115838	0.0001
	F55H	209	56.3397129	25.5680540	31.8559160	0.0001
	F55I	209	59.4497608	27.7966277	30.9194061	0.0001
	F56	197	51.7918782	31.7680101	22.8825680	0.0001
	HYP_B1	209	-11.7607656	37.4444485	-4.5406842	0.0001
	HYP_B3	200	-17.7600000	35.5406541	-7.0669585	0.0001
	HYP_B4	205	-15.9707317	36.1072629	-6.3329663	0.0001
	HYP_B6	203	-17.7241379	37.2924323	-6.7716177	0.0001
	HYP_B7	195	-24.6564103	35.4996718	-9.6989075	0.0001
	HYP_F55A	209	-19.8803828	29.4682040	-9.7531346	0.0001
	HYP_F55B	209	-18.3253589	27.9003960	-9.4954437	0.0001
	HYP_F55C	209	-23.5885167	27.7184169	-12.3028394	0.0001
	HYP_F55D	209	-9.4736842	24.4499199	-5.6016324	0.0001
	HYP_F55E	209	-12.1052632	25.3080715	-6.9149386	0.0001
	HYP_F55F	209	-9.5933014	24.8060196	-5.5909312	0.0001
	HYP_F55G	209	-8.1578947	23.5202234	-5.0142940	0.0001
	HYP_F55H	209	-13.6602871	25.5680540	-7.7238760	0.0001
	HYP_F55I	209	-10.5502392	27.7966277	-5.4871059	0.0001
	HYP_F56	197	-18.2081218	31.7680101	-8.0446703	0.0001
	CLIMATE	209	54.4883310	16.8188465	46.8360695	0.0001
	HCLIMATE	209	-15.5116690	16.8188465	-13.3332329	0.0001

According to the above, the extent to which communication climate exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility is interpreted to be 54.5%.

- Because the t-test for equal variances indicates a probability value less than 0.05: Prob>|T| = 0.0001 (sum of one tail) the null hypothesis was rejected.
- Because of the strong evidence against the null hypothesis, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, namely that the benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than the average response on communication climate.
- According to the statistics indicated in Table 4.26, the benchmark of 70% was indeed 15.5% higher than the average response of employees' on job levels K to P of The Utility on the construct of communication climate (54.5%).

**The conclusion is therefore reached that insufficient satisfaction with communication climate exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.**

### 4.3.9 Hypothesis 3 (supervisory communication)

Relevant to Primary Objective 2,  $H_3$  tested *the extent to which there is satisfaction with regard to supervisory communication amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility*. The findings of  $H_3$  are presented and discussed below.

Hypotheses		Findings
$H_0$	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and the benchmark of 70%.	Rejected
$H_3$	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> .	Accepted

Table 4.27: Statistics of the t-test on supervisory communication's measurement items

N Obs	Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev	T	Prob> T
209	D15	169	49.2248521	38.7414703	16.5177798	0.0001
	D16	193	52.5233161	32.6675286	22.3364686	0.0001
	D18	200	61.6300000	34.6252457	25.1718017	0.0001
	D19	204	66.6372549	33.1877149	28.6783943	0.0001
	D20	200	62.7550000	32.0452722	27.6948723	0.0001
	D21	200	54.9100000	37.1117002	20.9245242	0.0001
	D22	194	49.1752577	34.7316911	19.7206661	0.0001
	D23	196	54.0051020	34.8633225	21.6867290	0.0001
	HYP_D15	169	-20.7751479	38.7414703	-6.9712616	0.0001
	HYP_D16	193	-17.4766839	32.6675286	-7.4322688	0.0001
	HYP_D18	200	-8.3700000	34.6252457	-3.4185945	0.0008
	HYP_D19	204	-3.3627451	33.1877149	-1.4472104	0.1494
	HYP_D20	200	-7.2450000	32.0452722	-3.1973444	0.0016
	HYP_D21	200	-15.0900000	37.1117002	-5.7503382	0.0001
	HYP_D22	194	-20.8247423	34.7316911	-8.3513093	0.0001
	HYP_D23	196	-15.9948980	34.8633225	-6.4230416	0.0001
	SUP_COM	205	55.3891057	26.4425030	29.9915369	0.0001
	HSUP_COM	205	-14.6108943	26.4425030	-7.9113604	0.0001

According to the above, the extent to which supervisory communication exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility is interpreted to be 55.4%.

- Because the t-test for equal variances indicates a probability value less than 0.05:  $\text{Prob}>|T| = 0.0001$  (sum of one tail) the null hypothesis was rejected.
- Because of the strong evidence against the null hypothesis, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, namely that the benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than the average response on supervisory communication.
- According to the statistics indicated in Table 4.27, the benchmark of 70% was indeed 14.6% higher than the average response of employees' on job levels K to P of The Utility on the construct of supervisory communication (55.4%).

The conclusion is therefore reached that insufficient satisfaction with supervisory communication exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.

### 4.3.10 Hypothesis 4 (organisational integration)

Relevant to Primary Objective 2,  $H_4$  tested *the extent to which there is satisfaction with regard to organisational integration amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.*

The findings of  $H_4$  are presented and discussed below.

Hypotheses		Findings
$H_0$	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>organisational integration</u> and the benchmark of 70%.	Rejected
$H_4$	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>organisational integration</u> .	Accepted

Table 4.28: Statistics of the t-test on organisational integration's measurement items

Organisational integration

N Obs	Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev	T	Prob> T
209	B1	209	58.2392344	37.4444485	22.4854385	0.0001
	B4	205	54.0292683	36.1072629	21.4245372	0.0001
	C12	198	51.5757576	36.0287789	20.1432094	0.0001
	HYP_B1	209	-11.7607656	37.4444485	-4.5406842	0.0001
	HYP_B4	205	-15.9707317	36.1072629	-6.3329663	0.0001
	HYP_C12	198	-18.4242424	36.0287789	-7.1956941	0.0001
	ORG_INT	209	54.7488038	24.0312804	32.9360011	0.0001
	HORG_INT	209	-15.2511962	24.0312804	-9.1748747	0.0001

According to the above, the extent to which organisational integration exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility is interpreted to be 54.7%.

- Because the t-test for equal variances indicates a probability value less than 0.05:  $\text{Prob}>|T| = 0.0001$  (sum of one tail) the null hypothesis was rejected.
- Because of the strong evidence against the null hypothesis, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, namely that the benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than the average response on organisational integration.
- According to the statistics indicated in Table 4.28, the benchmark of 70% was indeed 15.3% higher than the average response of employees' on job levels K to P of The Utility on the construct of organisational integration (54.7%).

**The conclusion is therefore reached that insufficient satisfaction with organisational integration exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.**

### 4.3.11 Hypothesis 5 (media quality)

Relevant to Primary Objective 2,  $H_5$  tested *the extent to which there is satisfaction with regard to media quality amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.*

The findings of  $H_5$  are presented and discussed below.

Hypotheses		Findings
$H_0$	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>media quality</u> and the benchmark of 70%.	Rejected
$H_5$	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>media quality</u> .	Accepted

Table 4.29: Statistics of the t-test on media quality's measurement items

#### Media quality

N Obs	variable	N	Mean	Std Dev	T	Prob> T
209	C10	201	50.3034826	36.4626170	19.5590720	0.0001
	E24	202	62.0495050	27.1758146	32.4512503	0.0001
	E25	199	47.0000000	31.9126016	20.7760119	0.0001
	E26	204	69.0833333	33.6664004	29.3083712	0.0001
	E27	201	64.4925373	31.7487196	28.7992566	0.0001
	E28	201	68.3233831	29.6924216	32.6228405	0.0001
	E29	204	57.9852941	30.5663258	27.0950346	0.0001
	E30	208	70.2355769	20.0578218	50.5015901	0.0001
	E31	169	46.6035503	35.5832724	17.0261506	0.0001
	E32	191	49.0000000	28.3114260	23.9194406	0.0001
	E33	193	50.2383420	27.6150092	25.2736962	0.0001
	E34	205	74.6439024	24.5227990	43.5814051	0.0001
	E35	205	68.5853659	27.4986413	35.7106005	0.0001
	E36	207	69.2608696	25.8637124	38.5285133	0.0001
	E43	197	43.5583756	29.6729261	20.6036619	0.0001
	E44	204	67.1862745	26.6917195	35.9516719	0.0001
	E45	201	74.7761194	24.3122320	43.6049828	0.0001
	E46	191	62.7853403	30.0975781	28.8299166	0.0001
	E47	194	63.7628866	28.8665944	30.7661593	0.0001
	E48	198	54.5101010	29.7876989	25.7497269	0.0001
	E49	199	49.6582915	29.7014406	23.5852670	0.0001
	E50	196	63.0663265	32.5571795	27.1193201	0.0001
	E51	201	63.5223881	25.4631252	35.3682148	0.0001
	E52	195	51.9589744	31.3343848	23.1556354	0.0001
	E54	203	37.6896552	33.5146967	16.0226701	0.0001
	HYP_C10	201	-19.6965174	36.4626170	-7.6584281	0.0001
	HYP_E24	202	-7.9504950	27.1758146	-4.1580268	0.0001
	HYP_E25	199	-23.0000000	31.9126016	-10.1669846	0.0001
	HYP_E26	204	-0.9166667	33.6664004	-0.3888927	0.6978
	HYP_E27	201	-5.5074627	31.7487196	-2.4593672	0.0148
	HYP_E28	201	-1.6766169	29.6924216	-0.8005459	0.4243
	HYP_E29	204	-12.0147059	30.5663258	-5.6141626	0.0001
	HYP_E30	208	0.2355769	20.0578218	0.1693872	0.8657
	HYP_E31	169	-23.3964497	35.5832724	-8.5476637	0.0001
	HYP_E32	191	-21.0000000	28.3114260	-10.2511888	0.0001
	HYP_E33	193	-19.7616580	27.6150092	-9.9416128	0.0001

Obs	Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev	T	Prob> T
	HYP_E34	205	4.6439024	24.5227990	2.7113774	0.0073
	HYP_E35	205	-1.4146341	27.4986413	-0.7365629	0.4622
	HYP_E36	207	-0.7391304	25.8637124	-0.4111643	0.6814
	HYP_E43	197	-26.4416244	29.6729261	-12.5072223	0.0001
	HYP_E44	204	-2.8137255	26.6917195	-1.5056369	0.1337
	HYP_E45	201	4.7761194	24.3122320	2.7851486	0.0059
	HYP_E46	191	-7.2146597	30.0975781	-3.3128440	0.0011
	HYP_E47	194	-6.2371134	28.8665944	-3.0094626	0.0030
	HYP_E48	198	-15.4898990	29.7876989	-7.3171882	0.0001
	HYP_E49	199	-20.3417085	29.7014406	-9.6613196	0.0001
	HYP_E50	196	-6.9336735	32.5571795	-2.9815675	0.0032
	HYP_E51	201	-6.4776119	25.4631252	-3.6066272	0.0004
	HYP_E52	195	-18.0410256	31.3343848	-8.0400242	0.0001
	HYP_E54	203	-32.3103448	33.5146967	-13.7358114	0.0001
	MEDIA_Q	209	58.9776398	14.9924413	56.8706476	0.0001
	HMEDIA_Q	209	-11.0223602	14.9924413	-10.6285834	0.0001

According to the above, the extent to which media quality exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility is interpreted to be 59%.

- Because the t-test for equal variances indicates a probability value less than 0.05:  $\text{Prob}>|T| = 0.0001$  (sum of one tail) the null hypothesis was rejected.
- Because of the strong evidence against the null hypothesis, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, namely that the benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than the average response on media quality.
- According to the statistics indicated in Table 4.29, the benchmark of 70% was indeed 11% higher than the average response of employees on job levels K to P of The Utility on the construct of media quality (59%).

**The conclusion is therefore reached that insufficient satisfaction with media quality exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.**

### 4.3.12 Hypothesis 6 (supervisory communication versus communication climate)

Relevant to a secondary objective of Primary Objective 2,  $H_6$  tested *whether employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are more satisfied with supervisory communication than with communication climate.*

The findings of  $H_6$  are presented and discussed below.

Hypotheses		Findings
• $H_0$	On job levels K to P of the Utility, there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and their satisfaction with <u>communication climate</u> .	Accepted
• $H_6$	On job levels K to P of the Utility, employee satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> is significantly higher than with <u>communication climate</u> .	Rejected

Table 4.30: Statistics of the t-test comparing supervisory communication with communication climate

CONSTR	N	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error	Minimum	Maximum
Comm Climate	209	54.48833097	16.81884648	1.16338394	13.33333333	98.33333333
Sup Comm	205	55.38910569	26.44250298	1.84682452	0.00000000	100.00000000

Variances	T	DF	Prob> T
Unequal	-0.4127	344.8	0.6801
Equal	-0.4144	412.0	0.6788

The above is interpreted as no significant difference existing between the satisfaction of employees on job levels K to P with supervisory communication and their satisfaction with the communication climate. This is because:

- the null hypothesis was accepted, as the ttest for equal variances indicated a probability value higher than 0.05: Prob>|T| = 0.6788 (sum of one tail).

The conclusion is therefore reached that there is no significant difference between employees job levels K to P of The Utility's satisfaction with supervisory communication and their satisfaction with the communication climate.

### 4.3.13 Hypothesis 7 (supervisory communication versus organisational integration)

Relevant to a secondary objective of Primary Objective 2, H<sub>7</sub> tested *whether employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are more satisfied with supervisory communication than with organisational integration.*

The findings of H<sub>7</sub> are presented and discussed below.

Hypotheses		Findings
• H <sub>0</sub>	On job levels K to P of the Utility, there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and their satisfaction with <u>organisational integration</u> .	Accepted
• H <sub>7</sub>	On job levels K to P of the Utility, employee satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> is significantly higher than with <u>organisational integration</u> .	Rejected

Table 4.31: Statistics of the t-test comparing supervisory communication with organisational integration

CONSTR	N	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error	Minimum	Maximum
Org Integration	209	54.74880383	24.03128036	1.66227842	0	100.00000000
Sup Comm	205	55.38910569	26.44250298	1.84682452	0	100.00000000
Variances	T	DF	Prob> T			
Unequal	-0.2577	406.7	0.7968			
Equal	-0.2579	412.0	0.7966			

The above is interpreted as no significant difference existing between the satisfaction of employees on job levels K to P with supervisory communication and their satisfaction with the organisational integration. This is because:

- the null hypothesis was accepted, as the t-test for equal variances indicated a probability value higher than 0.05: Prob>|T| = 0.7966 (sum of one tail).

**The conclusion is therefore reached that there is no significant difference between employees job levels K to P of The Utility's satisfaction with supervisory communication and their satisfaction with the organisational integration.**

### 4.3.14 Hypothesis 8 (supervisory communication versus media quality)

Relevant to a secondary objective of Primary Objective 2,  $H_8$  tested whether employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are more satisfied with supervisory communication than with media quality.

The findings of  $H_8$  are presented and discussed below.

Hypotheses		Findings
• $H_0$	On job levels K to P of the Utility, there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and their satisfaction with <u>media quality</u> .	Accepted
• $H_8$	On job levels K to P of the Utility, employee satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> is significantly higher than with <u>media quality</u> .	Rejected

Table 4.32: Statistics of the t-test comparing supervisory communication with media quality

CONSTR	N	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error	Minimum	Maximum
Media Quality	209	58.97763976	14.99244134	1.03704885	0	95.81250000
Sup Comm	205	55.38910569	26.44250298	1.84682452	0	100.00000000

	T	DF	Prob> T
Unequal	1.6942	321.6	0.0912
Equal	1.7027	412.0	0.0894

The above is interpreted as no significant difference existing between the satisfaction of employees on job levels K to P with supervisory communication and their satisfaction with the media quality.

This is because:

- the null hypothesis was accepted, as the ttest for equal variances indicated a probability value higher than 0.05: Prob>|T| = 0.0894 (sum of one tail).

The conclusion is therefore reached that there is no significant difference between employees job levels K to P of The Utility's satisfaction with supervisory communication and their satisfaction with the media quality.

#### 4.3.15 Conclusion

Based on the statistical analysis above, it is concluded that the null hypotheses relevant to H<sub>1</sub> to H<sub>5</sub> were all rejected. With regards to the context of this study, the following interpretation is provided:

- H<sub>1</sub>, which tested the major concept of employee communication satisfaction, found that there is insufficient employee satisfaction with communication (54.9% in the first instance of testing, and 51.8% in the second instance. These findings are relatively close, considered that they were obtained through different measurement questions).
- H<sub>2</sub>, which tested employee satisfaction with the construct of communication climate, found that there is insufficient employee satisfaction with communication climate (54.5%).
- H<sub>3</sub>, which tested employee satisfaction with the construct of supervisory communication, found that there is insufficient employee satisfaction with supervisory communication (55.4%).
- H<sub>4</sub>, which tested employee satisfaction with the construct of organisational integration, found that there is insufficient employee satisfaction with organisational integration (54.7%).
- H<sub>5</sub>, which tested employee satisfaction with the construct of media quality, found that there is insufficient employee satisfaction with media quality (59%).

Based on the statistical analysis above, it is concluded that the null hypotheses relevant to H<sub>6</sub> to H<sub>8</sub> were all accepted. With regards to the context of this study, the following interpretation is provided:

- H<sub>6</sub>, found that there is no significant difference between employee satisfaction with supervisory communication and communication climate.
- H<sub>7</sub>, found that there is no significant difference between employee satisfaction with supervisory communication and organisational integration.
- H<sub>8</sub>, found that there is no significant difference between employee satisfaction with supervisory communication and media quality.

## 4.4 Findings of Phase 3: Focus Communication Audit (FCA™)

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Phase 3 set out to achieve Primary Objective 3:

*'To determine quantitatively the perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication of line managers, according to The Utility's Top Management and Communication Officers.'*

The FCA™ quantitative rank ordering tool was used to obtain data to the following measurement question: "Which of the following skills would most probably improve the communication of line managers?" Respondents were asked to rank-order a number of communication-related variables according to perceived importance. The analysis was conducted by using the statistical package SAS.

Phase 3 required participation from all the Top Managers and all the Site Communication Officers in The Utility. The total number of Top Managers and Site Communication Officers to whom the FCA™ was presented equalled 18. However, only 16 of the 18 FCA™ rank ordering assessments conducted were sufficiently consistent to consider in the final analysis

The findings of the FCA™ rank ordering tool are presented in two sections:

- A descriptive statistical analysis, which presents the order of importance of specific communication skills, as ranked by the Top Management group and the Site Communication Officers.
- An inferential statistical analysis, which presents the findings on the consistency and correlation tests. It also includes the findings of whether active listening is perceived as being more important than providing guidance in improving the communication skills of line managers, according to Top Management and the Site Communication Officers as a group.

The achievement of the secondary objectives and the testing of the corresponding hypotheses are discussed under the relevant sections headings.

## DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FINDINGS

This section presents the findings with regard to the concept supervisory communication skills, as measured by the Focus Communication Audit (FCA™) rank ordering instrument. It describes the *order of importance of the specific communication skills selected*, as set out in Primary Objective 3.

The FCA™ computerised issue-rank ordering tool was used to prioritise specific communication skills required for effective supervisory communication. This computerised methodology breaks down the list of variables to be ranked into sub-groups (known as 'incomplete blocks'). The 'incomplete blocks' technique works with a total of 13 variables and a maximum of 15 respondents. The respondent cannot see the whole list, and items are repeated in a controlled way to measure consistency. Every item is presented to the interviewee an equal number of times to prevent bias. It is in this way that the variables are ranked.

### 4.4.1 Priorities of the Top Management group

Table 4.33 indicates the Top Managers' rank ordering for the communication variables based on the measurement question "*Which of the following skills would most probably improve the communication of line managers?*"

A "low priority" in this context does not mean that the particular skill is not worthy of attention. It serves to give an understanding of the way in which the respondents view the above variables relative to each other and is very useful in formulating strategies and allocating resources.

Table 4.33: Communication priorities of the Top Management group

Priorities	Communication Variable	Rank Order
Top	Encouraging input	1.0
	Active listening	2.0
	Providing guidance	3.0
	Encouraging feedback	4.0
Mid Range	Acting on feedback	5.0
	Facilitating cohesion	6.0
	Clarifying meaning	7.0
	Motivating employees	8.0
	Conducting effective meetings	9.0
Lower Range	Channel information to those accountable	10.0
	Mentoring	11.5
	Managing conflict	11.5
	Demonstrating empathy	13.0

### Discussion

Table 4.33 indicates that Top Management is of the opinion that the following communication skills are the most important in probably improving the communication of line managers:

- Encouraging input
- Active listening
- Providing guidance
- Encouraging feedback

Top Management also regards the communication skills mentioned below as important in improving the communication of line managers but not to the same degree as those listed above.

- Acting on feedback
- Facilitating cohesion
- Clarifying meaning
- Motivating employees
- Conducting effective meetings

Top Management finds the communication skills mentioned below to be the least important in probably improving the communication of line managers.

- Channelling information to those accountable
- Mentoring
- Managing conflict
- Demonstrating empathy

#### 4.4.2 Priorities of the Site Communication Officer group

Table 4.34 indicates the Site Communication Officers' rank ordering for the communication variables based on the measurement question "Which of the following skills would most probably improve the communication of line managers?"

Table 4.34: Communication Priorities of the Site Communication Officers

Priorities	Communication Variable	Rank Order
Top	Conducting effective meetings	1.0
	Acting on feedback	2.0
	Providing guidance	3.0
	Clarifying meaning	4.0
Mid Range	Encouraging input	5.0
	Active listening	6.0
	Encouraging feedback	7.0
	Facilitating cohesion	8.0
	Motivating employees	9.0
Lower Range	Channel information to those accountable	10.0
	Mentoring	11.5
	Managing conflict	11.5
	Demonstrating empathy	13.0

A "low priority" in this context does not mean that the particular skill is not worthy of attention. It only serves to give an understanding of the way in which the respondents view the above variables relative to each other and is very useful in formulating key messages.

## Discussion

Table 4.34 indicates that the Site Communication Officers are of the opinion that the following communication skills are the most important in probably improving the communication of line-managers:

- Conducting of meetings
- Acting on feedback
- Providing guidance
- Clarifying meaning

Site Communication Officers are of the opinion that the communication skills below are also important in improving the communication of line managers but not to the same degree as those listed above.

- Encouraging input
- Active listening
- Encouraging feedback
- Facilitating cohesion
- Motivating employees

Site Communication Officers find the communication skills mentioned below to be the least important in probably improving the communication of line managers.

- Channel information to those accountable
- Mentoring
- Managing conflict
- Demonstrating empathy

#### 4.4.3 Comparison of communication skill priorities between the Top Management group and the Site Communication Officer group

Table 4.35: Comparison of communication skill priorities between the two groups in the FCA sample

Priorities	Communication Variable	Top Management's Rank Order	Site Com Officers Rank Order
Top	Encouraging input	1.0	5.0
	Active listening	2.0	6.0
	Providing guidance	3.0	3.0
	Encouraging feedback	4.0	7.0
Mid Range	Acting on feedback	5.0	2.0
	Facilitating cohesion	6.0	8.0
	Clarifying meaning	7.0	4.0
	Motivating employees	8.0	9.0
	Conducting effective meetings	9.0	1.0
Lower Range	Channel information to those accountable	10.0	10.0
	Mentoring	11.5	11.5
	Managing conflict	11.5	11.5
	Demonstrating empathy	13.0	13.0

#### Discussion

The discussion below should not be seen as a benchmark of the Top Management group's rank ordering against that of the Site Communication Officers' rank order, but as a comparison to reflect different points of view.

Based on Table 4.35, the following conclusions can be made:

- There is a major discrepancy between how the Top Management group (rank order 1.0) and the Site Communication Officers group (rank order 9.0) view the *encouragement of input*. Site Communication Officers (rank order 1.0) view the *effective conducting of meetings* as the communication skill that would most probably improve the communication of line managers. *Effective conducting of meetings* received a low rank order of 9.0 from the Top Management group.
- The Top Management group (2.0) views *active listening* (rank order 2.0) as more important than do the Site Communication Officers group (rank order 6.0).
- Both groups are in agreement that *providing guidance* (rank order 3.0) is an important variable in increasing the communication skills of line managers.

- The Site Communication Officers group (rank order 7.0) does not see *the encouragement of feedback* to be as important as the Top Management group (rank order 4.0).
- Another discrepancy between the two clusters is their rank ordering of *the clarification of meaning* that indicates a rank order difference of 3.0 (Top Management = 7.00 versus Site Communication Officers = 4.00).
- It is interesting to note that both the Top Management group and the Site Communication Officers group are in agreement that the lower range priorities (*channelling information to those accountable, mentoring, managing conflict and demonstrating empathy*) are not as important as the mid-range and top priorities in improving the communication abilities of line managers.

## INFERENCEAL STATISTICS FINDINGS

This section presents the findings of the inferential statistics analysis with regard to the concept supervisory communication skills as measured by the Focus Communication Audit (FCA™) rank ordering instrument. Relating to Primary Objective 3, it describes *whether active listening is perceived as being more important than providing guidance in improving the communication skills of line managers*.

Order of findings		Number of corresponding sub-section
• Findings of the correlation and consistency of the Top Management group's responses		4.4.4.1
• Findings of the correlation and consistency of the Site Communication Officers group's responses		4.4.4.2
Hypotheses testing	Number of hypothesis	
• Findings of the importance of <u>active listening</u> versus <u>providing guidance</u> in the improvement of the communication skills of line managers.	$H_9$	4.4.5

#### 4.4.4 Findings of correlation and consistency tests

To test correlation and consistency, the FCA™ methodology uses statistical analyses such as Spearman's Rho and Kendall's W.

Spearman Rank Order Correlation (Spearman's Rho) is used to compare two respondents with each other and to compare one respondent with the group. It is a popular ordinal measure. It correlates ranks between ordered variables (Cooper & Schindler, 2003:599). When dealing with a situation in which both variables are ordinal, the strength of the association as well as its guidance can be investigated. Spearman's Rho ranges from -1 to +1, with values close to zero indicating little or no association between the variables concerned (Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 2000:201). Correlation measurement +1.0 represents total correlation (agreement) and -1.0 represents total disagreement.

The Kendall Coefficient of Concordance (Kendall's W) calculates the consistency of the individuals' responses (i.e. reliability), reported here as a percentage. It is a technique that can be used in studies involving rankings made by independent respondents and is based on the concept of concordant and discordant pairs. It does not require the assumption of bivariate normal distribution, yet by incorporating order, it produces a range from a perfect negative relationship (-1.0 or 0%) to a perfect positive relationship (+1.0 or 100%). Within this range, a coefficient with a larger magnitude (absolute value of measure) is interpreted as having a stronger relationship.

The outcome of the Spearman's Rho and Kendall's W tests can be seen below.

##### 4.4.4.1 Correlation and consistency of the Top Management group's responses

Table 4.36: Correlation and consistency of the Top Management group's responses

Respondent	A Correlation (Spearman's Rho)	B Consistency (%) (Kendall's W)
J	0.894	70
H	0.775	90
Q	0.743	92
M	0.602	98
L	0.556	89
N	0.499	90
O	0.467	91
P	0.423	86
I	0.409	88
K	0.364	92
R	-0.066	82
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>0.515</b>	<b>88</b>

In Table 4.36:

- Spearman's Rho = 0.515, which indicates positive agreement within the group as a whole. The respondents' scores range from +0.894 (high agreement) to -0.066 (very low agreement).
- Kendall's W = 88%, which indicates a strong relationship within the group as a whole. Consistency ranges from 98% to 70%.

This is interpreted as meaning that there is agreement amongst the Top Managers about the rank order of priorities and that they have been consistent with their rank ordering.

#### 4.4.4.2 Correlation and consistency of the Site Communication Officer group's responses

Table 4.37: Correlation and consistency of the Site Communication Officers

Respondent	A Correlation (Spearman's Rho)	B Consistency (%) (Kendall's W)
C	0.739	75
F	0.723	84
D	0.643	87
G	0.309	77
B	0.224	93
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>0.5276</b>	<b>83.2</b>

In Table 4.37:

- Spearman's Rho = 0.5276, which indicates relative positive agreement within the group as a whole. The respondents' scores range from +0.739 (moderate agreement) to +0.224 (low agreement).
- Kendall's W = 83.2%, which indicates a strong relationship within the group as a whole. Consistency ranges from 93% to 75%.

This is interpreted as meaning that there is agreement amongst the Site Communication Officers about the rank order of priorities and that they have been consistent with their rank ordering.

## Hypothesis testing

The results of testing the last one of the nine hypotheses formulated in Chapter 1 are discussed below.  $H_9$  tested the importance of the major concept of supervisory communication skills.

The particular test used for this hypothesis ( $H_9$ ) is discussed below.

### 4.4.5 Hypothesis 9

Relevant to a secondary objective of Primary Objective 3,  $H_9$  tests *whether active listening is perceived as being more important than providing guidance in improving the communication skills of line managers.*

The findings of  $H_9$  are presented and discussed below.

Hypotheses		Findings
$H_0$	According to the perceptions of The Utility's Top Management and Communication Officers as a group, there is no significant difference between the importance of <u>active listening</u> and <u>providing guidance</u> in improving the communication skills of line managers.	<b>Accepted</b>
$H_9$	According to the perceptions of The Utility's Top Management and Communication Officers as a group, <u>active listening</u> is significantly more important than <u>providing guidance</u> in improving the communication skills of line managers.	<b>Rejected</b>

Using the Mann-Whitney  $U$  test (Wilcoxon 2 Sample Test) to test for statistical differences between active listening and providing guidance, the P-value of **0.6336** is bigger than 0.05 and the null hypothesis could be accepted. The detailed statistical analysis can be seen in Table 4.38.

Table 4.38: Statistics of the Wilcoxon 2 Sample Test on supervisory communication skills

Supervisory communication skills

Wilcoxon Scores (Rank Sums) for Variable RATING  
Classified by Variable ITEM

ITEM	N	Sum of Scores	Expected Under H0	Std Dev Under H0	Mean Score
Active Listening	16	251.0	264.0	26.2272943	15.6875000
Provide Guidance	16	277.0	264.0	26.2272943	17.3125000

Average Scores were used for Ties

Wilcoxon 2-Sample Test (Normal Approximation)  
(with Continuity Correction of .5)

S= 251.000                      Z= -.476603                      Prob > |Z| = 0.6336

T-Test approx. Significance = 0.6370

**The hypothesis testing procedure on supervisory communication skills led to the conclusion that there is no significant difference between the importance of active listening and providing guidance in improving the communication skills of line managers, according to the perceptions of The Utility’s Top Management and Communication Officers as a group.**

## 4.5 Summary of the findings

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The Utility’s management was not informed as to the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst their employees, or the perceived importance of which communication skills of supervisors needed to be improved. This study set out to clarify these issues and offer solutions through a qualitative and a quantitative research approach. It was accomplished by setting three primary objectives, achieved by means of exploration as well as the testing of nine hypotheses.

The findings are summarised below.

### 4.5.1 Phase 1: Qualitative research

The qualitative data analysis of the focus groups with regard to propositions P<sub>1</sub> to P<sub>4</sub> led to the achievement of Primary Objective 1, namely *that in most instances, employees on job levels H, I and J of The Utility, are not totally satisfied with communication*. The conclusion was reached based on the following:

- Employees were mostly dissatisfied with the communication climate. Employees on these job levels experience communication as being mostly late, untrustworthy, not credible and not conducive to commitment. They furthermore see their supervisors and Site Communication Officers as barriers to communication.
- Employees on these job levels were mostly dissatisfied with supervisory communication as the supervisors do not convey their messages to management. These participants also do not get feedback from supervisors.
- These employees were mostly dissatisfied with organisational integration. They feel no affinity with The Utility's vision, are not informed about their job expectations and do not receive job performance evaluations.
- Employees were mostly dissatisfied with media quality. On these job levels, employees experience communication as being mostly inaccurate, incomprehensible and inconsistent. They furthermore receive minimal information that they perceive as relevant.

Verbal communication mediums also do not contribute to satisfaction with media quality. If these employees are invited to meetings (other gatherings), the latter are not participative. There is also lack of a communication medium to meet the needs of illiterate employees.

Although written communication mediums are received, in most instances they are not understood and seen to be irrelevant.

#### **4.5.2 Phase 2: Quantitative research**

The quantitative analysis of the questionnaire data led to the achievement of Primary Objective 2.

The descriptive statistics indicated that employees are slightly satisfied with three of the four constructs of communication satisfaction, namely supervisory communication, organisational integration and media quality. They are, however, dissatisfied with the communication climate. Based on the inferential statistics, it is concluded that insufficient communication satisfaction exist amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.

The conclusions above were reached based on the following:

#### 4.5.2.1 Findings of descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics conducted on the data obtained by means of the questionnaire, indicated the findings below. A mean score closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were in *agreement* with the measurement item or statement, i.e. these responses have a tendency towards being more 'positive'. The mean scores closer to five (5) indicate respondents' *disagreement* with the statement, i.e. these responses have a tendency towards being more 'negative'.

- With an overall mean score of 2.6, employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are slightly dissatisfied with communication climate.
- With an overall mean score of 2.3, employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are slightly satisfied with supervisory communication.
- With an overall mean score of 2.4, employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are slightly satisfied with organisational integration.
- With an overall mean score of 2.2, employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are slightly satisfied with media quality.

Comparing the overall mean scores of the constructs above, the following comes to light:

- Employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are most satisfied with media quality.
- Employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are least satisfied with communication climate.
- Employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are more satisfied with supervisory communication than with organisational integration.

#### 4.5.2.2 Findings of inferential statistics

Inferential statistics conducted on the data obtained by means of the questionnaire, indicated the following:

- The analysis of  $H_1$  indicated that the benchmark of 70% was significantly higher than the average response on communication satisfaction of employees on job levels K to P of The Utility (51.8%). It is thus concluded that there is insufficient communication satisfaction amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.
- The analysis of  $H_2$  indicated that the benchmark of 70% was significantly higher than the average response on communication climate by employees on job levels K to P of The Utility (54.5%). It is thus concluded that there is insufficient satisfaction with communication climate amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.

- The analysis of  $H_3$  indicated that the benchmark of 70% was significantly higher than the average response on supervisory communication by employees on job levels K to P of The Utility (55.4%). It is thus concluded that there is insufficient satisfaction with supervisory communication amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.
- The analysis of  $H_4$  indicated that the benchmark of 70% was significantly higher than the average response on organisational integration by employees' on job levels K to P of The Utility (54.7%). It is thus concluded that there is insufficient satisfaction with organisational integration amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.
- The analysis of  $H_5$  indicated that the benchmark of 70% was significantly higher than the average response on media quality by employees' on job levels K to P of The Utility (59%). It is thus concluded that there is insufficient satisfaction with media quality amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.
- The analysis of  $H_6$ ,  $H_7$  and  $H_8$  indicated that there is no significant difference between employee satisfaction with supervisory communication and their satisfaction with the communication climate, organisational integration and media quality, amongst employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.

### 4.5.3 Phase 3: Quantitative research

The quantitative data analysis of the Focus Communication Audit (FCA™) led to the achievement of Primary Objective 3: *the perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication of line managers, according to The Utility's Top Management and Site Communication Officers as a group, were quantitatively determined*. Conclusions were reached based on the following:

#### 4.5.3.1 Findings of descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics conducted on the data obtained by means of the FCA™, were indicated in Table 4.35.

The descriptive statistics rank ordered the perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication ability of line managers. The Utility's Top Management considered encouraging input, active listening, providing guidance and encouraging feedback as the most important skills, in that order. Site Communication Officers saw conducting effective meetings, acting on feedback, providing guidance and clarifying meaning as the most important supervisory communication skills.

#### **4.5.3.2 Findings of inferential statistics**

The FCA™ rank ordering tool was used to collect and analyse data in Phase 3. Hypothesis testing indicated the following:

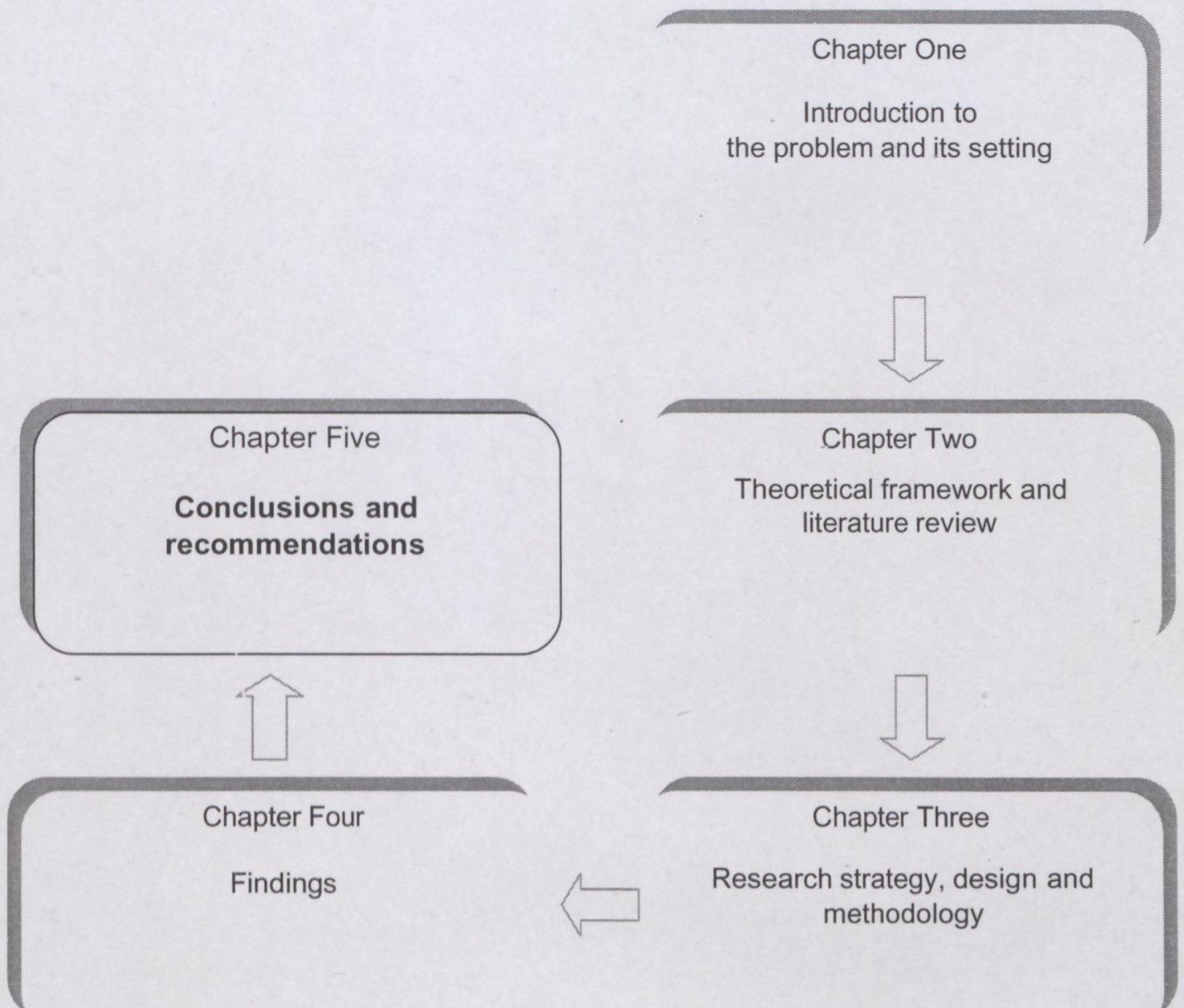
- The analysis of  $H_0$  indicated that there is no significant difference between the importance of active listening and providing guidance in improving the communication skills of line managers, according to the perceptions of The Utility's Top Management and Communication Officers as a group.

### **4.6 Chapter conclusion**

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This internal communication audit had clearly outlined that employee satisfaction with communication does, to a considerable degree, not exist within The Utility. It has been a valuable exercise for The Utility to map out the key areas that need immediate attention, to be addressed through the implementation of an effective internal communication strategy. To this end, Chapter Five presents recommendations based on the research conducted in this study.

## Outline of the research report



*Chapter Five includes the conclusions and recommendations, based on the findings in Chapter Four. Overall conclusions on the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees of The Utility are presented. The perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication ability of line managers is also discussed. In addition, this Chapter suggests further research and describes the limitations of the study.*

## 5.1 Introduction to the problem and its setting

---

In Chapter One, the main problem addressed by this study was stated, namely that top management of The Utility did not know the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst their employees. In providing possible solutions to the main problem, three primary objectives were set, as well as hypotheses to achieve the set objectives.

- **Primary Objective 1** set out:

*'To determine qualitatively the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels H, I and J of The Utility.'*

The secondary objectives relevant to Primary Objective 1 explored the existence of the four selected constructs of communication satisfaction amongst the employees on job levels H, I and J of The Utility. Four propositions were set to achieve Primary Objective 1.

- **Primary Objective 2** set out:

*'To determine quantitatively the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.'*

Seven secondary quantitative objectives were set. The first four related to the extent that employees were satisfied with the four constructs of communication satisfaction. The next three set out to determine whether employees are more satisfied with supervisory communication than with the other three selected constructs.

Eight hypotheses were set to achieve Primary Objective 2 and its secondary objectives.

- **Primary Objective 3** set out:

*"To determine quantitatively the perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication of line managers, according to The Utility's Top Management and Communication Officers.'*

Primary Objective 3 relates to the concept of supervisory communication skills. Two secondary objectives set were to determine the order of importance of the specific communication skills and also whether active listening is perceived as being more important than providing guidance in improving the communication skills of line managers. One hypothesis was set to achieve the secondary objective of determining whether active listening is perceived as being more important than providing guidance in improving the communication skills of line managers.

In the remainder of Chapter One, the Major Concept of communication satisfaction and the Secondary Concept, supervisory communication skills, were clarified. All the constructs of Downs and Hazen's (1977:68) communication satisfaction theory were listed and discussed. Those constructs selected for measurement in this study (communication climate, supervisory communication, organisational integration and media quality) were expanded upon. The importance of supervisory communication skills was also described. The concept of supervisory communication was clarified as the immediate supervisors' vertical communication, which mainly facilitates delegation and reporting functions in an organisation.

## **5.2 Meta-theoretical framework and conceptualisation**

---

Chapter Two provided the theoretical foundation of the study. The domain within which the study was positioned is *communication*, and the sub-domain *management communication*. The meta-theoretical framework for the study is the Excellence theory of public relations and communication management (Dozier *et al*, 1995).

In the literature study, the major concept of communication satisfaction and its constructs were described, as well as the second concept, relating to supervisory communication skills.

The insights obtained in this Chapter were the following:

Firstly, that management's effectiveness can be influenced by the degree to which they contribute to communication satisfaction; that communication is inherent in all leadership functions; and that the quality and effectiveness of management communication can influence the success of the organisation as a whole. Secondly, that the meta-theoretical framework, namely the Excellence approach to public relations and communication management (Dozier *et al*, 1995), is also a core element of excellent organisations. Thirdly, based on management theories, that practice with regard to communication need to be adjusted to ensure increased employee communication satisfaction.

The theories of management communication made it clear that top management should have an understanding of employees' communication needs. The important function of internal communication can be enhanced to satisfy the communication needs of employees, and thereby improve their communication satisfaction. Lastly, that the description of the concepts of communication satisfaction and supervisory communication skills clarified the objectives presented in Chapter One.

The Major Concept of the study, communication satisfaction, is defined by Downs, Hazen, Quiggens and Medley (*in* Downs & Hazen, 1977:68) as a *multi-dimensional, generalised feeling which an employee has towards his total communication environment*. The multi-dimensionality of communication satisfaction resulted in eight distinct primary constructs of the Downs and Hazen Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire. They include communication climate, media quality, organisational integration, personal feedback, job information, supervisory communication, subordinate communication and horizontal communication. The constructs selected for measurement were clarified as follows:

- Communication climate is the general response to the communication environment on an organisational and personal level (Pincus, 1986:399).
- Supervisory communication refers to immediate supervisors' upward and downward communication. It includes supervisors' openness to ideas and willingness to listen (Pincus, 1986:399).
- Organisational integration refers to the degree to which individuals receive information relevant to the organisation and their jobs (Pincus, 1986:399).
- Media quality reflects the degree to which employees perceive major forms of organisational media as functioning effectively (Downs & Hazen, 1977:67).

The second concept of this study is supervisory communication skills. Line managers' and supervisors' communication skills have an impact on the effectiveness of internal communication – from top to bottom. Much emphasis has thus been placed on the communicating abilities of all leaders (Mintzberg; Kanter; Naisbitt, *in* Puth, 2002:12). Supervisory communication refers to immediate supervisors' vertical communication, which mainly facilitates delegation and reporting functions in an organisation.

## 5.3 Overview of findings

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Based on the exploration of the propositions and the testing of hypotheses, the different primary and secondary objectives were achieved. These outcomes are discussed below.

### 5.3.1 Findings of Primary Objective 1

Primary Objective 1 was achieved by determining qualitatively that employees on job levels H, I and J of The Utility are, in most instances, dissatisfied with communication. This was based on the exploration of the propositions below (which related to the corresponding secondary objectives).

#### 5.3.1.1 Findings of secondary objective 1.1

Secondary objective 1.1 set out to explore the extent to which employees on job levels H, I and J are satisfied with the communication climate within The Utility.

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| • P <sub>1</sub> | Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with the <u>communication climate</u> within The Utility. |
|------------------|---|

Based on the exploration and rejection of P<sub>1</sub>, secondary objective 1.1 was achieved by determining qualitatively that employees on job levels H, I and J are mostly dissatisfied with the communication climate within The Utility.

#### 5.3.1.2 Findings of secondary objective 1.2

Secondary objective 1.2 set out to explore the extent to which employees on job levels H, I and J are satisfied with supervisory communication within The Utility.

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| • P <sub>2</sub> | Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with <u>supervisory communication</u> within The Utility. |
|------------------|---|

Based on the exploration and rejection of P<sub>2</sub>, secondary objective 1.2 was achieved by determining qualitatively that employees on job levels H, I and J are mostly dissatisfied with supervisory communication within The Utility.

### 5.3.1.3 Findings of secondary objective 1.3

Secondary objective 1.3 set out to explore the extent to which employees on job levels H, I and J are satisfied with organisational integration within The Utility.

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| • P <sub>3</sub> | Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with <u>organisational integration</u> within The Utility. |
|------------------|--|

Based on the exploration and rejection of P<sub>3</sub>, secondary objective 1.3 was achieved by determining qualitatively that employees on job levels H, I and J are mostly dissatisfied with organisational integration within The Utility.

### 5.3.1.4 Findings of secondary objective 1.4

Secondary objective 1.4 set out to explore the extent to which employees on job levels H, I and J are satisfied with media quality.

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| • P <sub>4</sub> | Employees on job levels H, I and J of the Utility are satisfied with <u>media quality</u> within The Utility. |
|------------------|---|

Based on the exploration and rejection of P<sub>4</sub>, secondary objective 1.4 was achieved by determining qualitatively that employees on job levels H, I and J are mostly dissatisfied with media quality.

## 5.3.2 Findings of Primary Objective 2

Primary Objective 2 was achieved by determining quantitatively that communication satisfaction, to a large extent, does not exist amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility. This was based on testing the hypotheses below, which correspond with Primary Objective 2 and its various secondary objectives.

### 5.3.2.1 Findings of descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics conducted on the data obtained by means of the questionnaire, indicated the findings below. A mean score (measure of central tendency) closer to one (1) indicates that the respondents were in *agreement* with the measurement item or statement, i.e. these responses have a tendency towards being more 'positive'. The mean scores closer to five (5) indicate respondents' *disagreement* with the statement, i.e. these responses have a tendency towards being more 'negative'.

- With an overall mean score of 2.6 employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are slightly dissatisfied with communication climate.
- With an overall mean score of 2.3, employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are slightly satisfied with supervisory communication.
- With an overall mean score of 2.4, employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are slightly satisfied with organisational integration.
- With an overall mean score of 2.2, employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are slightly satisfied with media quality.

Comparing the overall mean scores of the constructs above, the following comes to light:

- Employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are most satisfied with media quality.
- Employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are least satisfied with communication climate.
- Employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are more satisfied with supervisory communication than with organisational integration.

### 5.3.2.2 Hypothesis 1

Primary Objective 2 set out to determine the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility.  $H_1$  tested the Major Concept of employee communication satisfaction.

• $H_0$	There is no significant difference between the average response on <u>communication satisfaction</u> amongst employees on job levels K to P of The Utility and the benchmark of 70%.
• $H_1$	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on <u>communication satisfaction</u> .

Based on the acceptance of  $H_1$ , Primary Objective 2 was achieved. It determined quantitatively that insufficient communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility. This was because the benchmark of 70% was significantly higher than the average response on communication satisfaction. This was true for both tests conducted on  $H_1$ .

- The findings of the first testing of  $H_1$  (computing the average mean of all four the constructs) indicated that the 70% benchmark was 15.1% higher than the average response on communication satisfaction (54.9%).
- The findings of  $H_1$ , tested based on measurement item F56, indicated that the 70% benchmark was 18.2% higher than the average response on communication satisfaction (51.8%).

### 5.3.2.3 Hypothesis 2

As communication satisfaction is multi-dimensional, each of its selected constructs was tested individually. Secondary objective 2.1 set out *to determine the extent to which employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are satisfied with the communication climate within The Utility*. H<sub>2</sub> tested employee satisfaction with the construct of communication climate.

• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>communication climate</u> and the benchmark of 70%.
• H <sub>2</sub>	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>communication climate</u> .

Based on the acceptance of H<sub>2</sub>, secondary objective 2.1 was achieved by determining quantitatively that insufficient satisfaction with regard to communication climate exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility. This was because the benchmark of 70% was significantly higher (15.5%) than the average response on satisfaction with communication climate (54.5%).

### 5.3.2.4 Hypothesis 3

As communication satisfaction is multi-dimensional, each of its selected constructs was tested individually. Secondary objective 2.2 set out *to determine the extent to which employees on job levels K to P of The Utility J are satisfied with supervisory communication within The Utility*. H<sub>3</sub> tested satisfaction with the construct of supervisory communication.

• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and the benchmark of 70%.
• H <sub>3</sub>	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> .

Based on the acceptance of H<sub>3</sub>, secondary objective 2.2 was achieved by determining quantitatively that insufficient satisfaction with regard to supervisory communication exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility. This was because the benchmark of 70% was significantly higher (14.6%) than the average response on satisfaction with supervisory communication (55.4%).

#### 5.3.2.5 Hypothesis 4

As communication satisfaction is multi-dimensional, each of its selected constructs was tested individually. Secondary objective 2.3 set out to *determine the extent to which employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are satisfied with organisational integration*. H<sub>4</sub> tested satisfaction with the construct of organisational integration.

• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>organisational integration</u> and the benchmark of 70%.
• H <sub>4</sub>	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>organisational integration</u> .

Based on the acceptance of H<sub>4</sub>, secondary objective 2.3 was achieved by determining quantitatively that insufficient satisfaction with regard to organisational integration exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility. This was because the benchmark of 70% was significantly higher (15.3%) than the average response to satisfaction with organisational integration (54.7%).

#### 5.3.2.6 Hypothesis 5

As communication satisfaction is multi-dimensional, each of its selected constructs was tested individually. Secondary objective 2.4 set out to *determine the extent to which employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are satisfied with media quality*. H<sub>5</sub> tested satisfaction with the construct of media quality.

• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>media quality</u> and the benchmark of 70%.
• H <sub>5</sub>	The benchmark of 70% is significantly higher than employees on job levels K to P of The Utility's average response on their satisfaction with <u>media quality</u> .

Based on the acceptance of H<sub>5</sub>, secondary objective 2.4 was achieved by determining quantitatively that insufficient satisfaction with media quality exists amongst the employees on job levels K to P of The Utility. This was because the benchmark of 70% was significantly higher (11%) than the average response on satisfaction with media quality (59%).

### 5.3.2.7 Hypothesis 6

Secondary objective 2.5 set out *to determine whether employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are more satisfied with supervisory communication than with communication climate*.  $H_6$  tested satisfaction with the construct of supervisory communication versus the construct of communication climate.

• $H_0$	On job levels K to P of the Utility, there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and their satisfaction with <u>communication climate</u> .
• $H_6$	On job levels K to P of the Utility, employee satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> is significantly higher than with <u>communication climate</u> .

Based on the acceptance of  $H_0$ , secondary objective 2.5 was achieved by determining quantitatively that there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with supervisory communication and their satisfaction with communication climate. The null hypothesis was accepted as the t-test for equal variances indicated a probability value higher than 0.05:  $\text{Prob}>|T| = 0.6788$  (sum of one tail).

### 5.3.2.8 Hypothesis 7

Secondary objective 2.6 set out *to determine whether employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are more satisfied with supervisory communication than with organisational integration*.  $H_7$  tested satisfaction with the construct of supervisory communication versus the construct of organisational integration.

• $H_0$	On job levels K to P of the Utility, there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and their satisfaction with <u>organisational integration</u> .
• $H_7$	On job levels K to P of the Utility, employee satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> is significantly higher than with <u>organisational integration</u> .

Based on the acceptance  $H_0$ , secondary objective 2.6 was achieved by determining quantitatively that there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with supervisory communication and their satisfaction with organisational integration. The null hypothesis was accepted as the T-test for equal variances indicated a probability value higher than 0.05:  $\text{Prob}>|T| = 0.7966$  (sum of one tail).

### 5.3.2.9 Hypothesis 8

Secondary objective 2.7 set out *to determine whether employees on job levels K to P of The Utility are more satisfied with supervisory communication than with media quality.*  $H_8$  tested satisfaction with the construct of supervisory communication versus the construct of media quality.

• $H_0$	On job levels K to P of the Utility, there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> and their satisfaction with <u>media quality</u> .
• $H_8$	On job levels K to P of the Utility, employee satisfaction with <u>supervisory communication</u> is significantly higher than with <u>media quality</u> .

Based on the acceptance of  $H_0$ , secondary objective 2.7 was achieved by determining quantitatively that there is no significant difference between employees' satisfaction with supervisory communication and their satisfaction with media quality. The null hypothesis was accepted as the T-test for equal variances indicated a probability value higher than 0.05:  $\text{Prob}>|T| = 0.0894$  (sum of one tail).

### 5.3.3 Findings of Primary Objective 3

Primary Objective 3 was achieved by determining quantitatively the perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication ability of line managers, according to The Utility's Top Management and Communication Officers. Two secondary objectives contributed to achieving Primary Objective 3.

#### 5.3.3.1 Findings of secondary objective 3.1

Secondary objective 3.1 set out *to determine the order of importance of the specific communication skills selected.* According to the descriptive statistics conducted with regard to secondary objective 3.1, the perceived order of importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication ability of line managers is as follows:

Communication Variable	Top Management's Rank Order	Site Com Officers Rank Order
Encouraging input	1.0	5.0
Active listening	2.0	6.0
Providing direction	3.0	3.0
Encouraging feedback	4.0	7.0
Acting on feedback	5.0	2.0
Facilitating cohesion	6.0	8.0
Clarifying meaning	7.0	4.0
Motivating employees	8.0	9.0
Conducting effective meetings	9.0	1.0
Channel information to those accountable	10.0	10.0
Mentoring	11.5	11.5
Managing conflict	11.5	11.5
Demonstrating empathy	13.0	13.0

### 5.3.3.2 Findings of secondary objective 3.2

Secondary objective 3.2 set out to determine whether active listening is perceived as being more important than providing guidance in improving the communication skills of line managers.

The achievement of secondary objective 3.2 was based on testing the hypothesis below.

• $H_0 =$	According to the perceptions of The Utility's Top Management and Site Communication Officers, there is no significant difference between the importance of <u>active listening</u> and <u>providing guidance</u> in improving the communication skills of line managers.
• $H_9 =$	According to the perceptions of The Utility's Top Management and Site Communication Officers, <u>active listening</u> is significantly more important than <u>providing guidance</u> in improving the communication skills of line managers.

Based on the rejection of  $H_0$ , secondary objective 3.2 was achieved by determining quantitatively that there is no significant difference between the importance of active listening or providing guidance in improving the communication skills of line managers, according to the perceptions of The Utility's Top Management and Communication Officers as a group. The null hypothesis was accepted as the p-value of Mann-Whitney's  $U$  test for statistical differences was bigger than 0.05: Prob > |Z| = 0.6336.

## 5.4 Practical recommendations

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Based on the achievement of Primary Objectives 1, 2 and 3 and their secondary objectives, recommendations are made. These recommendations are based on the four constructs of communication satisfaction: communication climate, supervisory communication, organisational integration and media quality.

Within The Utility's Corporate Business Plan for 2003 to 2008, the improvement of internal communication was amongst the initiatives undertaken to promote an organisational culture that is more reflective of its values. In making these practical recommendations, the researcher thus took cognisance of The Utility's transformation strategy and its values.

### 5.4.1 Recommendations for the improvement of communication climate

- **Become The Utility's earpiece**

Employees have a need to be heard - not only on a personal level but they want to share their valuable work related experience with The Utility. Rather than being only the organisation's mouthpiece, the internal communication department is advised to instil a culture within The Utility of listening to their employees' opinions more often.

Effective communication will not take place without mutual understanding. The Utility first needs to understand the attitudes, needs, expectations and opinions of their employees before they can even attempt to make the employees understand or accept The Utility. Constant formative and evaluative research on a small scale is recommended to enable the internal communication team to keep their fingers on the pulse of internal communication.

- **Re-assess The Utility's internal communication strategy**

It has been proven many times that employees' productivity is related to the environment in which they work. The communication climate of an organisation contributes to such an environment. However, in The Utility there were few positive opinions about overall communication. The current communication climate was not seen in a positive light and was not regarded as having improved during the last 12 months. It is thus recommended that the current internal communication strategy be re-assessed while considering the abovementioned concerns.

To some degree, the communication skills that will most probably improve the communication skills of line managers, as identified by senior management and Site Communication Officers, could be used as objectives descriptors for such an internal communication strategy.

- **A corporate governance drive**

Seen in the light of the King II Report, corporate transparency has become non-negotiable. With the widely held belief amongst The Utility employees that internal communication at the organisation does not create a climate of transparency, a corporate governance drive is recommended. The role of the internal communication department in this should not only be that of messenger and facilitator, but also that of participant.

Not only should such a drive create more transparency in The Utility but it should also correct the present negative perception amongst employees that internal communication in the organisation does not contribute to a climate of mutual trust amongst employees.

- **Feedback**

Feedback is an integral element of the communication process and employees on all job levels have complained about the lack of feedback within The Utility. This has resulted in failure to ensure effective communication. Feedback has to occur as a matter of course whilst keeping in mind that it is not a one-way process. Just as management has to give feedback to staff, so does staff need communication channels to give feedback to management.

#### **5.4.2 Recommendations for the improvement of supervisory communication**

- **Communication training**

Given the concern expressed by support staff about middle and lower management and the crucial role of these managerial levels in converting strategy and high-level planning into actionable steps, there is a need to strengthen their communication capacity. This requires, inter alia, appropriate communication training. It is recommended that a programme of communication training be developed and implemented that is aimed at empowering managers, supervisors and Site Communication Officers with the appropriate communication skills.

Training is no longer something which is 'done to' people. 'Standard' training courses attended by everyone, are no longer the way forward. Training is increasingly being tailor-made to the needs of the individual employee. In determining such aspects as training needs analysis, the employee is key to developing an organisation's own programme. A training needs analysis will assist The Utility and its employees to become more participative with regard to employees' job expectations and their job performance. This recommendation may correct the current negative perception that employees have of internal communication as well as the perception that supervisors and Site Communication Officers are barriers to effective communication.

Apart from the foregoing recommendation on training needs assessment, the communication skills priorities as identified by Top Managers and the Site Communication Officers are also a good indicator of requisite communication skill needs. It is believed that the skills listed below are those that will most probably improve the communication ability of line managers.

- Acting on feedback
- Active listening
- Clarifying meaning
- Encouraging feedback
- Encouraging input
- Facilitating cohesion
- Motivating employees
- Providing direction
- Conducting effective meetings

If, through communication skills training, line managers can understand the importance of effective communication, they would hopefully automatically practise effective two-way communication. In the long term, this should alleviate the current perception amongst The Utility's employees that communication and information within The Utility is disseminated too slowly and that their line managers are failing to effectively communicate upwards to Top Management.

- **Communication as a Key Performance Area (KPA)**

Noting global trends and international best practice where the maxim is the enhancement of a company's intellectual capital, growing its human potential and developing relationships, an open and honest communication culture and good communication skills are essential. This applies to all levels of management and staff. It is recommended, therefore, that appropriate ways to include communication as a KPA in the formal appraisal system be investigated.

The communication skills that will most probably improve the communication ability of line managers, as identified by Top Management and Site Communication Officers, could be used as assessment criteria for a communication KPA.

- **Developing interfaces with other Departments**

Research outcomes such as 'communication from Divisional, Departmental and Site management is slow and irregular' and the high priority communication need for human resource-related information indicates that the Internal Communication Department needs to start playing an advisory role to other Divisions and Departments of The Utility.

### 5.4.3 Recommendations for the improvement of organisational integration

- **More information about The Utility's programmes**

It is recommended that more awareness and understanding be created about different The Utility Programmes such as HIV/AIDS, Business Planning Processes, Employee Well-being, Employment Equity, etc. This is needed for the benefit of the employee groups represented by the respondents to the questionnaire.

Participants of the focus groups involved are also seen to be in need of human resource-related information.

- **Vision and mission drive**

To become an excellent organisation means that everyone sharing the business's strategic goals must have an understanding of the business they are in.

The employees on job levels H, I and J do not have an understanding of The Utility's strategic intent. An understanding of the rationale and importance of The Utility's existence amongst these employees will also improve their commitment to The Utility, rather than being committed only to receiving a month-end salary check. This could be a phased process – launched initially with an emphasis on the vision and thereafter focus on one mission and value per month.

Such a vision, mission and values drive should also include a description of the commitment and actions of management and the Internal Communication Department towards achieving the vision and mission. Once employees have an understanding of The Utility's vision, mission and values, and if they perceive management and the Internal Communication Department to be committed to those philosophies, they will probably become more committed themselves. They will also start perceiving the internal communication processes as contributing to improved commitment.

- **Long service / job expectations and performance recognition**

In general, employees have three needs: remuneration, security and recognition. A programme that recognises the special achievements and long service of employees will do much to improve the attitude of employees at all job levels. Such a programme should be inclusive of an individual performance feedback programme as well as a job expectations programme.

Recognising and valuing the contributions and diversity of individuals in The Utility will help to create a better understanding of employees' different needs and expectations. In reality, it is all about creating real partnerships. Involving all the staff in business decisions and sharing

information with them will generate new ways of achieving strategic goals more quickly, cheaply and simply. More than ever, business success depends on the people in organisation contributing a regular flow of new ideas.

The implementation of the programmes recommended above will also encourage a feeling that employees have as much influence on their relationship with The Utility as The Utility has on them.

#### **5.4.4 Recommendations for the improvement of media quality**

- **Communicating with illiterate staff**

The current scenario where many illiterate employees are reliant on colleagues to inform them, leads to a lot of confusion, inconsistency and mistrust within The Utility.

Although communication with illiterate staff should be an operational issue, the current situation in The Utility indicates that this has indeed become a strategic issue. The Utility in general and the Internal Communication Department specifically will have to make decisions to ensure that the green area meeting procedure and briefing sessions with interpreters are streamlined. Other communication mediums aimed at more effective communication with the illiterate should be used such as traditional or folkmedia (also called oramedia). The latter are based on indigenous culture and deals with problems of direct relevance to a situation. Some examples of these interpersonal/group media are industrial theatre, humour, music, singing, dancing, and festivals.

Creating an understanding amongst supervisors of the importance of meaningful, two-way communication and the vital role they play in creating mutual understanding will also alleviate the current negative situation.

- **Communication needs assessment**

An underlying perception exists amongst employees on job levels H, I and J that The Utility's internal communication is not always relevant and is seldom understandable. Such irrelevant and incomprehensible communication entails fruitless expenditure.

A communication needs assessment that determines the specific work-related and individual communication needs of staff within specific divisions/sites/regions is strongly recommended. Of further benefit will be an assessment of employees' educational levels. This will give an indication on which readability ease level (Flesch Reading Ease Score) information should be used for written communication with these employees.

- **Two-way communication**

Effective communication is a two-way process. There should be channels of communication that management can use to communicate with employees as well as the reverse, namely communication channels that employees can use to communicate with management.

This is, unfortunately, not currently the case within The Utility. Employees on job levels H, I and J in particular feel that they have no upward communication channel or opportunities to reach management. That perception has to be addressed, perhaps in the form of a suggestion scheme, in an effort to improve the overall communication culture within The Utility.

- **Improvement of the quantity and quality of communication**

The quality of communication needs to be addressed as a matter of course. It is deduced that the majority of inaccuracies in communication lead to employees of The Utility questioning the credibility of messages. The recommendation is that validated information should be repeated more often, using a wider variety of communication mediums.

- **Content**

For those employees represented by the respondents of the questionnaire, The Utility communication mediums should carry more content on major business changes in the organisation. As these employees do not have a clear understanding of where their Division fits within The Utility, it is recommended that communication messages disseminated by the Internal Communication Department include descriptions and detailed explanations about The Utility's structure, its various Divisions and Departments and how they are interrelated.

For those employees represented by the respondents of the focus groups, The Utility communication mediums should carry more content on human resource related topics (the pension fund, UIF, leave regulations, etc) as well as information about safety, health and security issues. More information is required about The Utility's vision and employee job expectations or job performance. Less information on social issues and corporate events is recommended.

- **Notice boards**

The capacity of this communication medium should be exploited. Almost all participants of the focus groups and many respondents from all samples viewed notice boards as a credible, updated and useful source of valuable information. An added benefit of the use of such a communication medium is that it is relatively inexpensive when compared to other communication mediums.

- **Distribution management of communication mediums**

As few employees find it easy to get hold of the communication mediums in The Utility, it is recommended that the distribution procedure for each communication medium be assessed and streamlined with a view of expediting delivery to employees.

When employees have better access to formal The Utility mediums, reliance on receiving information about the organisation from other, unofficial, internal sources could decrease.

- **H<sub>2</sub>O**

This publication should be published more regularly on fixed publication dates. The content could add more value to its readership. This will require a communication needs assessment amongst the publication's readers.

It is further strongly recommended that the readability and writing style of H<sub>2</sub>O content should better meet the profile of the publication's readership.

- **Readability of Lerothodi**

Paradoxically, the publication in The Utility which is most respected and most appreciated, Lerothodi, is also the publication which is the most difficult to understand. It is recommended that the readability and writing style of Lerothodi should also better meet the profile of its readership.

The above scenario holds true specifically amongst the employees from job levels H, I and J. Noting that these employees value no other Utility publication except Lerothodi, it is recommended that its readability be amended to between 60 and 80 (Standard to Fairly Easy) on the Flesch Readability Ease Score. This can be found on the spell check application of MSWord.

- **Distribution of cloakroom posters**

Cloakroom posters are perceived as acceptable, easy to understand and readily memorised by employees. The distribution of these posters to all sites and all cloakrooms can be improved. At some sites, the instalment of frames in which to place the posters might be required.

- **Imbizos and road shows**

These face-to-face communication events are held in high regard. Taking into consideration employees' vital need for more interpersonal interaction with management, it is recommended that they be held more often for the benefit of all employees from all sites and regions.

An annual Imbizo with the Chief Executive and bi-annual road shows involving all General Managers are strongly recommended. Of importance at these events is that all employees should be allowed to attend, interpreters should be available if needed and sufficient time should be allocated to them. This would allow for quality participation and feedback to take place.

- **Meeting procedures**

Although most types of meetings do take place daily, they do not seem to be very participative and are thus seen as not being very effective. Notice of meetings, agendas and minutes do not seem to be part of the procedure at present.

There is a need to develop and implement appropriate meeting procedures to ensure that two-way communication is encouraged. Rather than simply conveying instructions at meetings, employees should be better informed about the context and rationale for meeting specific requirements.

#### **5.4.5 General recommendations**

- **Resource allocation**

Resources, both human and financial, should be allocated to the Corporate Communications Division to have its voice heard, loud and clear. However, the Division needs more manpower, technology and funding.

- **Creating positive awareness of the internal communication function**

Few employees know of the internal communication department. Those who do know of it do not have a positive perception of it. The comment portrayed below points to an issue of serious concern.

*'I don't know how internal communication contributes because I do not even know what it is that they are supposed to be doing. Is communication part of the strategy of this organisation? We need to find out.'*

Keeping in mind that very few messages will be seen as credible if the messenger is not known or is not seen as credible, the internal communication department needs to improve its image in the eyes of the staff of The Utility.

The lack of legitimacy of the Corporate Communications Division was also reflected by some respondents who had little faith in any changes taking place as a result of the audit. It is thus strongly recommended that, as a point of departure on a 'positive awareness initiative', the

Internal Communication Department should give detailed and verbatim feedback of the communication audit to all employees at all sites. This should be done in a manner comprehensible and accessible to all.

## **5.5 Recommendations for further research**

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Recommendations for further research refer not only to The Utility, but to all future research in communication satisfaction and communication in general.

### **5.5.1 Recommendations for further research in The Utility**

- This case study determined the extent to which communication satisfaction exists amongst the employees of The Utility. Although the eight constructs of Downs and Hazen's theory on communication satisfaction were considered theoretically, only four of these constructs were actually measured in The Utility because of its resource constraints and its specific needs.
  - ☞ It is however recommended that future research on communication satisfaction measure all eight constructs as indicated by the standardised Downs-Hazen Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire. This will ensure that the findings of such communication satisfaction research studies are more comprehensive and of greater strategic value. Testing all eight constructs will more thoroughly cover a variety of communication practices and provide a better overview of potential problem areas. The Downs-Hazen questionnaire consists of 40 core questions, with five questions operationalising each of the eight constructs. In addition, there are six questions about job satisfaction and productivity.
- As a base-line study, this research measured only the concept of communication satisfaction and did not test correlations with job satisfaction or productivity, as allowed for by the Downs-Hazen Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire.
  - ☞ For future research by communication practitioners and academics (either within The Utility or in other organisations), it is recommended that research on communication satisfaction should be correlated with other related concepts such as:
    - job satisfaction;
    - productivity;
    - employee satisfaction; and
    - organisational commitment.

- As this case study only focused on the existence and extent of communication satisfaction, little is currently known about employee communication expectations. If this were known, communication satisfaction could probably be improved more easily through appropriate internal communication.

☞ It is thus recommended that further research within The Utility should include the measurement of employee communication expectations, an outcome that would help to reconcile The Utility's vision with employees' expectations. One way of going about this would be to use another theoretical framework for such a measurement. For instance, the concept of (customer) 'satisfaction' in marketing theory is measured as the gap between (customer) 'expectations' and (customer) 'perceptions of performance'. In The Utility, (employee communication) satisfaction could thus be measured as the gap between (employee communication) expectations and (employee perceptions of the communication) performance of their managers/supervisors.

- Considering the overall negative outcome of this study, it is assumed that there are many underlying issues amongst the employees that have not come to the fore. If such issues are not identified and managed through, inter alia, communication intervention, they could develop into potential crises situations within The Utility.

☞ An issue identification study is thus recommended. This will assist the Internal Communication Department to resolve issues strategically before they reach crisis proportions.

- Based on the findings of the descriptive statistics in Phase 3, a comparison was drawn between Top Management's and the Site Communication Officers' rankings of supervisory communication skill priorities. Although a hypothesis was not set to test the difference in ranking, a difference between the two groups' rankings did in fact emerge.

☞ It is thus recommended that the following hypothesis is tested in future research within The Utility.

• H <sub>0</sub>	There is no significant difference between The Utility's Top Management and Site Communication Officers in their perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication of line managers.
• H <sub>A</sub>	There is a significant difference between The Utility's Top Management and Site Communication Officers in their perceived importance of specific communication skills in improving the communication of line managers.

- The benchmark against which average responses on communication satisfaction was compared, was 70%. This percentage was determined when the original ordinal variables (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) were transformed into ratio scaled variables (100%, 66.7%, 33.3% & 0%) to be able to apply the parametric T-test. It was for pragmatic reasons that the 66.7% scale point was rounded off to 70%.
  - ☞ For future research within The Utility it is recommended that the benchmark be decreased to the exact relevant ratio scale point namely 'Agree' (66.7%); or
  - ☞ That an industry benchmark be applied in setting the standard for The Utility. Various organisations conduct studies that can be used for industry benchmarks. For example, both Deloitte & Touche South Africa and the Corporate Research Foundation conduct an annual survey know as 'Best companies to work for.' This survey includes South African benchmarks on concepts such as communication satisfaction. The average satisfaction with communication revealed in the 2004 survey was 63%.

### **5.5.2 Recommendations for further research in communication satisfaction and communication in general**

- A fundamental learning outcome of this study for the researcher was the realisation of the value of academic literature, inclusive of research measurement tools such as standardised questionnaires. This realisation is coupled with the frustration with an education system that does not provide communication learners with the knowledge base or insight into such useful, practical and invaluable resources.

Numerous standardised measurement instruments can be sourced from the literature on research methodology or the specific discipline. These instruments are grounded in firm developmental processes, possessing a rich theoretical orientation and reliably tested in a variety of organisational settings. Recommended data analysis techniques relevant to specific measurement instruments are also available. These techniques will yield valid and reliable research findings, useful to practitioners and learners alike.

- ☞ It is thus strongly recommended that postgraduate learners and communication practitioners involved in empirical research consult literature on research methodology before embarking on research initiatives. Standardised measurement instruments available in academic literature will prove to be useful, flexible, efficient and cost-effective means of researching communication concepts.

- ☞ A further, more fundamental recommendation is made to educational institutions that have research as a subject in any of its communication curricula. References to lists and discussions of the different available measurement instruments should be included in communication learners' prescribed references/readings on research methodology. Having an awareness and understanding of available research instruments and the concepts/constructs that they measure assists the learner and industry researcher in choosing the most appropriate measurement instrument in any particular case. Understanding how such measurement instruments should be administered produces insight on the validity and reliability that these standardised instruments produce – making any research initiative more practical, time saving and cost-effective.

Examples of such references are:

- Rubin, R.B., Palmgreen, P. & Sypher, H.E. 1994. *Communication research measures*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Downs, C.W. & Adrian, A.D. 2004. *Assessing organisational communication. Strategic communication audits*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Hargie, O. & Tourish, D. 2000. *Handbook of communication audits for organisations*. New York: Routledge.

- With the knowledge of available communication research instruments, recommendations for further research by The Utility can now be made more readily. The measurement instruments below are recommended, based on the different constructs of communication satisfaction tested in this study. These recommended instruments can, however, also be used by other communication practitioners involved in organisational communication research.

☞ The constructs communication climate can be tested with the use of:

- Organisational Communication Scale or OCS (Hargie & Tourish, 2000:51).
- Goldhaber's International Communication Association Survey or ICA (Hargie & Tourish, 2000:49).
- Downs-Hazen Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire or CSQ (Downs, DeWine, & Greenbaum, 1994:139).
- Individualised Trust Scale (Rubin, Palmgreen, & Sypher, 1994:184).
- Organisational Communication Development audit questionnaire or OCD (Hargie & Tourish, 2000:50).

- ☞ The constructs supervisory communication can be tested with the use of:
  - Critical Communication Experience Survey (Downs *et al*, 1994:158).
  - Communicative Adaptability Scale or CAS (Rubin *et al*, 1994:120).
  - Communication Networks' Diagnosis (Downs *et al*, 1994:187).
  - Organisational Communication Development audit questionnaire or OCD (Hargie & Tourish, 2000:50).
  - Organisational Communication Scale or OCS (Hargie & Tourish, 2000:51).
  - Communicator Competence Questionnaire or CCQ (Rubin *et al*, 1994:130).
  - Mentoring and Communication Support Scale (Rubin *et al*, 1994:130).
  
- ☞ The constructs organisational integration can be tested with the use of:
  - Goldhaber's International Communication Association Survey or ICA (Hargie & Tourish, 2000:49).
  - Organisational Communication Development audit questionnaire or OCD (Hargie & Tourish, 2000:50).
  - Organisational Identification Questionnaire (Rubin *et al*, 1994:268).
  
- ☞ The constructs media quality can be tested with the use of:
  - Episodic Communication Channels in Organisations or ECCO (Downs *et al*, 1994:173).
  - Communication Networks' Diagnosis (in Downs *et al*, 1994:187).
  - Goldhaber's International Communication Association Survey or ICA (Hargie & Tourish, 2000:49).
  - Organisational Communication Development audit questionnaire or OCD (Hargie & Tourish, 2000:50).
  - Source Credibility Scale – Berlo (Rubin *et al*, 1994:327).
  - Source Credibility Scale – McCroskey (Rubin *et al*, 1994:332).

## **5.6 Limitations of the study**

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Limitations were experienced while conducting Phases 1, 2 and 3 of the study.

### **5.6.1 Limitations in Phase 1**

The content validity of the focus groups held during Phase 1 was not ideal. Although the focus group moderator guide measured what it was purported to measure, the validity of the focus groups as a measuring instrument was negatively affected by time constraints on each focus group. With only one and a half hour for each focus group, the number of measuring items on the focus group moderator guides that could be discussed was limited.

### **5.6.2 Limitations in Phase 2**

The planning and design of the quantitative Phase 2 of the study presented the major limitation of this study. Although a literature review originally directed the design of the questionnaire, the review was compiled on the subject matter of communication and communication satisfaction and not on research methodology associated with communication. This was mainly because the planning, design and approval of this measurement instrument by The Utility took place before the study was selected for academic research. However, if a 'theoretically based', valid and reliable standard questionnaire was used as such in its entirety, the outcome of this communication audit could have been of more strategic value.

Related to the limitation above is the fact that the researcher did not initially fully understand the relationship between conceptualisation and the design of the measuring instrument. This comprehension only dawned in the process of study guidance for masters' research. Their practical applications became apparent upon finding the Downs and Hazen theory on communication satisfaction and the related standardised Downs-Hazen Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire.

Measurement items B2 and B4 used in measuring the construct of communication climate were also used in measuring the construct of organisational integration, as they both had relevance to these constructs. As it is understood that this is not ideal, it has been identified as a limitation.

### **5.6.3 Limitations in Phase 3**

In Phase 3, a maximum of 15 respondents can be tested effectively within one group when using the FCA™ rank ordering instrument. As the total number of respondents in the sub-population of this phase was 18, the sub-population had to be split into two groups of respondents; the Top Managers and the Site Communication Officers. Although a hypothesis that could have tested differences between the two groups in the relevant sub-population could have been set, it fell outside of the scope of this study.

### **5.6.4 General limitations**

The inferential statistical analysis was done by a statistician practising mainly in the marketing industry. This also proved to be a limiting factor as the data analysis in some cases was done in a manner that might be unacceptable in terms of rigid academic standards.

The value of the outcome of this study was limited as only one major concept (communication satisfaction) was tested. If another concept, for example 'organisational commitment' had been included as a second dimension of the study, the strategic value to The Utility would possibly have been enhanced.

However, if a second dimension was included, the size of the study would have become impractical in terms of the fieldwork, reporting on the findings and the application of the findings to a practical internal communication strategy.

## **5.7 Chapter conclusion**

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This study determined that satisfaction with communication amongst the employees of The Utility was not sufficient. Now that an answer has been found to the management problem of not knowing the extent to which communication satisfaction exists among employees of The Utility, the Corporate Communications Division can formulate an internal communication strategy to, inter alia, create more satisfactory communication amongst the organisation's employees.

The aim of the new internal communication strategy should be to transform The Utility's organisational culture so that the strategy can, in turn transform The Utility to a customer orientated organisation. Practical recommendations as well as recommendations made for future research can be used in formulating the new internal communication strategy.

The limitations discussed should be noted by practitioners and learners alike. If future research, attempts should be made to overcome similar limitations.

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THE UTILITY

**Internal Communication Audit - 2004**

*Thank you for assisting us to improve communication within The Utility by completing this questionnaire openly and honestly.*

*All responses are strictly confidential and will not be recognisable by individuals' e-mail addresses.*

**Section A: Biographical Information**

*Please tick **one** option in the appropriate box.*

**SITE:**

- A
- B
- C
- D
- E
- F
- G
- H
- Other: Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**DIVISION:**

- Corporate Communications
- Corporate Services
- Engineering Services
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Information Services
- Marketing and Community Service
- Potable Water Production
- Sales and Customer Service
- Scientific Services

**JOB LEVEL:**

- Executive Management (Senior, General, Divisional and Departmental)
- Sectional / Head Foreman / Supervisor
- Official / Operator / Artisan / Support Staff

**EDUCATION LEVEL:**

- Standard 8 or less
- Standard 9 to Matric
- Post Matric

**YEARS OF SERVICE:**

- Less than 1
- 2 to 5
- 6 to 10
- 11 to 15
- 16 and more

**Section B: Communication CLIMATE**

*Please tick in the appropriate box the **one** option that best reflects your view.*

**1. I am proud to be part of The Utility community**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

**2. The internal communication in The Utility encourages two-way feedback**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

**3. To what extent do you trust the internal communication process in The Utility?**

- Large extent
- Fair extent
- Small extent
- Not at all
- I don't know/I'm not sure

4. The internal communication processes make me more committed to achieve The Utility's goals

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

5. The Utility's commitment to my personal and job success is conveyed to me through internal communication processes

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

\* B5 was omitted for the purpose of the academic study

6. The Utility's internal communication encourages a feeling that I have as much influence on my relationship with The Utility as they have on me

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

7. The internal communication at The Utility creates a climate of transparency

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

8. The Utility's internal communication has improved during the last 12 months

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

## Section C: Communication CONTENT

Please tick in the appropriate box the **one** option that best reflects your view.

9. The **quality** (credibility and accuracy) of information in The Utility is sufficient for me to do my work effectively

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

10. The **quantity** (amount) of information in The Utility is sufficient for me to do my work effectively

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

11. I have a clear understanding of where my Division fits within The Utility

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

12. Information about The Utility's programmes (HIV/AIDS, Business Planning Processes, Employee Well-being, Employment Equity, etc) is sufficient

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

**13. On which of the topics below do you prefer to get more information?**

*Multiple choices permitted*

- Vision and values
- Business performance
- Business goals (strategic objectives)
- Your immediate team's goals
- Your immediate team's performance
- Major change (restructures, etc.)
- Policy updates (payroll, IT changes, etc.)
- Individual performance feedback
- Job expectations
- Personal development discussions
- New services / business
- Crises at The Utility
- Other - please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**14. The role and services of the Corporate Communication Division are clear to me**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

## Section D: Communication by Line Managers

For the purposes of this audit, the term "line manager" is used to refer to anyone in The Utility who is responsible for managing a team of people, but who is not on a General Manager level. This would include both front-line managers/supervisors and sectional managers, *i.e. immediate supervisor or line manager*

Please tick in the appropriate box the **one** option that best reflects your view.

**15. Communication from Divisional, Departmental and Site management is:**

Multiple choices permitted

- Speedy
- Slow
- Regular
- Irregular
- I don't know/I'm not sure

**16. How would you rate the communication performance of your line manager?**

(Effective communication performance is good listening skills, briefing skills and feedback)

- Very good
- Good
- Average
- Poor
- Very poor

**17. How would you describe the communication style of your line manager?**

Multiple choices permitted

- Approachable
- Distant
- Supportive
- Disruptive
- Involved
- Leading
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**18. My line manager engages in dialogue with me**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

19. I can openly discuss work related issues with my line manager

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

20. My line manager has a good understanding of The Utility's business / policies and procedures to communicate effectively

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

21. My line manager's communication skills display an empathy (understanding / compassion) for my work related needs

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

22. My line manager communicates well upwards representing staff's needs raised at workplace meetings / green areas / other forums

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

23. My line-manager always responds (feedback) to my concerns, enquiries or suggestions

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

## Section F: Communication MEDIUMS

Please tick in the appropriate box the **one** option that best reflects your view.

24. Communication mediums within The Utility are relevant for our purposes as employees

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

25. In dealing with other Divisions, Departments, Sections and Sites I know which internal communication medium to use to find the required information

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

26. In my Division, Department, Section or Site we regularly have 'green area' meetings / workplace meetings

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

27. The 'green area' meetings / workplace meetings which I attend are participative

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

28. I receive *Aquavita* monthly

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

29. I find the information of the *Aquavita* valuable

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

30. I find *Aquavita* easy to understand

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

31. I receive *H<sub>2</sub>O* monthly (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

32. I find the information of *H<sub>2</sub>O* valuable (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

33. I find *H<sub>2</sub>O* easy to understand (this is a site focused publication exclusive of Rietvlei)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

34. I receive *Lerothodi* monthly

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

35. I find the information of *Lerothodi* valuable

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

36. I find *Lerothodi* easy to understand

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

37. I receive *Health Talk* quarterly

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

38. I find the information of *Health Talk* valuable

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

39. I find *Health Talk* easy to understand

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

40. I receive *Rands and Sense* quarterly

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

41. I find the information of *Rands and Sense* valuable

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

42. I find *Rands and Sense* easy to understand

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

\* The six items above were omitted for the purpose of the academic study

43. I find it easy to get hold of the communication mediums in The Utility

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

44. Notice boards (including electronic notice boards where applicable) are useful sources of work related information

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

45. The Utility's e-mail system is a useful source of work related information

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

46. The Utility's e-mail system is a reliable source of work related information

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

**47. I use The Utility's Intranet**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

**48. The Utility's Intranet is easy to use**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

**49. PCP forums (Site Forums, Stakeholder Forms and Steering Committee) are a useful communication mediums**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

**50. Corporate Imbizos / road shows are a useful communication medium**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

**51. Cloakroom posters are a useful communication medium**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

**52. I have access to a communication medium (newsletter, suggestion box, line managers, etc.) if I need to convey messages to management**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

53. I often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, unofficial internal sources

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

54. I often receive information relevant to The Utility from other, official external sources (mass media)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know/I'm not sure

## Section F: Overall Evaluation of Internal Communication

Please answer all the questions by ticking **one** option on the scale below on the point that best corresponds with your personal feelings on communication within The Utility, e.g.:

Communication within The Utility is best described as:

1	2	3	4	5	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sufficient					Insufficient
Very Good	Good	Average	Bad	Very Bad	

### 55. Communication within The Utility is best described as:

- |                      |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                            |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) Reaches all staff | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Only reaches certain staff |
| b) Consistent        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Inconsistent               |
| c) Speedy            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Slow                       |
| d) Understandable    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Confusing                  |
| e) Credible          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Questionable               |
| f) Purposeful        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not purposeful             |
| g) Relevant          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Irrelevant                 |
| h) Efficient         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Inefficient                |
| i) Customer focussed | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not customer focussed      |

### 56. Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with internal communication in The Utility?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- I don't know/I'm not sure

***Thank you for your participation. It is much appreciated!***

## SIMPLE STATISTICS

Below is the simple statistics as used in the descriptive statistics of this study. Of note is the difference in the number of respondents. To correct this it was suggested that the data is cleaned by computing an average on each item and then adjusting the missing values. It was, however found that by replacing a missing value with the mean, the resulting mean will be exactly the same (Sham, 2004b).

The Utility - Internal Communication Audit

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## CORRELATION ANALYSIS

## Simple Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev	Sum	Minimum	Maximum
B1	209	2.253589	1.121383	471.000000	1.000000	4.000000
B2	197	2.355330	1.109162	464.000000	1.000000	4.000000
B3	200	2.435000	1.063688	487.000000	1.000000	4.000000
B4	205	2.380488	1.080854	488.000000	1.000000	4.000000
B6	203	2.433498	1.116599	494.000000	1.000000	4.000000
B7	195	2.641026	1.062170	515.000000	1.000000	4.000000
B8	202	2.212871	1.096912	447.000000	1.000000	4.000000
C9	206	2.388350	1.153853	492.000000	1.000000	4.000000
C10	201	2.492537	1.091418	501.000000	1.000000	4.000000
C11	205	2.331707	1.096885	478.000000	1.000000	4.000000
C12	198	2.454545	1.078377	486.000000	1.000000	4.000000
C14	176	2.420455	1.060691	426.000000	1.000000	4.000000
D15	169	2.526627	1.160178	427.000000	1.000000	4.000000
D16	193	2.424870	0.976710	468.000000	1.000000	4.000000
D18	200	2.155000	1.037476	431.000000	1.000000	4.000000
D19	204	2.004902	0.995050	409.000000	1.000000	4.000000
D20	200	2.120000	0.959271	424.000000	1.000000	4.000000
D21	200	2.355000	1.111373	471.000000	1.000000	4.000000
D22	194	2.525773	1.039059	490.000000	1.000000	4.000000
D23	196	2.382653	1.043419	467.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E24	202	2.143564	0.812945	433.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E25	199	2.592965	0.953542	516.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E26	204	1.931373	1.009900	394.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E27	201	2.069652	0.951380	416.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E28	201	1.955224	0.890497	393.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E29	204	2.264706	0.914325	462.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E30	208	1.899038	0.601447	395.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E31	169	2.603550	1.064687	440.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E32	191	2.528796	0.844772	483.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E33	193	2.492228	0.823605	481.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E34	205	1.765854	0.736849	362.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E35	205	1.946341	0.823698	399.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E36	207	1.927536	0.775577	399.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E43	197	2.695431	0.885616	531.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E44	204	1.990196	0.800186	406.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E45	201	1.761194	0.729854	354.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E46	191	2.120419	0.900965	405.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E47	194	2.092784	0.864768	406.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E48	198	2.368687	0.890120	469.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E49	199	2.512563	0.886824	500.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E50	196	2.112245	0.975417	414.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E51	201	2.099502	0.761610	422.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E52	195	2.446154	0.936611	477.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E53	199	2.678392	0.988359	533.000000	1.000000	4.000000
E54	203	2.871921	1.001657	583.000000	1.000000	4.000000
F55A	209	2.995215	1.178728	626.000000	1.000000	5.000000
F55B	209	2.933014	1.116016	613.000000	1.000000	5.000000
F55C	209	3.143541	1.108737	657.000000	1.000000	5.000000
F55D	209	2.578947	0.977997	539.000000	1.000000	5.000000
F55E	209	2.684211	1.012323	561.000000	1.000000	5.000000
F55F	209	2.583732	0.992241	540.000000	1.000000	5.000000
F55G	209	2.526316	0.940809	528.000000	1.000000	5.000000
F55H	209	2.746411	1.022722	574.000000	1.000000	5.000000
F55I	209	2.622010	1.111865	548.000000	1.000000	5.000000
F56	197	2.451777	0.949736	483.000000	1.000000	4.000000

## IMPROVED CRONBACH COEFFICIENT ALPHA

The Utility - Internal Communication Audit

Cronbach Coefficient Alpha

for RAW variables : 0.910000  
for STANDARDIZED variables: 0.918723

Deleted Variable	Raw Variables		Std. Variables	
	Correlation with Total	Alpha	Correlation with Total	Alpha
B1	0.125148	0.911451	0.121767	0.919768
B3	0.134266	0.911169	0.124487	0.919744
B4	0.217932	0.910293	0.215850	0.918941
B6	0.130516	0.911374	0.133131	0.919669
B7	0.189097	0.910568	0.187828	0.919188
B8	0.137354	0.911235	0.136872	0.919636
C9	0.262980	0.909929	0.260506	0.918546
C10	0.258824	0.909856	0.256936	0.918578
C12	0.148009	0.911061	0.144177	0.919572
D15	0.104942	0.911820	0.112054	0.919853
D16	0.444461	0.907782	0.444557	0.916903
D18	0.338984	0.908900	0.341158	0.917829
D19	0.342701	0.908833	0.344923	0.917796
D20	0.405241	0.908189	0.403060	0.917276
D21	0.455122	0.907616	0.451356	0.916842
D22	0.551165	0.906579	0.549659	0.915953
D23	0.417175	0.908051	0.416198	0.917158
E24	0.462838	0.907781	0.471754	0.916658
E25	0.515556	0.907081	0.531120	0.916121
E26	0.409093	0.908140	0.413798	0.917179
E27	0.512230	0.907118	0.517068	0.916248
E28	0.338484	0.908839	0.349209	0.917758
E29	0.501826	0.907275	0.521834	0.916205
E30	0.430674	0.908395	0.449709	0.916857
E31	0.471530	0.907442	0.485333	0.916535
E32	0.480998	0.907574	0.495624	0.916442
E33	0.461457	0.907778	0.473189	0.916645
E34	0.450283	0.908005	0.468434	0.916688
E35	0.544963	0.907051	0.570635	0.915762
E36	0.451079	0.907936	0.473801	0.916639
E43	0.413759	0.908141	0.424496	0.917083
E44	0.334031	0.908880	0.346897	0.917778
E45	0.339995	0.908859	0.357971	0.917679
E46	0.358797	0.908649	0.378819	0.917493
E47	0.149490	0.910528	0.161593	0.919419
E48	0.251169	0.909646	0.262199	0.918531
E49	0.454879	0.907757	0.460949	0.916755
E50	0.305166	0.909204	0.325035	0.917973
E51	0.301795	0.909147	0.312452	0.918085
E52	0.406519	0.908183	0.417223	0.917149
E54	0.175059	0.910575	0.178187	0.919273
F55A	0.512454	0.906902	0.497009	0.916430
F55B	0.555359	0.906429	0.544534	0.915999
F55C	0.541731	0.906599	0.529312	0.916137
F55D	0.519921	0.907002	0.515745	0.916260
F55E	0.620704	0.905869	0.622165	0.915292
F55F	0.584764	0.906298	0.589679	0.915588
F55G	0.564735	0.906609	0.565035	0.915813
F55H	0.589395	0.906187	0.582551	0.915653
F55I	0.554381	0.906446	0.553407	0.915919
F56	0.603879	0.906195	0.613238	0.915373



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