

The perception of the community of Lichtenburg regarding communication and service delivery by the Department of Home Affairs

ME Dontso
21876576

Mini-dissertation submitted in *partial* fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree *Masters in Development and
Management* at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West
University

Supervisor: Mr JCM Venter

May 2014



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
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DECLARATION

I, MOTLAGOMANG ELLEN DONTSO, hereby declare that the mini-dissertation for the Master's Degree in Development and Management of the North-West University has not been previously submitted by me for any degree at this or any university. This is my own work in design and execution, and all the material contained in this research has been duly acknowledged.

M.E. DONTSO

SIGNATURE.....

SIGNED ON THE.....

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Several people have made a positive contribution towards the completion of this study and therefore deserved to be thanked.

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere, heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Jan Carl Venter, for his patience, encouragement, guidance and motivation throughout the study. There were times when it was not easy but he kept on encouraging and supporting me to the fullest. He deserves to be appreciated because his undivided support made it possible and easy for me to complete the study.

Special appreciation goes to my loving husband, Tembani William Dontso, and to my only daughter, Unathi Dontso, for their understanding and for spending holidays and weekends without me while I was busy studying. I would also like to thank my helper, Mama Lizzy Sebogonyane, for taking care of my child during my study period.

I would like to thank all my colleagues, especially those from the Department of Home Affairs in Lichtenburg, friends and family members for their support, advice, assistance and encouragement.

Above all, my special thanks go to Almighty God, who gave His only Begotten Son Jesus to die for my sins. With God, nothing is impossible. His wisdom, power and strength have made me realise my dream.

ERKENNING

Verskeie persone het 'n positiewe bydrae gemaak tot hierdie studie. Ek bedank graag die volgende:

In die eerste plek bedank ek my studieleier, dr Jan Charl Venter vir sy geduld, aanmoediging, leiding en motivering met my studie. Dit het nie altyd maklik gegaan nie, maar hy het my deurgaans ten volle ondersteun en aangemoedig. Hy verdien waardering omdat bogenoemde dit vir my maklik en moontlik gemaak het om die werk te voltooi.

Aan my liefhebbende man, Tembani William Dontso en my enigste dogter Unathi, my hoogste waardering en hulle begrip toe hulle vakansies en naweke sonder my moes deurbring omdat ek studeer het. Hartlike dank ook aan mamma Lizzy Sebogonyane wat my kind deur hierdie tydperk versorg het.

Baie dankie aan my kollegas, veral dié van die Departement Binnelandse Sake in Lichtenburg, asook vriende en familieleden vir ondersteuning, advies, hulp en aanmoediging.

Bo alles, spesiale dank aan die almagtige God vir die gawe van sy Seun om vir my sonde te sterf. Met Hom is niks onmoontlik nie. Sy wysheid, krag en mag het die realisering van my droom te weeg gebring

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess perceptions of the Lichtenburg community regarding service delivery and communication by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) in The Lichtenburg municipality.

A structured questionnaire was used to gather data from a sample of 80 respondents. The questionnaire consisted of four sections that the respondents were to answer. The study revealed that DHA officials in Lichtenburg are trained, that they adhere to the Batho Pele Principles, are good communicators and that they also maintain high ethical standards. Officials also have access to the necessary equipment, and have the necessary time and support to render services to the public. Although there are some shortcomings among officials – such as the absence of name tags, office cleanliness and the unfriendliness among some officials – respondents are still happy to conduct business with the DHA in Lichtenburg. Some of the shortcomings identified can be addressed within a short space of time, such as consistently wearing name tags. Addressing other shortcomings, such as the provision of human resources, will require the attention of the top ranks of government leadership, who will need to incorporate these into their planning processes.

In general, the DHA in Lichtenburg is trying its best to render efficient and effective services to its clients. The study found that the public knows what is expected from the DHA when they require its services, and they are able to express these views freely.

The DHA interacts with the public on a daily basis in rendering essential services such as the issuance of identification documents, passports, birth, marriage and death certificates; and its clients cannot obtain these anywhere else. Consequently, it is essential that the DHA maintains high ethical standards. It is important for the DHA to provide regular training and workshops to help its employees to keep abreast of new developments. This will help to ensure that the department maintains a high level of service delivery. The study's findings should serve as a guide to measure the performance of other DHA offices. It is recommended that regular studies of this nature be conducted to help identify any gaps in service, and to address them accordingly.

Keywords: Communication; Service delivery; Batho Pele; Department of Home Affairs; Ditsobotla municipality.

OPSOMMING

Die doel van hierdie studie is om om die persepsies van die Lichtenburgse gemeenskap ten opsigte van die dienslewering en kommunikasie van die Departement Binnelandse Sake in die Lichtenburgse munisipaliteit te assesseer.

'n Gestruktureerde vraelys bestaande uit vier afdelings is gebruik om data in te samel by 80 respondente.

Daar is bevind dat werknemers van die departement opgelei is, dat hulle die Batho Pele Beginsels toepas, en dat hulle hoë etiese standaarde handhaaf. Die amptenare het toegang tot die nodige toerusting, beskik oor die nodige tyd en ontvang ondersteuning om dienste aan die publiek te lewer. Hoewel daar sekere tekortkomings by sommige van die amptenare voorkom, bv. dat hulle nie altyd naamkaarte dra nie, die kantore nie oral netjies is nie, en dat sommiges onvriendelik is, is die respondente soms in hulle skik om sake te doen met die Departement van Binnelandse Sake in Lichtenburg. Sommige van die klein hindernisse sou maklik oorkom kon word. Ander ernstige tekortkomings soos die voorsiening van menslike hulpbronne sal die dringende aandag van staatsleierskap moet geniet in hulle beplanningsprosesse.

Algemeen gesproke, poog die departement om effektiewe en doelmatige diens te lewer.

Daar is ook bevind dat die publiek weet wat om van die amptenary te verwag t.o.v dienslewering en dat hulle in staat is om hulle menings vrylik te lug.

Die Departement Binnelandse Sake voer op 'n daaglikse basis kontak met die publiek terwyl hulle noodsaaklike dienste lewer soos die voorsiening van identiteitsdokumente, paspoorte, geboorte-, dood- en huweliksertifikate, en hulle kliënte kan nêrens elders gehelp word nie. Hoë etiese standaarde is dus van die grootste belang. Die departement behoort dus op gereelde grondslag opleiding en werksessies aan te bied. Die bevindinge van hierdie studie behoort as 'n middel te dien om die prestasie van ander kantore van die departement te dien.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

DHA	Department of Home Affairs
FBOs	Faith-based organisations
ID	Identity document
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
NPRC	National Population Register Campaign
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SADF	South African Defence Force
SAPS	South African Police Service

CHAPTER 1: PERCEPTIONS OF THE LICHTENBURG COMMUNITY REGARDING COMMUNICATION AND SERVICE DELIVERY BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS

Keywords: Communication; Service delivery; Batho Pele; Department of Home Affairs; Ditsobotla municipality.

1.1 Introduction

Since 1994 South Africa has experienced many positive developments on various fronts. Personal freedom, equality and the rule of law have all been enshrined in the new Constitution (1996). The Constitution precipitated the development of many new pieces of legislation that provide guidelines to address emerging challenges within the new South African society. A critical area requiring urgent attention was service delivery, which prior to 1994 had been concerned with services based on race, culture and historical background. Periodically, legislation was amended depending on the prevailing situation at the time, which further marginalised black people regarding the delivery of services.

The basic premise of democracy is that citizens should participate in matters concerning governing and administration and in the decision-making processes. Although it is difficult (almost impossible) to involve citizens directly in government affairs at a national level, it is easier to do so at a local or provincial level, where citizens can participate in public meetings and various forums on concerns such as the enhancement of service delivery (Van der Walt et al., 2002:90). This study concentrates on the provincial government level, where the citizens' perceptions are tested on the effective delivery of services, with special reference to the Department of Home Affairs in Lichtenburg in the North West Province.

The government has adopted five strategic objectives that are central to all government departments and the satellite offices. These are poverty alleviation, job creation, ensuring social security, combating crime and corruption, and rural development. The strategic objectives dictate and map a path for how various departments have to perform in order to achieve these goals. One of the highlights in the State of the Nation Address (2010) was the President's emphasis of the critical need for service delivery improvements in various offices of the departments. At the

heart of this clarion call by the President is government's need to be responsive to the needs of the people, by caring and putting the people first (Batho Pele Principles) in the provision of services. Satisfactory service delivery is the result of a combination of actions brought about by management, which are executed professionally and in accordance with the guiding principles of public management, and with due observance of the Batho Pele Principles (President Zuma, 2010).

Currently the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), which includes the Lichtenburg Office in the North West Province, is undergoing a transformation process to improve the quality of the service and products it renders, thus satisfying the needs of the society it serves. This transformation is characterised by the department's need to reflect a people-centric culture within a sound policy and regulatory framework; to have staff members who are professional, skilled, responsive, flexible, and motivated; and to be able to measure performance. There should be an atmosphere of sharing knowledge and best practice through management practices that cut across groupings and secure efficient cost-effective and enabled systems (DHA: Strategic Plan, 2009/10-2010/11: 40).

With regard to this transformation, planning involves defining how the department should develop over the next five years to reach its envisioned state, including better service delivery. The DHA's new service delivery model focuses on citizens and other clients, in terms of needs and services provided to them at the hand of well-developed infrastructures (DHA: Strategic Plan, 2009/10-2010/11:40).

Every institution has a vision and a mission, as well as strategic objectives. The DHA's vision is to 'contribute effectively to the development of a safe, secure South Africa where its people are proud of and value their identity and citizenship'. The DHA's mission is 'the efficient determination and safeguarding of the identity and status of citizens and the regulation of migration to ensure security, promote development and fulfil the department's international obligations'. The importance of having a vision and mission is to enable the department to contribute effectively to the government's programme of action, including the delivering of caring and responsive services. The DHA's mandates are embedded in legislation as well as in other policy documents in order to fulfil its mission. In accordance with its mandates the department executes the core function of public services, which includes

maintaining the National Population Register; the management of records, citizenship, travel documents and passports and identity documents; and the provision of immigration services, which involves dealing with admissions, inspectorate, and refugee affairs and countering xenophobia (DHA: Strategic Plan, 2009/10-2010/11:17).

An essential part of the DHA's transformation is for all its officials in all its offices, to adopt and live a clear and common set of values that are aligned both with the Batho Pele Principles and with the wider transformation of the public service and society. Officials need to do their work efficiently within the paradigm of service delivery to all the people.

In this study, the researcher seeks to assess perceptions of the community in the Lichtenburg area regarding service delivery and communication as a factor in the effective delivery of services. As such, service delivery and communication can be regarded as equally important phenomena in the addressing of people's needs. This study is necessary to establish whether the Lichtenburg Office of the Department of Home Affairs adheres to effective service delivery practices and whether the Office's communication activities are in place. A theoretical analysis, interviews and a questionnaire provide the information to undertake the study.

1.2 Communication and Service delivery

South Africa's history has witnessed the systematic violation of the social and cultural rights of mainly black South Africans. Black South Africans were subjected to severe conditions, such as restrictions on freedom of speech and association and segregation based on race and gender. They were evicted from their land and overcrowded in rural, underdeveloped villages far from essential services. That was when homelands were established and given independence. Almost all social services were based in towns and urban townships and people in rural areas had to travel long distances to access these services. The lack of employment in these villages led to the necessity for people, particularly men, to migrate in search of employment, leaving women behind as heads of their families (Van der Walt et al., 2002).

This, inter alia, resulted in many South Africans only obtaining enabling documents such as birth certificates at a later stage and not according to the stipulated timeframes in the prescripts. Children were not registered on time and most of the people's information was not captured or updated on the National Population Register. For example, a child should be registered for a birth certificate within 30 days of birth and should be in possession of a thirteen-digit bar coded identity document (ID) at the age of 16 years (Birth and Death Registration Act 51 of 1992).

This problem persisted until the ushering in of the new democratic South Africa in 1994. Key to the then leadership was to ensure a better life for all through the provision of equal opportunities for obtaining services, and continuous feedback to society. The Batho Pele Principles and other legislative frameworks, such as the Public Finance Management Act (1 of 1999), were promulgated to serve as a guide for service delivery enhancement. It is therefore critical for every department to implement these Acts in order to achieve their objectives of improving people's lives.

Effective service delivery is imperative for all government institutions. It is only possible in the context of good governance and ethics. Government departments need to be flexible and adaptable, and quick to learn new ways when conditions change so that service delivery can be improved. As stated in Van der Walddt (2004:5), 'Good governance is the acquisition of and accountability for the application of political authority to the direction of public affairs and the management of public resources. It is all about the process of decision making and the process by which these decisions are implemented as well as management of the development process. It is an institutional environment when citizens interact among themselves and with government institutions and officials'.

Transparency, accountability, openness in reporting, disclosure of information, and rewards for outstanding performance (both operational and financial) are accepted as vital for the practice of good co-operative governance within both the public and the private sector (Armstrong, 1988:13). The objective of good governance is attained when institutions demonstrate their public accountability and conduct their business within acceptable ethical standards. This 'demonstration' will take the form of reporting, setting of achievable standards, proper planning, monitoring, controlling and evaluation (Van der Walddt, 2004:26).

According to Van der Waldt (2004:11-12), good governance has eight characteristics that may be outlined as follows:

1.3 Rule of Law

Good governance requires fair legal frames that are enforced impartially and require independent judiciary and incorruptible policy enforcement. One of the statutes that serve as guidelines for fairness at the workplace is the Labour Relations Act (66 of 1995). The purpose of this Act is to harmonise the employer and employee relationship. Section 23 (1) of the Constitution (1996) states that everyone has the right to fair labour practice. Amongst others, the Act seeks to strengthen workplace democracy by promoting the right to fair labour practice, to form or join any union, and to organise and bargain collectively (Labour Relations Act, No 66 of 1995).

1.3.1 Transparency

All decisions should be taken in line with applicable rules and regulations and those affected should be involved at all levels. Services should be delivered in a transparent manner. This is one of the *Batho Pele* Principles.

1.3.2 Responsiveness or Service Standards:

Many government departments, including the DHA, are expected to meet the set service standards. Should they fail to do so, departments are required to issue an apology, to seek to correct this shortcoming and to maintain regular updates with the client. For example, there is often a delay by the DHA in issuing documents, which results in numerous complaints and dissatisfaction of public members and the media in the department's performance. This damages the department's image. Good governance requires institutions to try and serve all their stakeholders within a reasonable, set timeframe.

1.3.3 Consensus

Good governance requires a broad understanding of the historical, cultural, and social background of any given community. Each community may hold a unique viewpoint, which should be analysed and debated in order to reach a consensus on what would be in the best interest of society as a whole, and how this can be achieved. One such example is the accessibility of services. Achieving this would

require initial consultation with the community and consensus on a suitable location on which to establish a service. It is important to determine the types of services people need and when they need them.

1.3.4 Equity and inclusiveness:

In order to obtain the proper buy-in, it is important that services include all citizens on an equal basis. Resources should be distributed according to the needs of individuals. Services must reach all – irrespective of colour, gender, culture and historical background.

1.3.5 Effectiveness and efficiency:

Good governance means that good results should be attained with optimal use of resources. It is important to remember that resources are scarce and thus should be utilised for the benefit of all who deserve assistance. For example, social grants should be given to elderly people and children who are in need of such grants. Accordingly, it is important that such beneficiaries are able to obtain enabling documents to receive such services.

1.3.6 Participation

Citizens should be able to express their views either directly or through legitimate intermediate institutions or representatives. Government should be able to identify people's needs and to meet these accordingly. Concerns and problems encountered by clients should be reported without fear of being victimised or badly treated.

1.3.7 Accountability

Accountability is critical for both public and private sectors. Every organisation must be accountable to the public and their institutional stakeholders, especially those who are affected by the decisions or actions taken. Accountability should be enforced together with transparency and the rule of law. Public institutions need to demonstrate that public taxes are spent in accordance with their legal mandates and that high quality services are rendered to clients and communities. Good, stable and regular connection and interaction between authorities on all government levels and the public they serve are examples of good governance. They promote

responsiveness and are indicative of proactive decisions and actions and ultimately the provision of quality services (Du Toit, 2002:65).

The main focus of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (ANC, 1993) is people's expectations of how services should be delivered. It is critically important to assess perceptions of the community regarding service delivery and communication by the DHA in the Lichtenburg Office. Findings will lead to recommendations that will enhance the department's commitment to efficient, caring and effective administration.

The DHA's aim is to, at national level, protect and regulate the interests of the country's inhabitants regarding their individual status, their identity and specific rights and powers and to manage a supporting service for these activities. There are two core functions, namely civic services and immigration services. Civic services grant specified rights to eligible people by issuing valid documents within the targeted delivery period. Its mandates are the Identification Act (68 of 1997) as amended; the Birth and Death Registration Act (51 of 1992) as amended; the South African Citizenship Act (88 of 1995) as amended; and the South African Passports and Travel Documents Act (4 of 1994) as amended. Immigration services find their basis in the Immigration Act (13 of 2002), as amended. This Act controls the immigration of various categories of foreigners into and out of the country within prescribed delivery targets. The department has to enhance its ability to discharge its responsibilities to the citizens as required in any democratic development state and by the Constitution of the country. It remains critical that DHA focuses on improving to continue to put the client at the centre of service delivery (DHA: Strategic Plan, 2012: 17).

Another objective of the department is to improve the provision of services and products to eligible citizens and residents by reducing the time taken to issue valid documents. This necessitates increased interaction between public members and government actions in order to achieve this objective (DHA: Strategic Plan, 2012: 19).

In the light of this seemingly unsatisfactory state of affairs, the problem that this study seeks to address is how the community perceives communication and service delivery by the DHA in Lichtenburg.

1.4 Problem Statement

The Batho Pele is a framework with two primary functions. The first function is the delivery of services to citizens who are treated as customers or clients and can hold public officials accountable for the delivery and the quality of public services. The second function is the channelling of the energy and commitment of public officials to introduce customer-focused ways of executing their functions and doing their work (Van der Walddt, 2004:89).

In striving to adhere to these functions the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA experiences certain problems which can affect the effective delivery of services and which may hamper effective communication between the citizens and the Office.

Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public service they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered. There are many ways to consult users of services, including conducting customer surveys; interviews with individual users; consultation and communication with groups. These aspects are seemingly not high on the priority list of the Lichtenburg Office and it is not known what the quality of services is or even whether the Office makes use of effective communication activities to consult with the public.

There are also no known standards that are precise and measurable in order for the public to judge for themselves whether they are receiving what was promised. These standards should cover processes, such as the length of time taken to authorise a housing claim, to issue a passport or ID, or even to respond to letters. Standards form the point of departure of assessing the services delivered by employees and they also determine the level of satisfaction that the public experiences.

Citizens should be treated with consideration and respect. It seems that this aspect is not always high on the agenda of the employees. These aspects should be identified quickly and accurately when services are falling below the promised standards and procedures must be in place to remedy the situation. This should be done at the individual transactional level with the public, as well as at the organisational level, in relation to the entire service delivery programme.

These observations will be further scientifically unveiled and analysed in this study to determine what the real situation is. The problem statement of this study can

therefore be described as follows: ***What are the perceptions of the public of the Lichtenburg Office of the Department of Home Affairs regarding service delivery and communication.***

1.4.1. Research Questions

To analyse the problem statement specific research questions have been identified. These questions are as follows:

- What are the theoretical guidelines and principles that form the foundation of the phenomenon of effective service delivery in the government institutions?
- What theoretical guidelines and principles form the foundation of the phenomenon of effective communication with special reference to government institutions?
- What do the Batho Pele principles state regarding communication and effective service delivery in government institutions?
- What is the current state of affairs in the Lichtenburg Office of the Department of Home Affairs regarding satisfactory communication practices and effective service delivery performance?

1.4.2 Research Objectives

The study's research objectives, based on the primary and the secondary research questions, are as follows:

- To analyse the theoretical guidelines and principles that form the foundation of the phenomenon of effective service delivery in the government institutions.
- To analyse the theoretical guidelines and principles that form the foundation of the phenomenon of effective communication with special reference to government institutions.
- To establish what the Batho Pele principles state regarding effective communication and service delivery in government institutions.
- To determine the current state of affairs in the Lichtenburg Office of the Department of Home Affairs regarding satisfactory communication practices and effective service delivery actions.

1.4.3 Hypothesis

Neuman (1997:108) asserts that a hypothesis is a proposition to be tested or a tentative statement of relationships between two variables. Hypotheses provide the theoretical base for research and should be tested for validity or invalidity through data collection (mainly on the basis of questionnaires) and analysis.

A hypothesis is also a prediction of what the researcher thinks the survey will show. This can be achieved by, inter alia, interviews and as mentioned the administering of questionnaires. A questionnaire forms part of this study as it provides the data necessary to test the hypothesis. This way of operation is typically related to a quantitative study.

The hypothesis that will be tested in this study is as follows:

According to the community around Lichtenburg, service delivery and related communication practices in the Lichtenburg Office of the Department of Home Affairs are poor, and this leads to unsatisfied citizens.

1.4.4 Research Design and Methodology

The selection of a research design depends on what the study aims to achieve, as well as the best way of conducting the study (Babbie, 2010:91). In order to achieve the research objectives listed above, information has been sought through the review of literature pertinent to the research topic, and this study adopted the quantitative approach. Quantitative research is defined as a systematic, empirical investigation of a social phenomenon using statistical, mathematical or computational techniques. According to Du Plooy (2006:29).

The following assumptions guide the researcher when conducting a quantitative study:

- Empirical observations, experiences or experiments are the only source of real knowledge:
- Empirical evaluations are applied, in other words, the hypothesis which is formulated about the nature of the reality can be accepted or rejected based on the findings.

- The hypothesis can be used to predict and control the phenomenon that is being studied.
- Observations can be measured in quantitative terms.

Methodology is thus concerned with how the researcher goes about finding whether a problem of some kind exists in a community and then seeks solutions to the problem (Goddard, 2001:16). It is an argument about why the problem exists, steps to analyse the problem and then find the best approach through research to solving the problem identified (Van der Waldt, 2001).

Neuman (1997:418) asserts that research is the instrument by which the data describe the environment, present the phenomenon in written words, create phrases and/or symbols representing people, and describe actions and events in social life. In this paradigm, this research is, as mentioned, quantitative in nature, as it assesses the perceptions of individuals within the Lichtenburg community in terms of how they view communication and service delivery processes. The perceptions will be tested by means of a close ended questionnaire and data will be presented in numbers.

1.4.5 Literature review

A literature review lays the foundation on which the research is based, and also provides current knowledge on the topic of the study (Fink, 2010:196). The review of existing literature in this study includes legislation and explores best practices regarding service delivery and good communication practices within the context of serving the community. The relevant literature has been identified and analysed using sources such as journal articles, dissertations, books and scholarly articles, as well as government policy documents and reports on the research topic. Information on the internal functioning activities of the Lichtenburg Office of the Department of Home Affairs has been made available to the researcher by management.

1.4.6. Databases consulted

The following data bases have been consulted in the literature review of this study and to determine whether similar studies have been undertaken in the past:

- Sabinet database
- Catalogue of books : Ferdinand Postma library (North West University)
- Catalogue of theses and dissertations of South African Universities (NEXUS).

1.4.7 Data collection

As Struwig and Stead (2001: 41) suggest, data can be collected through the use of questionnaires, observations, experiments, interviews, documents, photographs and films. The fundamental technique for gathering information in quantitative studies is, however, the questionnaire. In this research, data were collected by a questionnaire, the analysis of relevant literature and observations. Struwig and Stead (2001:41) further elaborate that there are no strict guidelines about the formulation of a questionnaire. The questionnaires developed for this study were however compiled according to the principles laid down in theory. A 5-point Likert scale was used in the following way:

AS = Agree Strongly, A = Agree, AD = neither agree nor disagree, D = Disagree; and DS = Disagree Strongly.

1.4.8 Data analysis

The primary role of quantitative research is to test the hypothesis on the basis of data produced from the questionnaire. This approach therefore analysed the collected data and drew conclusions from this (Struwig & Stead, 2001). The analysis of the data was undertaken with the assistance of the NWU Statistical Services. This analysis ensured that the data were scientifically administered and presented.

1.4.9 Scope of the study

The study was conducted at the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA. The intention was to test the community's perceptions and obtain feedback from them with regard to the effectiveness of service delivery and the quality of communication.

1.4.10 Population

According to Mouton (1998: 134), the population is a collection of objects, events or individuals having some common characteristics that the researcher is interested in

studying. The population in this study was comprised of community members from around Lichtenburg who visit the DHA for various services, such as the:

- registration of births,
- registration of deaths,
- registration of marriages (both civil and customary marriages),
- application for identity documents (permanent and temporary identity documents),
- application for permits (work, study, business, corporate and visitors permits),
- amendments, rectification, collection of documents and enquiries,
- application for passports (permanent, temporary, official and maxi passport).

1.4.11 Sampling Techniques

Sampling is done usually because it is impossible to test every single individual in the population. The researcher kept in mind that the ideal scenario is to test as many individuals as possible to reach the best possible results within the constraints of a mini-dissertation. The researcher chose probability sampling as a technique to select individuals. With this type of population sampling, every individual of the population has an equal chance of being selected as a subject of the study. This method guarantees that the selection process is completely randomized and without bias. In this research, sampling was performed on every 10th client who visited the DHA offices in Lichtenburg for services, which means that every client had an equal chance of being selected to form part of the study. Elaboration on the sampling procedures will be presented in Chapter 4.

1.5 Definition and Explanation of Key Concepts

It is important to define and explain the key concepts used in this study to assist in the understanding of all who will use this document for reference purposes and for any other academic endeavours.

Batho Pele Principles – A government-adopted document that outlines how services should be rendered to meet the needs of the people. The document reflects eight principles.

Civic services – One of the core functions of the DHA dealing mainly with all civic service related matters. These include the issuing of identity documents; passports; and birth, marriage and death certificates (DHA: Strategic Plan, 2009).

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) –An Act that serves as the supreme law of the country.

Department of Home Affairs (DHA) – The name of the government department under study.

Identity Document (ID) –A green thirteen-digit, bar-coded book issued by the DHA.

Immigration services – A core function of the DHA dealing with the control of the influx of people to and from the country. It has units such as an inspectorate, and permitting and border management offices.

National Population Register (NPR) – Every South African is required by law to be registered with the DHA in order to be counted for statistical purposes.

Strategic Plan –A government-adopted document that maps out future plans, taking the present as a baseline (DHA, Strategic Plan: 2009/ 10-10/11).

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for the Lichtenburg Office of the Department of Home Affairs in the following ways:

It determines scientifically what the perception of the community has on how effective the services are that the Department delivers.

It gives a scientific indication of what the community think about the effectiveness of communication channels between them and the office.

On the basis of the said questionnaire the researcher was able to acquire data which was analysed and used to inform the Lichtenburg Office of the Department of Home Affairs on possible problems regarding the two mentioned aspects.

1.7 Ethical Considerations

The participants were assured that their response would not harm or embarrass them. They were informed that they would not receive any unpleasant treatment because of their participation. This was fully outlined in the consent form. Every client was also debriefed in order to handle any negative effects. The study strove to obtain knowledge through means that were honest, reliable and had integrity (Struwig & Stead, 2001).

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter serves to present a road map of the research that was undertaken. The research sought to assess the perceptions of the community regarding quality service delivery and effective communication by the Lichtenburg Office of the Department of Home Affairs. Accordingly, the chapters making up the report examine the background to the study, and outline the issues of concern with regard to service delivery communication within the Lichtenburg Office of the Department of Home Affairs.

The research problem was to establish whether the community was of the opinion that the functioning of the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA is of a high standard and whether the community members are treated with dignity when they visit the Office for specialised services.

Findings obtained will assist the top leadership in identifying problems and in laying the foundation for excellent management activities.

The research questions related to the study were formulated and formed the foundation of the objectives of the study. A hypothesis was developed which states that: ***Effective service delivery and related effective communication practices in the Lichtenburg Office of the Department of Home Affairs are, according to the community around Lichtenburg, poor and this leads to unsatisfied citizens.***

With this in mind, the methodology of the study was analysed as correlated with the empirical study presented in Chapter 4. In order to achieve the research objectives listed in this chapter, information was sought through the review of literature

pertinent to the research topic. This study adopted a quantitative approach. Concepts used in this study were also defined.

The big challenge was to establish whether the public servants were aware of the fact that they are there to serve the members of the public when they visit the department.

With this chapter as background the next chapter will focus on the Theory and Principles of quality service delivery. It includes a discussion of the Batho Pele principles which is an important document for service delivery. This is an important chapter because it will partially present the scientific information on which the questionnaire was developed.

- Questionnaires cannot be developed and compiled without a theoretical foundation. In this regard, the first relevant objectives of the study read as follows:
- ***To analyse the theoretical guidelines and principles that form the foundation of the phenomenon of effective service delivery in the government context.***

CHAPTER 2: EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS.

2.1 Introduction

Institutions are purposeful societal units and their existence relies on the delivery of effective services and employees who perform different tasks to contribute to the institutional goals. For any institution to function with any degree of effectiveness, all managers must assume that their subordinates comply with orders and carry out tasks as planned. Such tasks, performed according to these orders, contribute in an integrated manner to the institution's goals (Hodgson, 2006:1; Dessler, 1986:6).

An institution's success thus depends on the extent to which employees identify themselves with the institution's values and on their willingness to perform their roles beyond expectations. In an attempt to increase efficiency and flexibility, many institutions are experimenting with team-building projects. Excellent team-work can be rewarded by performance incentives and awards. Team members' responsibilities should however be outlined and communicated clearly, and monitored and assessed by management at the end of a given period to determine whether the employees in the teams deliver effective services to the public (Hodgson, 2006:1-19; Dessler, 1986).

This chapter describes service delivery as a phenomenon in South African government institutions, and more specifically what effective service delivery is. It defines the characteristics of service delivery, and examines service delivery in government institutions. The chapter also analyses the Batho Pele Principles and legislation on service delivery, and discusses the constraints applicable to service delivery. The legislation will be discussed in the latter part of the chapter after effective service delivery has been highlighted.

2.2 Characteristics of Service Delivery

One of the most complex matters of any government is determining what citizens' most crucial needs are. This is because these needs always exceed the available human, financial and most other resources of government. It is therefore imperative for government to **identify** and **prioritise** the needs that should be met. Government needs to achieve this whilst still **maintaining political stability**, because if services

Institutions that provide services to customers have to work hard at all times to ensure that they produce high-quality work. It is important that service delivery improvement plans are adopted, which specify how service delivery will be monitored and reported on as well as the management of information systems that will support such initiatives. Putting institutional and system arrangements in place will ensure that set standards regarding service delivery are met. The said set standard of services for customers and the financial systems that should support the implementation of the standardised services should also be in place (Van der Walddt & Du Toit, 1997).

Emphasising the role of good administration is vital when it comes to effective service delivery. When services are unacceptable to service users, the reasons are frequently poor administration. The challenge for managers is to clarify the importance of good administration in supporting both frontline delivery of services and corporate objectives such as performance management. The provision of human resources (such as staff) and non-human resources (such as computers), the development of personnel and the continuous updating of policies to meet the emerging needs provide important support for the frontline delivery of services. As the institutions seek to provide more user-centred services, the need for creativity and innovation throughout becomes greater. Innovation and creativity may also be obtained from frontline service providers, as they deal with clients on a daily basis and thus have a better understanding of their needs (Public Service Commission, Directorate Communication and Information Services, 2005. Evaluation of Service Standards in the Public Service. Pretoria: ISBN: 0-621-35939-4 p10-16).

There are two distinct approaches to maintaining and developing quality services. The **first approach**, which is taken from manufacturing industries, is 'quality assurance' or 'quality control'. This involves someone with responsibility and expertise in the field of quality assurance examining the examples of the product or the service and judging them according to set minimum standards. Identification of substandard services results in an intervention to address the individual concern or the overall performance of the group. Training will be provided for the individual or group to address the problem. Any negligence identified will result in disciplinary action. This is a regulatory approach that is intended to identify and rectify poor practice in a bid to prevent people from poor performance (PSC, 2005:10-16).

The **second approach** is '**quality improvement**'. Here the service providers reflect on the quality of their work and explore ways of improving it. Some of these ways may involve upgrading technology used by that institution, implementing quality checking devices and/or timeous updating of guiding legislative frameworks. This is a developmental approach that is intended to enable people to do their best when performing their tasks (PSC, 2005:10-16).

Effective service delivery is a situation where employees are properly trained and have access to the necessary resources or equipment, have the required amount of time to perform their roles with accuracy and are given the necessary support to become professional employees. Employees should be encouraged and motivated by their superiors to deliver quality work. Unacceptable conduct should be identified and be dealt with in line with the designed legislative framework. Employees should be familiarised with the Code of Conduct on a regular basis to prevent them from losing sight of what is expected from them (Business Dictionary, 2013).

In order for an employee to deliver effective services to the public he or she must take internal factors such as accountability and responsibility for all activities performed in the context of the work. If this can be achieved frontline clerks will motivate themselves to strive for work performance that is above average and will find focus in excellent service delivery. Expecting responsibility and accountability, founded on high motivation, will then act as a pillar for employees in an institution such as the DHA. These internal factors that stimulate the desire and energy in people to continually be employees committed to a job are important to secure the delivery of quality services (Business Dictionary. 2013).

Essential skills for dealing with clients directly require certain skills. These include communication skills (both written and verbal), listening skills, interviewing skills, problem-solving skills and analytical skills. When a problem is presented, the service provider should be able to interview the customer to get to the root of the problem, listen attentively, and analyse the problem in order to make an informed decision. Having empathy with the customer is critical for the service provider. Unnecessary delays and requirements must be avoided. For example, empathetic frontline clerks will not leave clients waiting in a queue while they enjoy their lunch or tea. All officials in any position whether providing guidelines or dealing with clients

directly should be endowed with sensitivity and should strive to be objective in their execution of tasks (Hattingh, 1998).

Working for public institutions involves engaging with the activities of many different stakeholders, including other government departments. For example, in approving applications for social grants, the Department of Social Development is reliant on supporting documents such as birth certificates and IDs obtained from the DHA. Thus working in partnership with other stakeholders helps the DHA to deliver quality service with their assistance and also to assist other institutions to reach their objectives within a given timeframe (DHA, Strategic Plan, 2011/12).

It is critical to service delivery that both human and non-human resources be utilised in the process. Technology should be upgraded on a regular basis and officials should be trained to use it. Officials should also be familiar with government's legislative framework and others policies on service delivery. Skills audits need to be conducted so that proper training is offered to the relevant people. The public should be kept informed about the services they can obtain from government departments as well as the required service standards they can expect for each of the departments. In those instances in which human error has occurred, there should be room for redress and feedback should be provided to improve customer satisfaction (Van der Walddt, 2004:83).

2.4 Service Delivery in Practice

Enhancement of service delivery reform in South Africa stemmed directly from the triumph of democracy and the promise made by the newly elected government of a better life for all, especially for the most historically disadvantaged sectors of society. The public service which is the principal vehicle through which this promise of a better life for all was to be accomplished became the centre piece of public attention. Access to public services is a right enshrined in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and, in particular, Article 21 (2) which states that everyone has the right of equal access to public services. The public service must, in order to deliver services, be governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in the Constitution, which are human dignity, the achievement of equality, the advancement of human rights and freedoms, non-racialism and non-sexism. Section 195 (1) of the

Constitution further stipulates other principles that should inform public service delivery, namely:

- i. *Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias,*
- ii. *People's needs must be responded to and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy making,*

Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information, and

Public administration should be development oriented (Van der Waldt, 2004:85-86).

Expectations of service providers (from the employer and customers) and from the end (customers) users should be clearly defined. The approach requires greater delegation by authorities, more flexibility and greater attention to the training and development of staff in order to obtain the payoff of improved service delivery (Van der Waldt, 2004:83).

Struwig and Stead (2001:65) stated that "in the context of governance, service delivery is the result of the intentions and decisions of government and government institutions". The ultimate goal of every government should be to create a good quality of life for all. The attainment of a good quality of life for all demands an environment that provides equal opportunities for all individuals to develop maintain and enjoy a satisfactory quality of life. This can be achieved in an environment in which equal opportunities exist for all individuals to subsist, where people feel safe and are able to live without fear of social, political and economic disruption. It is on this basis that government should govern to ensure that quality services can be provided to society to enjoy a good life (Du Toit, 2001:63).

Gildenhuys and Knipe (2000) discuss various mechanisms that can be put in place to enhance service delivery. These may be from the public themselves, private institutions or non-governmental organisations.

2.4.1 Voluntarism

This is when people come together voluntarily to provide community services. It is a common practice in South Africa, with recent examples being the voluntary cleaning of streets in preparation for the 2010 Fifa World Cup. Communities may also perform certain voluntary tasks for the public's benefit (Mandela day projects). Voluntarism thus involves people offering their services without remuneration reward or profit. The drawback, however, it is that people can withdraw at any time before the completion of the project. Often a lack of commitment is experienced and, because of this, many projects end up not being completed on time (Gildenhuys & Knipe, 2000:65).

2.4.2 External suppliers

This is when an institution finds that it cannot meet certain needs because of a lack of resources, technical knowhow or experience of officials. In this instance, outsiders with relevant expertise are invited to fill the vacuum and address the needs of the community. Leaning on external suppliers to address the needs of the community is however problematic. The drawback is that it is now expected from external suppliers to take over the primary function of institutions and that is to address the needs of the public (Gildenhuys & Knipe, 2000:66).

2.4.3 Private contractors

Services that cannot be performed by public institutions are outsourced to private contractors. This may include the provision of goods and services such as equipment, and purchasing office furniture and stationery. Suppliers must be registered with the institution's data base to be eligible for the contract (Gildenhuys & Knipe, 2000).

All of these mechanisms are focused on the enhancement of service delivery to the communities. The problem is however that the institution loses control over its core business for which it was created and in the process quality service delivery may be jeopardised.

Empowerment is a crucial concept in service delivery. It begins with training, providing tools to perform the work, and recognising individual employees' potential

or gaps in their knowledge or performance. Empowerment should be nurtured by showing support and trust, listening and by helping employees to resolve the problems they come across and removing any obstacles or conditions that make their work more complicated. Employees should feel free to discuss issues that concern them with supervisors. Management should also create a platform for information-sharing in a relaxed atmosphere, such as at team building sessions. This should be done with the intention of empowering all staff (Gildenhuis & Knipe, 2000).

Empowered customer service frontline clerks are not only knowledgeable about the service they provide but can also impart knowledge to their customers. They will demonstrate confidence but not arrogance, friendliness but not familiarity, helpfulness but not insistence, and attentiveness but not intrusiveness. They will act in the best interests of the institution. Frontline clerks should project a strong, positive image of the organisation and a sincere interest in helping the customers. Following interaction with the clerks, customers should feel content about doing business with an institution whose employees are warm, friendly, efficient and competent (Gildenhuis & Knipe, 2000).

This should not be confined to the frontline clerks who are expected to maintain a sound image of the institution but should also apply to all employees within an institution. All directorates, including those that provide support such as supply chain management and human resources, should play their role in the delivery of quality services. For example, the human resource unit should ensure that there is enough human resources capacity to perform the work and the supply-chain management unit should ensure timely purchasing of goods and services. Failure of one unit will prevent the whole institution from achieving its objectives.

2.5 Description of effective Service Delivery

Every institution is expected to deliver quality service to all its clients. Norms, standards and procedures are determined and outlined to everyone who is expected to render or receive a service. Performance has to be managed and evaluated according to the set standards at the end of every given term, and outcomes are communicated accordingly to the affected individuals who receive the services (Green Paper, 1996).

It is generally accepted in theory that a government has a particular responsibility of ensuring the wellbeing of all citizens. The major challenge facing governments is how service delivery can best be improved to achieve their responsibilities and to fulfil citizens' needs. Citizens depend on government to render services that are in line with what they need and which cannot be provided by themselves. It is therefore critical for the government to promote and maintain a high standard of professional ethics in order to promote continuous improvement in quality, quantity and equity of service provisioning (Green Paper, 1996).

Improving service delivery means redressing the imbalances of the past and a shift away from inward-looking, bureaucratic systems, processes and attitudes as well as searching for new ways of working that put the needs of the public first. Service delivery by institutions is said to be effective when it is in line with the needs of its clients, when it is rendered within a specific timeframe and when it meets the required quality standards. Clients must however be satisfied with the quality of service they received from their service provider (Green Paper, 1996).

For government to render effective service delivery, the following factors should be taken into consideration.

2.5.1 Prioritisation of needs

Government operates with limited resources, such as financial and human resources. Every department has therefore to determine the most critical needs that it has to satisfy and list them in order of priority. Prioritisation is crucial because in most instances the needs always exceed the available human and financial resources (Commission for Africa, 2005:138). Another critical aspect for managers in the process of the effective delivery of services is the measurement of the performance of all individuals within the institution. Managers have to ensure that performance agreements are in place so that performance appraisals can be performed to determine whether officials are doing the task they should do effectively. The performance agreement should thus outline the standards, indicators and activities to be achieved by the official. Performance should be monitored daily and assessed on a quarterly and yearly basis (Performance management, 2013).

Performance management is about getting better results through people. It contains a range of various activities, the primary aim of which is to help managers obtain improved performance from their staff, who will be rewarded accordingly. It is also concerned the development of the potential of individuals so they become capable of taking over greater responsibility. It is thus a tool to integrate two levels in the organisations: it links the individual and the team to the strategic goals through an appropriate organisation and management framework. At individual level, it links the people management process to strategic goals coherently by starting with human resource planning, knowing the purpose of the job and what competencies are required to do the job. It is the basis of a set of processes designed to attract, retain, support and develop staff and set them up to succeed (Van der Waldt, 2004).

2.5.2 Capacity to deliver

The development of professional staff is an essential part of building capacity in an institution to ensure that effective services are provided to the public. There is a need for properly trained and experienced public servants to operate within their systems. Staff members need to be updated regularly to keep abreast of new developments and changes in departments. This is essential for collecting and managing data based on the evidence of what provides effective service. Sound public administration requires effective managerial systems that are publically accountable. Management should be able also to operate within sound administrative systems supported by state of the art managerial practices (Commission for Africa: 2005:138).

Transparency is also a crucial requirement in all government institutions and it plays an important role in the delivery of effective services to the public. A primary requirement in government is society's ability to establish how the elected government is performing. This implies that society should be able to demand information from governmental institutions to determine the success or failure of policies and related actions of the government. The availability of valid information increases the ability of members of the society to participate in policy making and in monitoring the performance of public institutions. Budget transparency is one of the most crucial requirements for effective service delivery in government institutions. It

guides the planning process of the organisation. The planned objectives of departments are always determined by the availability of funds. When citizens engage in the issues that affect them, they can help to ensure that power and public funds are used wisely and focused on effective service delivery.

As a principle for effective service delivery, the South African Public Service Commission states in its public service report (2005:23) that services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias. Services should be provided to all irrespective of their historical background, gender, race or religion. Government services should reach even those in the far-flung areas and farms and not only in urban areas. Many departments have resorted to using mobile units that are fully capacitated to render full services like any other well-established office. These mobile units can access far-flung remote areas and thus reduce the need for clients to travel to access services. However, clients can only receive the full benefits of such services if they have access to them. Access in this sense refers to services provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias (White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele) (Government Gazette 18340, 1 October 1997).

2.5.3 Ethical conduct

A traditional principle for officials is to adhere to ethical conduct. Most codes of conduct require that the basic values governing government institutions should be honoured. The South African Code of Conduct requires that: "An employee should be faithful to the Republic, put the interest of the public first, be loyal, execute the policies of the government and abide by all statutory and other instructions applicable to his or her conduct and duties". Adhering to these principles will play a positive role in assisting government institutions to deliver effective services (White Paper, 1997).

An employee should promote the wellbeing of society, serve the public in an unbiased manner, be polite, helpful and reasonably accessible, and not discriminate unfairly against any member of the public. Employees should strive to achieve the objectives of their institution in a cost-effective manner, be punctual in the execution of their duties, execute their duties in a professional manner, and should not engage in activities that conflict with the execution of their duties. Further, employees should

not use their position to obtain private benefits, or disclose officials' information for personal gain but rather only for the benefit of the organisation. Failure to comply with these guidelines will not only result in disciplinary action been taken against the perpetrator, but effective service delivery by these officials will remain an illusion (White Paper, 1997).

The above-mentioned guidelines are essential and should promote ethical conduct, the failure of which promotes an environment conducive to corruption. Corruption not only hampers effective service delivery but also prevents proper accountability as a real reason for lack of performance (Van der Waldt, 2004).

In instances in which there is a lack of proper monitoring, transparency and public accountability, corruption is bound to happen. To address this, government has to introduce strict measures and legislation to augment the code of conduct in an effort to promote a sense of responsibility in all employees.

2.6 Service delivery in Government institutions

Society needs the public service sector to create the policies and services that are effective and efficient in meeting needs. In order to maximise its ability to produce the required performance according to whatever criteria of performance society has set for it, the public service sector needs to be aware of the contemporary political and managerial processes. The need to find more effective ways of working and serving the public has been acknowledged throughout government and is identified in policy documents such as *Batho Pele* (White Paper, 1997). The creation of a people-centred public service remains a priority for the government of the day (Van der Waldt, 2004).

Service delivery is only possible in the context of 'good governance'. Good governance embraces all management tools, namely for planning, controlling, monitoring and evaluating performance. Managers should be able to plan, control, monitor, evaluate performance and address any gaps that might be identified in employees' work performance within the institution. Results should be attained using the available resources optimally. The government has adopted five strategic objectives that are central to all government departments. These are poverty alleviation, job creation, social security, crime and corruption, and rural development.

Enhancement of service delivery is critical in all government departments for the attainment of these strategic objectives (Green Paper, 1996).

Service delivery concerns the provision of a product or service by a government or government body to a community to whom the service was promised, or which is expected by that community. It is important to understand that service quality is not negotiable in the public sector. Therefore, to achieve quality, the institution must understand the needs of the clients they serve. Customers' satisfaction should thus be key in all spheres of government (Green Paper, 1996).

Government in South Africa is divided into three spheres: local, provincial and national. Each sphere's responsibilities are outlined in the Constitution. National government makes laws and sets policies for the whole country. Provincial government can make and administer provincial laws in its areas of jurisdiction (for example, liquor licences, provincial planning, cultural matters, recreation, roads and traffic). It also shares certain areas of responsibility with national government, such as health, education and social services (South African government online, 2013).

The broad service delivery strategy of central government should be considered as an integral part of formulating the relevant policy or programme for the whole country. Central considerations include the following.

Depending on the nature of the policy and the choice of policy instrument, options for which agencies should deliver the policy could range from government (including other jurisdictions and agencies) to non-profit and private sector partners. Where third party providers are funded to deliver services, consideration needs to be given to the basis on which that funding is provided. Options can include input funding, purchasing clearly defined outputs, or funding outcomes with incentives for meeting these. Where policy or programme objectives require that funded organisations co-operate on the ground and develop partnership arrangements, care needs to be taken to design competitive tendering arrangements to appropriately reflect this. A further tension needing deliberation is the extent to which the service delivery strategy effectively determines the details of the service delivery organizations' operations, or leaves flexibility for the agencies to work this out (South African government online, 2013).

In government, a service delivery strategy requires regular renewal due to continually evolving and new community expectations. To ensure clear accountability for effective implementation of policy service delivery agencies must work within a well-defined governance structure. There should be an agreement regarding performance monitoring, compliance, and reporting requirements so that the necessary data-capture mechanisms can be built into the day-to-day business processes of the institution (South African government online, 2013).

In order to understand whether a policy and its implementation have truly been effective institutions must view service delivery through the lenses of the end clients. This gives the institution an understanding of how the client feels about the services and what outcomes the policy is actually achieving (South African government online, 2013). The strategic plan for every institution is a guiding tool on what must be done by when and how. Objectives are set with measurable standards and responsible people are assigned to carry out the tasks. Adjustments should be based on regular feedback and review, since the aim of any institution is to improve service delivery on a continual basis. If all are adhered to, good results can be obtained (Harrison, 1993:49).

The heart of effective service delivery can be found in the Batho Pele principles and every institution, including the DHA, should try its best to implement them successfully. These principles should therefore be analysed.

2.7 The *Batho Pele* Principles and Service Delivery

The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele) has the principal role of transforming the South African public service into a coherent, representative, competent and democratic instrument for executing government policies and meeting the needs of the people. There is no issue in South Africa more important than improving the delivery of public services. An efficient, equitable and accountable public service is the hallmark of any democratic society (Van der Walddt, 2004).

In view of South Africa's poor democratic history, the public service transformation process has two distinct aims, namely to improve the delivery of services to all people and to demonstrate that South Africa has become a truly democratic society.

The public service in South Africa has undergone a radical transformation through the policy called Batho Pele, which means 'People First'. The policy strives to ensure the transformation of service delivery, resulting in a more satisfied public and client base. The principles contained in this policy framework must be translated into action by all the state departments (White Paper, 1997).

According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996), these principles are aligned with the Constitutional ideals of:

- promoting and maintaining high standards of professional ethics;
- providing service impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias;
- utilising resources efficiently and effectively;
- responding to people's needs and encouraging citizens to participate in policy making; and
- rendering an accountable, transparent, and development-oriented public administration.

The Batho Pele Principles aim to achieve visible results in all government sectors and to put people first in terms of service delivery. Public servants are held accountable for services they provide to clients. When rendering services, officials need to identify customers' needs and priorities; the level of services currently provided; inform the clients about the service standards; and monitor the delivery of services against results. The two primary functions of the Batho Pele Principles are the delivery of services to citizens where the citizens can hold public officials accountable; and channelling the commitment and energy of public officials to introduce more customer-focused ways of executing their functions and their work (Green Paper, 1996).

The improvement of service delivery cannot be achieved in isolation from other government functions. New management actions will be needed, such as taking increased responsibility for individual managers to deliver specific results; increased authority to take management decisions and to delegate managerial responsibility and authority to lower levels; and transparency about the results achieved and resources consumed (Van der Walddt, 2004: 89).

2.7.1 Analysis of the *Batho Pele* Principles

The *Batho Pele* is a framework with, as mentioned, two primary functions. The first function is the delivery of services to citizens who are treated as customers or clients and can hold public officials accountable for the delivery and the quality of public services. The second function is the channelling of the energy and commitment of public officials to introduce customer-focused ways of executing their functions and doing their work (White Paper, 1997).

The eight principles of Batho Pele are broad enough to embrace every public service and also specific enough to ensure tangible benefits. All public servants must prepare themselves for the challenging and rewarding task of implementing Batho Pele. The eight principles of Batho Pele are as follows (White Paper, 1997):

2.7.1.1 Consultation

Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public service they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services that should be or are offered to them. There are many ways to consult users of services, including conducting customer surveys; interviews with individual users; consultation with groups; and holding meetings with consumer representative bodies, NGOs and CBOs. Often, more than one method of consultation will be necessary to ensure comprehensiveness and representativeness. Consultation is a powerful tool that enriches and shapes government policies such as the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and their implementation in the local government sphere (White Paper, 1997).

2.7.1.2 Setting service standards

This principle reinforces the need for benchmarks to constantly measure the extent to which citizens are satisfied with the service or products they receive from departments. It also plays a critical role in the development of service delivery improvement plans to ensure a better life for all South Africans. Citizens should be involved in the development of service standards. They should be told what level and quality of public services they will receive so that they can monitor the situation (White Paper, 1997).

Standards that are precise and measurable are required to enable users to judge for themselves whether they are receiving what was promised. Some standards will cover processes, such as the length of time taken to authorise a housing claim, to issue a passport or ID, or even to respond to letters. To achieve the goal of making South Africa globally competitive, standards should be benchmarked (where applicable) against those used internationally, taking into account South Africa's current level of development (White Paper, 1997).

2.7.1.3 Increasing access

One of the primary aims of Batho Pele is to provide a framework for making decisions about delivering public services to the many South Africans who do not have access to them. Batho Pele also aims to rectify the inequalities in the distribution of existing services. Examples of initiatives by government to improve access to services include such platforms as the Gateway, multi-purpose community centres and call centres. All citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled. Access to information and services empowers citizens' value for money (White Paper, 1997).

2.7.1.4 Ensuring courtesy

This goes beyond a polite smile and a 'please' and 'thank you'. It requires service providers to empathise with citizens and treat them with as much consideration and respect as they would like for themselves. The public service is committed to continuous, honest and transparent communication with citizens. This involves communication of services, products, information and problems, which may hamper or delay the efficient delivery of services to promised standards. If applied properly, the principle will help to demystify the negative perceptions that citizens in general have about the attitude of public servants (White Paper, 1997).

2.7.1.5 Providing information

As a requirement, information about services should be available at the point of delivery, but for users who are far from the point of delivery, other arrangements will be needed. Managers and employees should regularly seek to make information

about the institution and all other service delivery related matters available to fellow staff members. Citizens should also be given full and accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive (White Paper, 1997).

2.7.1.6 Openness and transparency

A key aspect of openness and transparency is that the public should know more about the way national, provincial and local government institutions operate, how well they utilise the resources they consume, and who is in charge. It is expected that the public will take advantage of this principle and make suggestions for the improvement of service delivery mechanisms, and even make government employees accountable and responsible by raising queries with them (White Paper, 1997).

2.7.1.7 Redress

This principle emphasises a need to identify quickly and accurately when services are falling below the promised standards and to have procedures in place to remedy the situation. This should be done at the individual transactional level with the public, as well as at the level in relation to the entire service delivery programme. Public servants are encouraged to welcome complaints as an opportunity to improve service, and to deal with complaints so that weaknesses can be remedied quickly for the good of the citizens. If the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and speedy and effective remedy, and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic and positive response (White Paper, 1997).

2.7.1.8 Value for money

Many improvements that the public would like to see often require no additional financial resources and can sometimes even reduce costs. Failure to provide a member of the public with a simple, satisfactory explanation to an enquiry may, for example, result in an incorrectly completed application form, which will cost time to rectify. Public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value for money (White Paper, 1997).

Legislation forms the basic foundation of government activities and accordingly the structuring of government departments. The DHA has thus its origin in legislation and the service delivery activities in the DHA are also founded on legislation. The relevant legislation regarding effective service delivery will therefore be discussed next.

2.8 Legislation on Service Delivery

The political representatives provide the policy direction and oversight necessary to make public servants responsive to the needs of citizens' concerns. There are several pieces of legislation promulgated for improved service delivery which are applicable to government departments. These are discussed as follows.

2.8.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)

The Constitution and other legislative frameworks may be said to provide the machinery (structure) and the fuel (facilities) for people in authority to commence their work. Accordingly, the task of those in authority is to set the machine in motion and keep it running to achieve the objectives of the institution to which they have been appointed (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996).

The Constitutions and other forms of legislation also lay down a comprehensive government structure for pursuing the objective of the government to promote the general welfare of society. Provision is also made in the Constitution for other functions such as policy decisions, funds management, manpower and procedural measures, which enable officials to function within their institutions, regulated by a legislative framework (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996).

Section 2 of the Constitution (1996) stipulates that "this Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic". This means that there are no legal norms in the country above the Constitution. Public administration is one of the primary themes of the Constitution and section 197 (1) stipulates that "within public administration there is a public service for the Republic, which must function and be structured, in terms of national legislation". Public Administration must be governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in the Constitution, namely human dignity, the achievement of equality, the advancement of human rights and freedoms, non-racialism and non-sexism.

The principles informing service delivery involve services that should be provided impartially, fairly, equitably, and without bias. People's needs must be responded to and the public encouraged to participate in the policy making processes. There should be transparency by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information. Public administration should be development-oriented. Any elements of subjectivity should be dealt with effectively in order for the government to achieve its vision (White Paper, 1997).

2.8.2 Public Service Regulations of 1991

The regulations facilitate the best route and enable the departments to use learning effectively to change strategies. In terms of section C of Part III of the Public Service Regulations Act (679 of 1999), executions of authorities are required to establish and sustain service delivery improvement programmes for the departments. The performance management system, which forms part of the Regulations (No.R679 of 1999), is geared towards excellence in service delivery. In order to achieve excellence in service delivery, it is necessary to improve productivity both quantitatively and qualitatively within the institutions (Masango, 2000:66).

The Public Service Regulations, 2001, part III, C 1 and C 2, state that an executing authority shall establish and sustain a service delivery improvement programme for his or her department; the executing authority shall also publish an annual statement of public service commitments which will set out the department's service standards that citizens and customers can expect. The annual statement must explain how the department will meet each of these standards which will in effect have an influence on the quality of services being offered to the public.

Service standards are required to be operational for one year and to be subjected to annual performance reviews. They are also required to be benchmarked against international standards, taking into account the country's level of development. It is important that service delivery also be viewed from the customer's viewpoint. For most customers, service delivery must conform to the following measurable criteria: quantity, quality, time/timelines, and value for money, access and equity.

The overall purpose of performance management is thus to ensure the continuous improvement of the human resources capacity of the public service; and to develop

and implement good quality human resources policies in the public interest. It is then also important to provide employees with mechanisms for effective service delivery.

2.8.3 Public Service Act (103 of 1994)

The Act stipulates that performance should be managed in a consultative, supportive, and non-discriminatory manner in order to enhance effectiveness, efficiency and accountability which will guide employees to deliver effective services. This means that employees can use resources in the achievement of results. Staff should be developed in order to perform; and outstanding performers should be noticed and rewarded accordingly. Shortcomings should be identified and attended to timeously. Different roles and responsibilities should be outlined clearly. In order to manage performance effectively, targets should be set, standards defined, and a performance evaluation system established. The performance agreements should be signed at the commencement of every financial year. Thus will enhance accountability and efficiency as employers will be guided accordingly. All these actions will contribute towards effective service delivery.

Service delivery involves the actual production or provision of goods and services for the community. This has to be conducted in accordance with plans and within the allocated funds. All systems that support the implementation of the budget in service delivery must be in place. These systems are the personnel management system; procurement system; risk management and internal control system; financial management system; and the information system. All these support systems contribute towards rendering effective service delivery (PSC, 2002:12).

Performance measures set in the planning phase serve as an important vehicle for monitoring purposes for effective service delivery. In order to undertake proper monitoring and evaluation, there should be relevant information. Reports should be generated on a regular basis to ensure that problems are detected early. Once problems are detected, a mitigation strategy can be developed so that service delivery should not be hampered. When reports are analysed, gaps are identified and addressed accordingly and in this manner, effective service delivery will not be hampered. The public will still receive reports as expected (Public Service Act 103 of 1994).

2.8.4 Public Finance Management Act (1 of 1999)

Strengthening the link between government priorities and spending plans is not an end in itself. The goal is to improve service delivery and ultimately the quality of people's lives. Budgeting for service delivery is enhanced by the Public Finance Management Act (1 of 1999), which sets out a framework for modernising the financial management of national and provincial departments and other government entities.

The Act gives managers greater flexibility while holding them accountable to communities for the use of resources for service deliveries. Better information on service delivery shows how public money is being spent, which is regarded as good practice in terms of transparency and accountability. It helps the department to better plan, budget and manage programmes, and also improves accountability and control. The Act assists government policy and decision makers in directing funds where they are needed most and to where they will best meet government priorities (Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999).

2.8.5 Green Paper Transforming Public Service Delivery 1996

Improving service delivery means re-addressing the imbalances of the past and to hold the public servants accountable for the services they provide. It also means a complete change in the way that services are delivered. It is a shift from inward looking, bureaucratic systems, processes and attitudes, towards new ways of working which put the needs of people first, and is better, faster and more responsive to meet those needs. The Green Paper explains how institutions will tackle the task of transforming the delivery of public services at both national and provincial level. In order to improve, the pressure should be on the systems, procedures, attitudes and behaviour within the Public Service to be customer focused. The environment should be improved to create a customer- first environment. This document also addresses the principles of Batho Pele already outlined in the White Paper on Transformation Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele Principles) and discussed above. All that is important is to put people first (*Green Paper, 1996, 2*).

2.9 Constraints on Service Delivery

The Public Service is perceived by citizens as more than just a national department, provincial administration or local government, as is defined by the Public Service Act (103 of 1994). Generally, citizens do not see any distinction between central, provincial or local government levels. Therefore, any failure in one area of the government levels is seen as a constraint of the public service as a whole. Challenges and constraints to service delivery were a significant concern that led to the development of the Batho Pele Principles. The purpose of these principles was to transform the public service.

Service delivery is challenged by so many constraints that departments are failing to achieve their planned objectives. The following provides an outline of these constraints.

2.9.1 Structural constraints

Many departments like the DHA are still in the process of restructuring in line with the government's new vision and mission statements. They are therefore not yet geared towards providing the quality and quantity of service delivery needed to achieve their stated objectives. This state of affairs challenges existing service delivery programmes and also delays what the government intends to achieve within a given time (Public Service Regulations, 1999).

2.9.2 Functional constraints

In most departments the vision, policies and business plans to steer appropriate services are not yet in place. Others are operating with policies that have still not been updated. In other instances, offices within the departments operate with people who are employed in an acting capacity and who lack the necessary skills and expertise to run these offices. This frustrates the good intentions and plans of the departments to deliver effective services (Public Service Regulations, 1999).

2.9.3 Process constraints

Many of the processes and procedures through which services are rendered are largely based on bureaucratic rules bequeathed by the previous regime. Unnecessary command and control applications delay the process. The technology

should be upgraded and officials trained in how to use this in order to meet the different challenges of citizens. Policies should be reviewed and amended on a regular basis to address the emerging needs of the community (Public Service Regulations, 1999).

2.9.4 Financial constraints

The lean-budget issue cannot be over-emphasised. In most institutions, finance is managed by officials without the necessary knowledge or financial skills. Skilled officials should be appointed to be able to manage the limited funds allocated at the start of each financial year. What is key here is to be accountable to the public at the end of the financial year (Public Service Regulations, 1999).

2.9.5 Provisioning constraints

Most departments suffer from a serious shortage of resources, such as office space, equipment, and computers and software. Often, there is, for instance, not enough space for clients to queue for services. It is important that institutions like the DHA dealing directly with the public create a user-friendly set-up that accommodates all clients (Public Service Regulations, 1999).

2.9.6 Human Resource Constraints

Service delivery is also constrained by a lack of staff in general, and a lack of skilled and representative staff in particular – especially in professional and technical fields. Services in offices are administered by fewer officials than are meant to be employed in the establishment, which negatively affects service delivery (Public Service Regulations, 1999).

2.9.7 Balancing the needs of the service with those of the people

The culture of any organisation is the product of the influence on the behaviour of two forces. These forces are the drive for the organisation's members to establish internal relationships with each other in their joint interests; and the need for the organisation as a whole to meet the needs of its customers and service users. A generic problem with public services is that they are facing demands as a result of a shifting external environment and are failing to meet the demands due to the

strength of internal forces that resist change and which jeopardise the maintaining of internal harmony and cohesion (Public Service Regulations, 1999).

If performance management is conducted on the basis of national templates and national procedures and is driven by national concerns, this will stimulate 'upward accountability' instead of accountability between the heads of offices at district and community level in that area. The major challenges facing the public service relate to combating corruption and maladministration, improving service delivery and developing human resources. Accurate information is essential for designing a vision and understanding the objectives of the organisation (Ababio, 2008).

The government set out eight transformation priorities, amongst which Transforming Service Delivery is key. This is so because a transformed South African public service will be judged above all by its effectiveness in delivering services which meet the basic needs of all South African citizens. Improving service delivery is therefore the ultimate goal of the public services. Public service priorities have therefore provided a policy framework and a practical implementation strategy for the transformation of the public service and its departments, such as the DHA. The strategy explains specifically how the public service will provide services, with special reference to the improvement of effective service delivery (White Paper, 1997).

2.10 CONCLUSION

The core functions of managers are to ensure that employees perform their respective functions; and to employ intervention measures, such as disciplinary action or retraining, for those who do not perform according to the prescribed standards. All employees should receive training on their legislative mandate for service delivery, including the Code of Conduct, which outlines how employees should conduct themselves. Any new circular or change in the way of operation should be communicated to all employees through formal discussion, emails or through individual sessions.

The mayor, ward councillors, departmental leaders, community development workers and all relevant stakeholders should have frequent consultations, campaigns and izimbizos with local communities in order to obtain first-hand

information on local needs. In addition to the annual report (Annual Review), reports should also be prepared on a quarterly basis so that shortcomings are identified earlier and addressed. Furthermore, there should be a record of the complaints and compliments from customers in order to determine the level of performance in every district office in a particular province, so that corrective action can be taken where necessary (Reddy & Sikhakane, 2008:695).

Insufficient human resources (staff) and non-human resources (equipment) and delays in updating legislative framework and technology, such as computer software, negatively affect service delivery. The laissez-faire attitude of some of the staff members cannot be overemphasised. This compromises rights, security and the capacity of the state to plan and deliver services (DHA: Strategic Plan, 2009- 2012).

The transformation process in institutions is seeking to ensure that there is security and the creation of skilled organisational capacity to consistently deliver against acceptable and verifiable standards. The purpose is to maintain the efficiency and also to create security in regard to administrative and systems control. The human factor is always central to winning strategies. This therefore calls for the creation of a cadre of highly motivated, productive, disciplined and honest staff members, as the effectiveness of any strategy depends on the integrity of those entrusted with its implementation (DHA: Strategic Plan, 2009-2012:8).

At the core of effective service delivery are good quality communication practices which will be discussed in the next chapter. Communication states that within organisations, effective internal communication between managers and staff is very important to create the basis for effective service delivery. Communication between the institution and its clients is a further vital aspect of communication. To understand what communication is all about one of the objectives of this study reads as follows: To analyse the theoretical guidelines and principles that form the foundation of the phenomenon of communication with special reference to government institutions.

CHAPTER 3 COMMUNICATION IN GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

3.1 Introduction

Communication is one of the most frequently used words in the reports, conversations, speeches, articles and books of today. For political journalists, business people and public relations practitioners, it has become the buzz word of the modern world. It is always purposeful and has been perceived to become a magic cure for the ills of any institution. Its purpose is to inform, to persuade, and it has been regarded as creating goodwill with the intention of achieving meaningful results. Communication does not necessarily mean agreement; good and honest communication may lead to disagreement and conflict (Cleary, 2008:6; Mersham & Skinner, 1999). There are essential structures of communication processes, which are referred to as the triptych of communication. This structure consists of the communicator, the medium which carries the message and the recipient of the message. Communication cannot take place unless these three elements exist (Cleary, 2008).

An institution like the DHA requires effective communication practices based on theoretical guidelines to achieve its mandate. This is owing to the nature of its core functions, which require direct interaction with public members when delivering services. On the other hand, public members need to know what is expected of them when they need services from the department; the waiting period of the end product; and the supporting documents required for that particular service. The DHA's mission statement reflects its personality and distinguishes it from other organisations or institutions with similar business lines. Its vision and mission give effect to the development of various plans at different service delivery levels. There are different kinds of plans, starting with the strategic plans at leadership level, business plans for different directorates, work plans at operational level; and crisis communication plans. The communication plans are valuable in their support of co-operative and business objectives. Effective communication is thus crucial in ensuring that employees understand their contributing role towards the implementation of plans, thereby helping to achieve the organisational goals (Ferguson, 1999:14).

This chapter discusses communication as one of the tools that institutions use to achieve their mandate. It begins by defining communication and then explores effective communication, the types of communication, and the challenges affecting communication.

3.2 Defining Communication

According to Van Ruler and De Lange (2003:145), no organisation can develop or even exist without sound communication practices. Communication describes what institutions are and describes the channels in which information flows. Ruck and Welch (2012:294) state that effective internal communication between managers and staff as well as between the institution and its clients is vital to institutional success. This is particularly true in periods of change when staff's uncertainty increases and there is an increased need for greater amounts of information and communication. During periods of change, the need for open and effective communication is of paramount importance for both internal and external clients. In times of difficulty, those organisations in which careful attention is paid to communication by management have been shown to perform more successfully on a range of criteria than those where such communication is poor. When an organisation is open and positive towards both vertical and horizontal communication, the internal and external communication will be effective. Communication is therefore key to any relationship, and relationships are the essence of any business (Ruck & Welch, 2012; Sliburyte, 2004).

Hybel and Weaver (2004:7-8) define communication as any process in which people share information, ideas and feelings. It involves not only the spoken and written words but also the body language, personal mannerisms and style. It also involves the transmission and reception of thoughts, feelings and ideas between two or more people. Communication is an ongoing, dynamic process and its description is intended to differentiate it from a static, linear and fixed phenomenon.

On the other hand, Huebsch (1986) defines communication as a human medium primarily for conveying messages, and as a process whereby one person tries to affect or modify the behaviour of another. In this process one may express ideas through the use of symbols and other audio-visual aids. Gibson et al. (1994:17) also

explain communication as the transmission of information and understanding through the use of common symbols, which may be verbal or non-verbal. Baron and Greenberg (1997:334) support Gibson et al. (1994:17) by defining communication as the process by which a person, group or organisation (the sender) transmits some type of information (the message) to another person, group or organisation (the receiver).

Bang (2004) goes further by stating that people communicate to establish relationships with others to express feelings and opinions, to share experiences and to persuade others to think as they do. He also says that it is clear that communication is used to describe many things. In a business context, communication is the sending and receiving of a message or information among the different internal and external role-players of an organisation to obtain mutual understanding.

For any institution to achieve its goals, communication must be organised effectively among the internal stakeholders, such as the management team and staff members, as well as the external stakeholders who are clients, communities, shareholders and the media. In a management context, the required outcome of communication should, as referred to in the definition, be the creation and maintenance of positive relationships between the organisation and its stakeholders (Lubbe & Puth, 1994).

According to Robbins (1997:124), communication serves four major functions within a group or organisation, namely control, motivation, emotional expression, and information. It is essential to point out that the four major functions of communication, as identified by Robbins (1997), are important for managers, particularly in ensuring that information that is first encoded and then transmitted through a channel to the receiver, is interpreted in the same way by the recipients who, in turn, will respond through a desired action and feedback.

The general aim of communication is to establish understanding or meaning between a communicator and a receiver (Skinner & Von Essen, 1994). More specific aims may be to persuade, to inform, to influence attitudes and to bring about action.

These specific aims are related to the required outcome of the communication. There are different types of communication, which will be discussed next.

3.3 Types of Communication

According to Huebsch (1986), there are five interrelated types of communication, namely interpersonal, intrapersonal, extra-personal, mass communication, and media communication. Because these five types of communication are interrelated, each one plays its own communication role. For the purpose of this study, each type will be explained individually according to the viewpoints of Huebsch (1986) and Weaver and Richard (2004).

3.3.1 Interpersonal communication

This occurs when communicating takes place on a one-to-one basis, usually in an informal, unstructured setting. Because it is between two and a limited number of people, it provides a great opportunity for effective communication with sound feedback. Weaver and Richard (2004) explain that in all interpersonal communication, there is a field of experience consisting of, *inter alia*, background, beliefs, knowledge and anything else that falls within the field of experience. When communication occurs in an interpersonal situation, these fields of experience often overlap and this is called *homophily*. "The greater the *homophily*, the greater the chances of meaningful interpersonal communication" (Huebsch, 1986).

3.3.2 Intrapersonal communication

This is centred in the self and the self is the only sender–receiver; thoughts and feelings make up the message (Weaver & Richard, 2004:18). According to Huebsch (1986), "In intrapersonal communication electro-technical and electro-chemical activities of the bodily senses are taking place. Intrapersonal communication effects the establishment of a person's self-concept, self-determination and eventually self-motivation".

3.3.3 Small-group communication

This involves only a small number of people which enables each member to interact with other members. One such example is the DHA stakeholder forums between the DHA and representatives of various community organisations, such as faith-based

organisations (FBOs). The main reason for the existence of these forums is to solve or discuss service delivery problems as well as to plan further for effective service delivery. The same communication channels are used as in interpersonal communication, but owing to there being more sender–receivers, this communication process is more complicated than interpersonal communication (Saundra, 2004).

3.3.4 Mass communication

This requires an intermediate transmitter of information (Huebsch, 1986) and involves communicating messages through the mass media, such as television, radio, newspapers or video, to a large, impersonal public.

3.3.5 Media communication

When two or more people use intermediate instruments to transfer a message, it is called media communication. This channel may be a telephone, video, mobile radio, the Internet or radar (Huebsch, 1986).

3.3.6 'Internal communication'

Internal communication is often used synonymously with 'organisational communication' and is frequently confused with corporate communication within an organisation. It is important to note that internal communication and corporate communication functions differ, as explained by Monge and Poole (2008), and Steyn and Puth (2000). These authors clearly indicate that corporate communication is communication on behalf of an organisation, whereas organisational communication constitutes an intersection between the study of human communication and the study of human organisations. Corporate communication refers to managed communication with the aim of increasing organisational effectiveness by creating and maintaining relationships with stakeholders. The authors claim that corporate communication developed from journalism and that it is founded on an integration of communication and management sciences.

The various categories of internal communication are important to understand in order to be able to identify the relevant category of internal communication within which this study is embedded. Erikson (1992) in Sliburyte (2004:190-191) identifies

five categories of internal communication, namely work, news, managed, change, and culture communication.

For the purposes of this study, the term 'internal communication' will be used synonymously with 'organisational communication' in relation to internal communication involving verbal and non-verbal, one-on-one communication between a manager and subordinates.

Erikson (1992) in Sliburyte (2004) describes the five different categories of internal communication as follows:

3.3.6.1 Work Communication

This communication is necessary to enable co-workers to pursue their daily work, for example, an agenda for a meeting. The majority of the oral communication concerns practical issues that continuously emerge.

3.3.6.2 News communication

This communication provides information about the latest issues in the organisation, which enables the employees to perform more efficiently in the long term. This dialogue usually occurs via personnel magazines, internal radio, department meetings, or other regular channels.

3.3.6.3 Managed communication

This communication guides the business towards the stated goals, long-term plans and short-term measures. Such communication contains budget issues, company policies, and memos that regulate the business. Managed communication also includes manuals for production, quality regulations and working environment regulations.

3.3.6.4 Change communication

An organisation often needs to separate the dialogue that concerns the regular business from the unexpected. Change communication is based on particular incidents, within the company or the world around, which occur beyond the normal news flow. Examples include information about altered business goals, visions and strategies.

According to Adey and Andrews (1990:86), lateral communication is very useful in co-ordinating and problem-solving and averts wasteful communication with a common superior who then has to communicate with each of the people on the same level but in different departments. In addition, the authors mention that lateral communication serves the further purpose of allowing peers to form good working and social relationships, thereby fostering good teamwork.

Adey and Andrews (1990:86) argue that, from a manager's viewpoint, lateral communication can be good or bad. Andrews and Baird (1992:76) state that since strict adherence to the formal vertical structure for all communications can impede the efficient and accurate transfer of information, lateral communication can be beneficial. In such cases, the authors point out that lateral communication occurs with the knowledge and support of superiors. However, the authors are also of the opinion that lateral communication can create dysfunctional conflict. This can happen when the formal vertical channels are breached when members go above or around their superiors to get things done, or when bosses find out that actions have been taken or decisions have been made without their knowledge. Adey and Andrews (1990:87) argue that another negative drawback is that people on the same hierarchical level could use lateral or horizontal communication to gang up on their common superior or superiors and form a power-block to defeat the wishes of top management.

3.3.6.9 Diagonal communication

Adey and Andrews (1990:87) define communication between members who are not on the same hierarchical level as diagonal communication. According to the authors, this communication is particularly common with line and staff departments and with projects when people on different levels of authority in different departments have the expertise needed for the successful outcome of a project. This may mean that those in higher positions have to liaise and work together with those in lower hierarchical positions, with those in higher positions sometimes having to submit to the expert knowledge of inferiors (Adey& Andrews, 1990:87). The authors point out that one of the problems of diagonal communication is that immediate line superiors may feel left out or may consider that their authority is being snubbed in some way. This negative aspect may result in diagonal communication being potentially

explosive unless, as Adey and Andrews (1990) reason, employees are tactful and committed to the overall objectives of a project or the organisation. With the different forms of communication as background, focus will now be directed to what effective communication entails.

3.4 Effective Communication

Communication is vital in all spheres of life including government institutions. As discussed, it is used to persuade, influence relationship, inform, share, discover and to uncover information. If communication is not in place, there is no clear direction for what must happen by when and how. It is through communicating that a direction is set. To live then is to communicate and to communicate effectively help in doing things better. It is therefore important to discuss what effective communication entails (Ruck & Welch, 2012:294; Skinner & Von Essen, 1994).

According to the Princeton Dictionary (2007), effectiveness involves “to produce or be capable of producing an intended result; have a striking effect; exerting force or influence”. The word ‘effectiveness’ means having a changeable and noticeable impact on something. In this instance, communication should be effective in order to achieve the set goals.

Tjosvold (1991) states that communication within and among groups is necessary for innovation in an organisation. He further (Tjosvold, 1991) declares that people within groups have the need to identify issues, share information, influence one another and put ideas together for continuous improvement. Effective communication therefore demands that people collaborate to ensure that the meaning created is the same for all. These definitions of communication emphasise the need for participants to be prepared to send and receive messages and to collaborate in ensuring that messages are fully utilised.

Effective communication is central to institutional success and, as such, should form an integral part of the strategic planning process for all organisations. The identification of the strategic stakeholders is likely to constrain or enhance the ability of the institution to carry out its mission and meet its goals, and to build good quality relationships with strategic stakeholders who help the institution to manage

interdependencies in an ever-changing environment. On the basis of this, the institution can make better decisions, formulate better strategies and, finally, adapt better to its ever-changing environment and the needs of its clients.

Effective communication in an institution is apparent through its achievement of goals and the successful building of long-term relationships with internal and external environments. Effective communication may be defined as the mutual acceptance of the message or information by the sender and receiver with minimum and individual barriers to achieve goals (Saundra, 2004:4).

Effective communication within organisations and among organisations and their external public members produces many tangible benefits. These benefits include a user-friendly internal atmosphere, more satisfied employees and customers, greater levels of productivity and innovation, and enhanced service delivery. In general, staff in an institution regards effective communication as the way to resolve most problems and to enrich their work life (Saundra, 2004:4).

For communication to reach the target market effectively, the source of information must be credible. Ferguson (1999:115) argues that "the credibility of a source can have a dramatic impact on how audiences receive messages. The audiences accept messages from credible sources and reject the same message from less credible sources". Ferguson (1999:131) also elucidates the factors that influence audience perceptions of source credibility. These factors can indicate elements that an institution should acknowledge when choosing a source to communicate a message to a target market. These factors are: level of experience, composure, trustworthiness, dynamism, sociability, extroversion and similarity to audience.

According to De Vito (1986), the characteristics of effective communication in an institutional context are openness, empathy, supportiveness, positivity and equality. In practice, if effective communication does not occur and vital information is not reaching its target audiences, the blockages in the communication channel need to be identified and dealt with (Hargie & Tourish, 1996). Therefore communication systems and practices should be carefully designed, implemented and evaluated. An institution should focus on creating an effective communication culture. This will

ensure the proactive exchange of knowledge, opinions and ideas by every worker and stakeholder in an institution. Schonfelder (1998) states that a positive communication culture "should include faster decision making, increased productivity and empowerment".

3.4.1 Guidelines for effective communication

To achieve effective communication, it is vital to know what kind of information is to be communicated. Knowledge of the kind of information is vital when deciding to whom the information is relevant, and what channel is suitable for communicating such information. Another contributor to effective communication is unambiguous, non-verbal communication, such as vocal intonation and body language, particularly when communicating face-to-face. In addition, the information should be conveyed in a manner that strives to create dialogue. It is important that the receivers have the opportunity to request a further exchange of ideas, and that they possess interpersonal communication understanding and skills in order to fulfil their communication role.

According to Saayman (2002), guidelines for effective communication in the personal and institutional context are as follows.

- **Regulate flow of information:** The management of an institution is responsible for regulating the flow of information. Valuable information is often lost because of the fact that the channels of information flow are unclear.
- **Encourage feedback:** Verbal and non-verbal feedback indicates whether the reason for the message being sent was received.
- **Simplify messages:** Messages that are sent should be simple and easily understood.
- **Listen actively:** Active listening ensures that the message is clearly understood and that meanings attached to it are recognised.
- **Control emotions:** Messages may be misinterpreted as a result of their emotional content. It is therefore critical to avoid clouding the message with emotions so that the intended purpose of sending the message is achieved.

- **Use verbal communication:** Verbal and non-verbal messages should support each other.
- **Formulate your thoughts clearly:** Thoughts should be clearly analysed before any message is sent. It is important to decide what should be achieved.
- **Get positive attention:** The message sent should be stimulating.
- **Follow your own approach:** Messages should be aimed at the impact they will have on the individual.
- **Take notice and be aware of the social climate and specific situation:** Timing, culture, habits and the physical situation of the receivers influence the effectiveness of the message sent.
- **Advantages for the receiver:** The receiver should know why this message is important. The tone as well as the content of the message should be taken into consideration.
- **Attention to the creation of imaginary, images and aims:** Strong and attractive images should be placed in the receiver's memory. This ensures that the aim of the message is placed in the subconscious.
- **Communication should always take place on a positive basis:** Attempts should be made to impress, to repeat and to associate so that the message will be retained. Communication should offer goodwill and respect.

Because communication involves a transaction between the sender and the receiver, it cannot be static or understood in terms of individual and isolated acts. Variables such as interpersonal history, culture and audience all contribute to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the communication process between the sender and the receiver. Essentially, effective communication should be seen as dialogical in nature. The following section will concentrate on the communication process.

3.5 Communication Process

In the 1940s a Bell Telephone engineer developed a model of how the communication process works. Originally a mathematical model intended to describe a technological process, some saw it as a way to describe communication. It formed

one of the first models in the communication discipline and is still used today (Huebsch, 1986).

Huebsch (1986) identifies eight key elements in the communication process, which are listed as follows.

Source: The communication process starts with the source of information – the person with a message to deliver to consumers. In this instance, the DHA is the source that should initiate the communication process internally and externally.

Message: The message is the information about a specific issue that should be communicated to the receiver. It is sent via a specific media form or channel and is received by the person to whom it is being sent.

Receiver: These are the people or consumers who hear or notice the source's message. The receiver is the specific role-player that should receive the information in the internal or external environment.

Media or channel: The media are the communication channels through which the message moves from the source to receiver. Stoner and Freeman (1992:534) declare that the channel is the carrier of the message, the means by which the message is sent. This channel differs from internal to external environments. The most commonly used communication channels that the DHA adopts are:

internal communication channels—face-to-face communication, including personal contact, written memos, videos, notice boards, emails, intranets and in-house publications; and

external communication channels—information centres, pamphlets, emails, a website, newsletters and focus groups.

Encoding: Encoding is the arrangement of the message into a symbolic form that will be clearly understood by the receiver. Encoding of the message is conducted by the sender (such as the DHA) sending information to the adjacent community or the customer service manager sending a message or information to the reception staff.

Decoding: The receivers interpret the message for themselves. The decoding process is subjected to internal and external influences. Decoding of the message is conducted by the role-player who receives the message from the DHA, for example the neighbouring community (external environment).

Response: The response is the behaviour the source wants to stimulate, whether buying awareness, informing or reminding the receiver. The source wants a specific response. If the response is not as desired, the message sent was ineffective.

- **Feedback:** The response is the message the receiver sends back to the source. The effective communicator is always sensitive to feedback and constantly modifies his or her messages as a result of the feedback received (Barker & Gaut, 1996:13). From the feedback the sender gets an idea of how accurately the message was understood. It also enhances the communication process, because it stimulates active participation.

Without all these elements, communication cannot be effective. These elements will assist an institution to communicate effectively and this will assure that effective services will be rendered. Communication is therefore a key part of why some institutions are highly successful, while others perish (Hargie & Tourish, 2000). Communication is thus a transaction whereby participants together create meaning through the exchange of symbols (Fielding, 1997:4). There are however, certain challenges facing effective communication, which will be discussed next.

3.6 Challenges / Barriers

According to Saayman (2002:158), general obstacles and individual obstacles may affect the effectiveness of the message sent during the communication process.

3.6.1 General obstacles

- **Structure:** A problem arises when people from different positions of authority in the institution communicate with each other. The more hierarchical levels there are between the sender and the receiver, the more difficult it is to communicate.
- **Specialisation:** People in different specialised fields communicate in different, abbreviated languages, symbols and jargon according to their specialised field.

- **Differences in aims:** Every section in an institution has its own goals and so tunnel vision could affect the vision of achieving a certain task. The DHA offices in the North-West Province and their different communities vary and invariably each office will have different ways of reaching its objectives.
- **Status:** Status may have various effects on the communication process. It may protect a person against negative information; it may hold back the amount of information that subordinates send upwards; and it may encourage employees to misuse information for their own benefit.

3.6.2 Individual obstacles

- **Conflicting acceptance:** This is when the sender assumes that the receiver will understand the specific phrase in the same way as the communicator intended.
- **Semantics:** There are different uses for the same words and the receiver may attach a different meaning to the words or phrases that were sent or used in the message.
- **Emotions:** The sender and receiver could attach different feelings or values to words or phrases.
- **Communication techniques:** The sender and the receiver may have different communication techniques as a result of different education, knowledge and personalities.

Adler and Rodman (1991:35) add a number of factors to these individual obstacles that cause officials to interpret things in a particular way, including past experience, assumptions about human behaviour, expectations, knowledge, and personal moods. According to Saayman (2002:159), timing forms a large part of communication techniques, which makes it important for the message to be sent at the right time when the receiver's attention is focused. Crone et al. (1992:368) say that, in the communication process, the sender has to formulate the message in such a way that the receiver clearly understands its content and purpose. All communication should receive a response from the receiver. The receiver should not only receive the message, but should also react in an appropriate way.

Communication should include both the transference and the understanding of meaning. Thus, in general, communication is the exchange of ideas through a system of symbols. Communication occurs in different situations and should be adapted according to the situation (Robbins, 1998:327).

Although effective communication is regarded as the 'lifeblood of organisations', a wealth of literature describes communication as extremely important, but difficult to address in any systematic way (Johnson, 2004; Sliburyte, 2004; Van Ruler & De Lange, 2003). This poses a number of challenges and concerns in sustaining effective internal communication in institutions like the DHA.

One of the main reasons for complications in achieving and sustaining effective internal communication is the complexities of life. These make miscommunication and misunderstandings inevitable, and may occur at all levels and in all areas of an institution (Eisenberg & Phillips, 1991 in Sliburyte, 2004:192).

Another reason is that with the conceptualisation and establishment of barriers to communication such as noise, differing perceptions, cultural backgrounds, languages, and inconsistencies in communication, differences in status, distrust, behavioural and attitudinal factors such as apathy, and resistance to change, are common, prevailing and perpetual factors within an institution. Sliburyte (2004:192) argues that using face-to-face communication; being sensitive to the backgrounds of others; using direct unambiguous language and frequent repetitions; being supportive to counteract defensiveness; and being a good listener can assist managers in removing barriers to effective communication.

Poor communication is a primary cause of concern in most institutions because it is frequently cited as a source of interpersonal conflict. Furthermore, over the past ten years a number of studies have demonstrated a growing problem of information overload (Quirke, 2008:298). According to the author, in 2000 a survey by the Institute of Management linked email to workplace stress in general. Another study of Fortune 1000 workers found that corporate staff are inundated with so many communication tools – such as email, teleconferencing, video-conferencing, postal mail and voicemail – that they do not know which to use for which task. This

challenge, once again, draws attention to the fact that in many institutions internal communication is managed in an unstructured and uncoordinated manner, which undermines the effectiveness and strategic value that communication, can add to enhancing institutional effectiveness.

Finally, the fundamental role of managers in facilitating effective internal communication is often misunderstood, overlooked or undermined by many managers and institutions. This is often caused by managers lacking the theoretical knowledge of the internal communication function and the basic communication skills needed to enable them to communicate effectively.

3.7 CONCLUSION

Communication is the key to building relationships in an institution. Through the communication process discussed above, a corporate strategy formulated for identified strategic issues might help to improve communication with an institution's stakeholders. Effective communication develops when institutions minimise the communication barriers that could cause confusion and poor internal and external relationships. The outcomes of effective communication are improved innovation in the institution and ensuring shared meaning among employees. An institution that achieves its goals is an institution that will survive in its environment. Consistent, co-ordinated and coherent communication also contributes towards achieving communication effectiveness. With effective communication in an institution, internal and external relationships are established and maintained.

The crucial role of effective internal communication is ensuring that employees understand the objectives and goals of an institution. However, institutional change, unstructured communication systems and processes, a diverse internal environment, technological development and the complexity of institutional life are transforming the traditional role of internal communication. There is a shift towards accentuating the critical role of interpersonal communication between managers and subordinates in enhancing internal communication effectiveness within an institution. Many authors emphasise the correlation between effective internal communication and an understanding of institutional strategy and objectives among employees. In addition,

research indicates that a correlation exists between effective interpersonal communication and enhanced employee commitment to the institution.

Communication is a critical enabling factor for creating a culture of engagement within an institution. Therefore, it is imperative firstly to achieve effective internal communication, in which all levels of managers participate actively in their communication role, in order to be able to foster engaged employees. Open and honest communication, particularly face-to-face communication, between managers and employees contributes significantly towards building trust and strengthening relations between employees, management and the institution. In the absence of open, transparent and honest communication, trust in the leadership is undermined and therefore poses a threat to fostering employee engagement.

Managers need to be cognisant of the important role they play in internal communication. They should strive for effective communication by ensuring that employees and stakeholders receive clear messages in plain language, presented in a familiar and recognisable format, with the intended meaning clearly highlighted. They should also acquire the appropriate skills to prepare information and engage in a conversation with employees to create clear understanding; and provide upward channels for response, to test understanding and as a means of continuing the conversation and providing input for the next round of communication. Without the proper and well-organised foundation to facilitate effective communication, it is almost impossible to achieve employee engagement.

In institutions that are forced to do more with less, managers often find themselves overwhelmed with goals, targets and deadlines. This leaves little room for them to dedicate time and effort to facilitate and sustain effective internal communication. This poses a challenge to one of the most critical key drivers of employee engagement, namely the day-to-day support of employees by their immediate manager or supervisor. The inclusion of the need for effective communication in managers' performance agreements should encourage them to pay equal attention to communication as they devote to other key performance areas. A further fundamental challenge is that technology development has introduced more efficient, cost-effective channels of communication, including email, intranet, blogs

and texting. However, this has increased the level of noise within institutions and reduced the level of conversation between managers and employees. Therefore, the crucial role of continuous dialogue between managers and employees within an institution is to sustain employee engagement and to secure effective service delivery.

The next chapter focuses on the empirical study where the perceptions of the community of the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA are determined at the basis of a questionnaire. The results of the empirical study will be presented in numbers because this is a quantitative study. This chapter will also resolve whether the hypothesis, as stated in Chapter One, is true or false.

CHAPTER 4: EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methods employed in assessing the perceptions of the Lichtenburg community regarding service delivery and communication by the DHA. It also discusses the methodology used to undertake the empirical research. The first part of the chapter deals with the study undertaken, as well as the reason behind the selection of the methodology used to conduct the study. The second part of the chapter focuses on the empirical research and the findings of the study. Findings are discussed and analysed followed by the presentation of the tables reflecting the results of the empirical study. These will determine if the hypothesis is true or false.

The empirical investigation includes the development of a questionnaire, determination of a sample from the population, measurement of responses, and analysis and interpretation of results. It will be important to give a brief report on the organisational structure of the Lichtenburg Home Affairs Department to contextualise the locus of the study. These discussions will be addressed briefly due to the length constraints linked to a mini-dissertation.

4.2 Organisational Structure of the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA

The DHA has two core functions, namely Civic and Immigration Services. The department fulfils its civic function by acting as a custodian of citizenship and identity. The department also regulates immigration, enforces the Immigration Act (2002) and determines the status of asylum seekers and refugees. These two core functions are essential to the security of the state and they support social and economic development. The department contributes to three of the twelve National Outcomes, namely:

- All people in South Africa must feel safe (Outcome 3),
- A skilled and capable work force to support inclusive economic growth (outcome 5), and

- An efficient and developed oriented public service that empowers the citizens and creates fair and inclusive citizenship (outcome 12) (DHA, Annual Performance Plan, 2013/14-2015/16)

As a national department, satellite offices are established at provincial and local levels to carry out its mandates. In each local municipality, there is visibility of Home Affairs either in the form of a fully established office or service points. If there is not one of these in place then a fully functional mobile office is allocated to render services in those areas. Lichtenburg Office is one of the local medium offices in the North West Province. The office is located in the Ditsobotla Local Municipality. The office processes applications for enabling documents relating to civic services such as identity documents, passports, birth certificates, marriage certificates, death certificates and also solemnises marriages. Under immigration services, there is an inspectorate unit which deals with the tracking and tracing of illegal and undocumented foreign nationals. The permit section which deals with the issue of permits such as work, visit, study and business permits is centralised to only three large offices in the North West Province, namely Klerksdorp, Rustenburg and Mmabatho (Department of Home Affairs, Annual Performance Plan, 2013/14-2015/16).

Following this brief discussion of the DHA in the North West Province it is important to indicate what is meant by the concept of empirical study.

4.3 Brief Focus on Empirical research

Empirical research can be defined as research based on experimentation and observation (evidence). Empirical research is conducted to test a hypothesis. The word empirical implies information gained by experience, observation or experiment. The central theme in the scientific method is that all evidence or information must be empirical, which means it is based on evidence. In regard to the scientific method the word empirical refers to the use of a working hypothesis that can be tested using experiment and observations.

The following are the objectives of empirical research:

- It goes beyond the simply reporting of observations.

- It promotes an environment for the improvement of understanding of a phenomenon.
- It combines extensive research with detailed analysis of a phenomenon.
- It assists in the process to prove the relevancy of theory by working in a real world environment.

In this study it goes beyond the simple reporting of observations in the sense that the perceptions of the community in Lichtenburg were obtained on the basis of a research instrument, observations, analysis and interpretation of data.

4.4 Questionnaires as a Research Tool

Close-ended questionnaires have been designed as a tool to collect valid and reliable information to test a hypothesis scientifically. The questions of the questionnaire were based on the theory as discussed in Chapters Two and Three. Questionnaires are generally used by researchers to gain information and to act as a platform to convert data, sourced during the empirical study. This research instrument makes it possible to measure people's knowledge, skills, likes and dislikes, attitudes and perceptions (Struwig & Stead, 2001).

The researcher also used the questionnaire to determine the perceptions of the community in the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA and to establish what their opinions are on the effectiveness of service delivery and communication in the area. The most significant aspect of this type of data collection is that the questionnaire is the primary means of communication between the respondents and the researcher (Struwig & Stead, 2001).

Questionnaires may be used to obtain, inter alia, the following kinds of information from the respondents (Huyseman, 1994:128):

- Their biographical particulars
- Their behaviour towards something (for instance service delivery and communication);
- Their opinions, beliefs and convictions; and
- Their attitudes towards an event (for instance, the quality of services delivered by the DHA).

Assistance was given by the researcher to the respondents in the completion of the questionnaires in order to secure valid data. The randomly selected population of eighty(80)women and men aged from fifteen (15) years and above were those who visited the DHA in Lichtenburg's Office during the week of 2 to 6 September 2013. There was no specific reason for choosing that week besides the researcher having the opportunity and time to conduct the research during it.

The researcher chose to use, as mentioned, a questionnaire as an instrument for gathering information for the study. There are, however, advantages and disadvantages related to this method, which will be addressed next.

4.4.1 Advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires

As a tool for research, questionnaires have certain advantages and disadvantages, which are discussed as follows.

4.4.1.1 Advantages

The following advantages can be identified (Best, 1977:166):

- Questionnaires are one of the instruments that a researcher can utilise to collect data quickly and it is relatively inexpensive, provided that the questionnaire is compiled in such a way that respondents are able to interpret the content of the questionnaire correctly.
- Administration is relatively easy.
- They are an economical instrument to utilise. This includes the 'economy of time' and a high proportion of responses can be obtained by the researcher in a small period of time.
- The results of data obtained when using questionnaires are normally without any bias because respondents are usually not known to the researcher.

This technique proved to be a valuable instrument for collecting data in this research, as respondents from the community obtained various services from the Lichtenburg DHA. All community members require the services of the DHA for various reasons, such as birth and death registration, as the department is the only one able to render such services to the public.

4.4.1.2 Disadvantages

The following disadvantages regarding the utilisation of questionnaires can, *inter alia*, be identified (Best 1984:137):

- Respondents often fail to return the completed questionnaires or fail to complete them at all. An important reason for this is that they are suspicious of the reasons for the research and see it as a threat of some kind. Others may see it as a waste of time and some simply do not understand the questions being asked.
- Inaccurate completion of questionnaires creates problems. Some respondents may not supply accurate answers as they may lack the vocabulary to articulate their thoughts.
- Respondents who are reluctant to divulge information may ignore certain questions or falsify their answers.
- A further limitation in conducting questionnaires is the problem of getting respondents to think and come out with original responses rather than responses that are merely pleasing to the researcher.
- Close-ended questionnaires are rigid and provide no flexibility that the researcher may seek, and comments cannot be further explored or probed.

Many of these disadvantages were addressed by the researcher because of the fact that the questionnaire was handed over to the respondents and they were assisted with its completion by the researcher. This ensured that failure to return questionnaires, inaccurate presentations of questionnaires, ignorance in answering questions or misinterpretation of questions were minimised.

4.4.2 Development of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed with the purpose of finding out what were the respondents' perceptions regarding service delivery and communication by the DHA in the Lichtenburg area. The respondents were assured of confidentiality of the information provided to the researcher, which positively encouraged more sincere and truthful responses. The preparation of the questionnaire followed theoretical guidelines, and took the following into account (Best, 1984:137):

- Long complex sentences were avoided so that statements were readily explicit and clear to respondents.
- Leading statements were minimised.
- The wording of statements was clearly presented with attention focused on directness and simplicity.

This approach helped to ensure that the questionnaire was compiled as scientifically as possible for a better understanding of all who completed it in order to obtain accurate information. The statistics processed from the information gathered from the questionnaire can thus be regarded as scientifically correct.

To measure respondents' attitudes, behaviours or perceptions related to a specific phenomenon, a 5-Point-Likert scale is one of the most popular (and reliable) instruments to employ. A Likert scale describes a specific phenomenon using answer choices that range from one extreme to another, for instance from 'agree strongly' to 'disagree strongly' with three other alternatives in between. Unlike simple 'yes/no' questions, a Likert scale allows the respondent to reflect degrees of opinion. A 5-point Likert scale was developed for this study.

When compiling the questions in Likert-scale type questionnaire statements in the questionnaire, the following aspects were taken into account:

- Avoid double-barrelled questions: that is those that contain two attitude objects or variables and are therefore potentially asking two different concepts in one question.
- Avoid quantitative statements in the question: It is the intention of the Likert scale to capture the extent or degree of the respondent's perception of a statement on the basis of agreement or disagreement and not to ask quantitative variables.
- Avoid leading questions: Questions must be asked from a neutral standpoint, which means that leading statements toward a particular answer should be avoided (Rob, 2010).

In compiling the questions the researcher was careful not to lead the respondents in a specific direction because the researcher wanted to determine the respondents' individual opinions, attitudes, perceptions and beliefs.

4.4.3 Structure and content of the questionnaire

The questionnaire designed for the study was divided into four main sections.

- **Personal particulars:** This was comprised of five questions and addressed the profile of the respondents, including issues such as gender; race qualification; age category; and disability.
- **Section one:** This Section determined how effective the community regarded service delivery in the Lichtenburg Office of DHA. Section B comprised eight questions.
- **Section two:** This Section also comprised eight questions and addressed the effectiveness of communication in the Lichtenburg DHA within the context of service delivery.
- **Section three:** This Section also comprised eight questions and concentrated on the Batho Pele Principles and effective service delivery.

Questions were structured on the basis of the theoretical discussion as presented in Chapters Two and Three. As mentioned, a questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale, was compiled to test the following.

- Whether the hypothesis, as stated in Chapter One, is true or false.
- What the status of service delivery at the Lichtenburg DHA is. The theory was analysed in Chapter Two.
- What the status of communication is at the Lichtenburg DHA. The theory was discussed in Chapter Three.
- Whether the Batho Pele principles of service delivery are effectively implemented at the Lichtenburg DHA. The Batho Pele Principles were discussed in Chapter Two.

Respondents had to indicate their choice of responses (according to the Likert scale) to the identified questions in the following way (Rob, 2010):

AS = Agree Strongly, A = Agree, AD = neither agree nor disagree, D = Disagree, DS = Disagree Strongly.

4.5 Questions included in the questionnaire (See Appendix A for full document)

The following questions were formulated in the questionnaire:

4.5.1 Section one of the questionnaire: questions and guidelines on effective service delivery by the Lichtenburg office of DHA

Question 1: *The officials at the front desk address me in a friendly manner.*

Question 2: *The officials at the front desk are motivated people.*

Question 3: *The officials at the front desk are more than willing to assist me when I have a problem.*

Question 4: *I wait long periods of times in queues.*

Question 5: *I have a feeling of happiness when I do business with the officials in the Department.*

Question 6: *I believe that services are delivered to the customers without bias (fairly).*

Question 7: *The delivery of services by the front desk officials in the DHA is high quality.*

Question 8: *I receive the services in this Department that were promised to me.*

4.5.2 Section two of the questionnaire regarding effective communication in the DHA

Question 1: *I always fully understand the information that is offered to me by the front desk officials in the DHA.*

Question 2: *My problems are solved through communication with the officials in the DHA.*

Question 3: *I have no problem in believing that the information that is given to me by the officials in the DHA is true.*

Question 4: *The non-verbal face-to-face communication side of the officials in the DHA is acceptable.*

Question 5: *I fully understand the language that is used by the officials in the DHA.*

Question 6: *I am in constant conflict with the officials at the front desk of the DHA.*

Question 7: *The officials of the DHA are supportive when I need verbal assistance.*

Question 8: *I experience an effective communication culture present in the DHA at large.*

4.5.3 Section three of the questionnaire: questions and guidelines on the BATHO PELE principles

Question 1: *I am consulted (asked) by the officials on the quality of the services delivered by the DHA.*

Question 2: *The service delivery efforts of officials in the DHA compare well with other institutions that I visit.*

Question 3: *I feel that I receive value for money when I visit the DHA.*

Question 4: *I have a positive attitude towards the services delivered by the officials in the DHA.*

Question 5: *When I need someone to help me with information I find it difficult to find such a person.*

Question 6: *I have opportunities to make suggestions to better the service delivery by front desk officials in the DHA.*

Question 7: *The front desk officials handle my complaints with sympathy (understanding).*

Question 8: *I have been rejected before by front desk officials when presenting an enquiry on something.*

4.6 Pre-testing of the Questionnaire

Pilot studies are a crucial element of a good study design. Conducting a pilot study does not guarantee success in the main study, but it does increase its likelihood. It is a valuable activity to pre-test a particular instrument such as a questionnaire (Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001:1)

There are some good reasons to conduct a pilot study, namely (Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001: 2):

- i) To play a role in the development and testing of adequate research instruments,
- ii) To identify logistic problems that might occur during the main survey,
- iii) Train and prepare the researcher for the main survey, and
- iv) Assess the likely success of the main survey.

The preliminary questionnaire was distributed to twenty members (respondents) of the public at the DHA in Klerksdorp Regional Office in Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality. These respondents were not part of the final sampling unit and were also not inhabitants of Lichtenburg or living near the place where the study was conducted. The pre-test was undertaken to ascertain whether the questionnaire had been scientifically compiled and whether the results were verifiable. The questionnaire was clearly understood by respondents and was also easy to administer. The response from the participants was positive, as they indicated that they did not experience difficulty in completing the questionnaire and that the statements were clear and fair to all irrespective of race, gender and/or age. The questionnaire was therefore administered without any alterations in the actual implementation of the study. Its validity and reliability were thus not under suspicion. This meant that the questionnaire would be consistent and dependable (reliable) as well as valid which meant the questionnaire would measure what it was intended to measure.

4.7 Population and Sampling

According to Struwig and Stead (2001), it is generally not possible for researchers to collect data from the whole population of a study, due to numbers and specific time

limits and financial constraints. The total population regarding a specific study topic can be so large that, from a technical point of view, it is impossible to conduct research on all of them. As a result, evidence is derived from a portion of the whole population in the expectation that the findings apply equally to the rest of the population.

Accordingly, due to the high population in Lichtenburg who are service delivery beneficiaries of the DHA, a total of eighty (80) respondents were requested to take part in the study and to complete questionnaires. The respondents were members of the public who visited the DHA to acquire specific services associated with Home Affairs. The eighty (80) respondents were randomly selected irrespective of what service they were seeking on the day of the study. Participants included blacks, whites, Indians, coloureds and other nationalities that were both males and females, of differing qualifications and ages. People with disabilities were also considered during this data collection phase. Every tenth person entering the office was asked to complete the questionnaire. This method secured population validity, where the results obtained from the sample could be generalised for the total population. The questionnaires were distributed by the researcher, who also collected the completed questionnaires for evaluation. This was a one week exercise, and the returns on the questionnaires were 100%.

The results of the questionnaire, as part of the empirical study, will be discussed in the next section. These results will also be utilised in the next chapter to indicate whether the objectives of the study were reached and to make specific recommendations.

4.8 Findings

In this section the responses of the respondents will be discussed. The discussion will be undertaken in light of the hypothesis and objectives outlined in Chapter One. As mentioned, the statements focused on the profile of the respondents; service delivery at the Lichtenburg DHA (discussed in Chapter Two); communication within the Lichtenburg DHA (discussed in Chapter Three); and how the public experienced the performance of the Lichtenburg Office on the Batho Pele principles (discussed in Chapter Two).

The results obtained from the analysis of data will also be utilised to determine and identify problems in the functioning of the DHA Office in Lichtenburg, regarding effective service delivery and communication aspects. These problems will be presented in the form of recommendations in Chapter Five.

4.8.1 Profile of respondents

The first part of the questionnaire focused on the respondents' profiles in relation to gender, age, qualifications, race and disability. The biographical information was needed to determine the profile of the population regarding the community and to establish what the client of the Department looks like. This will be valuable information for future planning activities on effective service delivery in the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA.

Table 4.8.1: Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
Male	43	53.75	43	53.75
Female	37	46.25	80	100.00

The results from Table 4.8.1 reveal that out of eighty (80) respondents, thirty-seven (37) are women and the remaining forty three (43) are men. Thus, the majority of respondents were men. However, women also go to the DHA for services, as the department requires direct interaction with the client irrespective of gender, age or qualification when it renders services. The application for an ID, for an example, requires the applicant to apply personally as applicant fingerprints need to be taken and/or verified on the system. The equation of **53.75%** (Males) and **46.25%** (Females) is not of special significance and it is not necessary to discuss the two genders individually in the rest of the study.

Table 4.8.2: Age of respondents

Age	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
15-20	17	21.25	17	21.25
21-30	17	21.25	34	42.5
31-40	24	30.00	58	72.5
41-50	12	15.00	70	87.5
51 & above	10	12.5	80	100.00

Table 4.8.2 reveals that respondents between 31-40 years of age at 30% were the principal visitors to the office. Ten (10) respondents (12.5%) were above 51 years and 12 (15.00%) were between 41-50. Those between the ages of 15-20 and 20-31 represented 34 % of the visitors. It is thus clear that any future development in the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA should put emphasis on the age group 15 to 40 although the visitors above the age of 40 should also form part of any planning on effective service delivery.

Table 4.8.3: Qualifications of respondents

Qualification	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
No qualification	9	11.25	9	11.25
Grade 1-5	10	12.5	19	23.75
Grade 6-8	15	18.75	34	42.5
Grade 9-12	35	43.75	69	86.25
Post-matric	11	13.75	80	100

Table 4.8.3 reveals that 35 of respondents (43.75%) have a Grade 9-12 qualification. It is interesting to note that eleven (11) respondents (13.75%) have post-matric qualifications, and that nine (9) respondents (11.25%) have no qualifications. This means that 42.5% of the respondents possess qualifications lower than Grade 8. This figure is important to management of the Lichtenburg Office when it comes to future development in effective delivery of services to the public. Any new programmes or improvement in communication matters should take this into account to ensure that such programmes or initiatives are understood by the public.

Table 4.8.4: Race of respondents

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
Black	47	58.75	47	58.75
White	14	17.5	61	76.25
Indian	8	10.00	69	86.25
Coloured	9	11.25	78	97.5
Others	2	2.5	80	100.00

Table 4.8.4 reveals that black respondents are in the majority in the Lichtenburg area at forty- seven (47) (58.75%), followed by whites at fourteen (14) (17.5%), Indians at eight (8) (10.00%), coloureds at nine (9) (11.25%) and others at two (2) (2.5%). Because the gap between blacks and others is high, management should handle this situation with caution. Policies on service delivery should hypothetically make sure that the dominant race's needs are addressed, but not to the detriment of the other races.

Table 4.8.5: Disability

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
Disabled	4	5.00	4	5.00
Not disabled	76	95.00	80	100.00

Table 4.8.5 reveals that seventy-six (76) (95.00 %) out of the eighty (80) respondents are not disabled. This means that four respondents (5%) were disabled in one form or the other. There are specific guidelines, laid down by government, on how to address the disabled and also how to make sure that their needs are addressed. This statistic is thus important for management in the Lichtenburg Office and any activity to improve service delivery or to address communication matters should take the disabled into account.

Section one of the questionnaire: questions and guidelines on effective service delivery by the Lichtenburg office of DHA

Table: 4.8.6: Question 1: The officials at the front desk address me in a friendly manner

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	31	38.75	31	38.75
2. Agree (A)	40	50.00	71	88.75
3. Neither Agree or Disagree (AD)	8	10.00	79	98.75
4. Disagree (D)	1	1.25	80	100.00
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	-	-----	-----	-----

The above table reveals that the majority of public members (71) agreed by varying degrees (from agree strongly to agree) that front desk officials address them in a friendly manner. This accounts for 88.75% of the population which is a high figure by any reckoning. The fact that only one (1.25%) disagreed with the statement emphasises the significance of the respondents who were positive over the friendliness of the desk officers. Eight (8) (10.00) % neither agree nor disagree. Every public member deserves to be treated with dignity, respect and in a friendly manner and it is satisfying to note that this is the case in Lichtenburg Office of DHA.

Table: 4.8.7: Question 2: the officials at the front desk are motivated

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	12	15.00	12	15.00
2. Agree (A)	58	72.5	70	87.5
3. Neither Agree or Disagree (AD)	6	7.5	76	95.00
4. Disagree (D)	3	3.75	79	98.75
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	1	1.25	80	100.00

Table 4.8.7 indicates that twelve (12) (15.00%) agreed strongly that officials at front desk at the DHA in Lichtenburg are motivated and 58% agreed with the notion that officials are motivated. This means that a total of 87.5% of the respondents believe that officials working at the front desk are motivated. Only four respondents (5%) indicated that the officials working at the front desk are not motivated. This statistic implies that the public of Lichtenburg are to a large extent of the opinion that the workers in the DHA Office are motivated which may, inter alia, point to the fact that should there be problems regarding effective service delivery, they are not related to a lack of motivation of the officials at the front desk.

The percentage for respondents who disagreed by various degrees is, as mentioned, at 5% which is according to statistical standards not a high percentage. Because the majority of the officials at the front desk in the DHA in Lichtenburg are regarded as motivated, the issue of the motivation of staff is not a serious issue for management to address immediately. It is safe to make a statement on the basis of the presented statistics that the motivated officials contribute effectively and positively to the performance of the institution.

Table 4.8.8: Question 3: The officials at the front desk are more than willing to assist me when I have a problem

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	23	28.75	23	28.75
2. Agree (A)	49	61.25	72	90.00
3. Neither Agree or Disagree (AD)	8	10.00	80	100.00
4. Disagree (D)	-	----	---	---
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	-	-----	---	---

The willingness of officials to assist the public when problems are encountered is a respectable indicator of the successful delivery of effective services to the public. Table 4.8.8 indicates that seventy-two (72) of the eighty respondents (80) agree or agree strongly that the statement is true. This represents a percentage of 90.0% which is a clear indication that the public is satisfied with the assistance provided by the officials at the front desk. Only eight (8) at 10.00% of the respondents neither agree nor disagree that officials at front desk are more than willing to assist when they have problems. Of special encouragement is the fact that no respondents indicated that they disagree or disagree strongly with the question asked. The deduction can thus be made that the public of Lichtenburg are satisfied with the efforts of the officials at the front desk to assist them when problems do occur. There is no single respondent who had an experience of not being assisted when they had problems.

Table 4.8.9: Question 4: I wait for a long period in the queues

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	-	----	---	---
2. Agree (A)	3	3.75	3	3.75
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (AD)	19	23.75	22	27.5
4. Disagree (D)	29	36.25	51	63.75
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	29	36.25	80	100.00

Table 4.8.9 reveals that three (3) respondents out of eighty (80) at 3.75% agreed that they waited for a long period in a queue at the DHA Office in Lichtenburg and nineteen (19) at 23.75% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. The remaining 58 (72.5 %) disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement which means that 72.5% of the respondents are of the opinion that they did not have to wait for long periods of time in queues. There are busy calendar days in every institution and this happens especially at the month end or towards festive seasons. It might be that the three (3) respondents that waited long in the queues were those who went to the office for services at the month end; hence they waited too long in the queue or there might be other reasons such as officials being on leave and causing a shortage at the front desk. The nineteen (23.75 %) who neither agreed nor disagreed pose a problem to interpret because it is quite a large figure by any standards. To thus make any deductions without further investigation would be unscientific and this will be one of the recommendations presented in Chapter Five.

Table 4.8.10: Question 5: I have a happy feeling when I do business with the officials in the department

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	21	26.25	21	26.25
2. Agree (A)	53	66.25	74	92.5
3. Neither Agree or Disagree (AD)	6	7.5	80	100.00
4. Disagree (D)	----	----	----	----
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	--	----	----	----

Table 4.8.10 reveals that none of the respondents disagree with the statement and that six at 7.5% neither agree nor disagree with the statement. Of more importance for this study is the fact that 74 (92.5%) of the respondents agree strongly or agree that they experience a feeling of happiness when they visit the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA to receive services related to the DHA. In the light of the fact that not one respondent agreed or disagreed strongly with the statement, and that only six respondents stayed neutral, put the 74 positive responses from the public even more into perspective. The indication here is thus that a great majority of the respondents feel happy to do business with the officials in the DHA.

Table 4.8.11: Question 6: I believe that services are delivered to the customers without bias (fairly)

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	24	30.00	24	30.00
2. Agree (A)	53	66.25	77	96.25
3. Neither Agree or Disagree (AD)	2	2.5	79	98.75
4. Disagree (D)	1	1.25	80	100.00
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	---	-----	----	---

Table 4.8.11 reveals that 77 (96.25%) of the respondents feel that the services delivered to them are without bias. Only one (1.25%) disagrees with the statement that services are delivered to the customers fairly. Two (2.5%) neither agree nor disagree. A figure of 96.25% is highly acceptable when it comes to statistics and it can without doubt be deduced that the public of Lichtenburg have a high appreciation of the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA regarding this statement. The implications of this are that the public may experience that the Office delivers services in an effective manner.

Table 4.8.12: Question 7: The delivery of services by the front desk officials in the DHA is of high quality

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	16	20.00	16	20.00
2. Agree (A)	58	72.5	74	92.5
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (AD)	6	7.5	80	100.00
4. Disagree (D)	----	----	----	---
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	-----	-----	----	----

Table 4.8.12 reveals that seventy-four (74) at 92.5% of the respondents agree that the delivery of service at the DHA in Lichtenburg is of high quality and six (6) at 7.5% neither agree or disagree with the statement. None of the respondents has a negative perception of the quality of services in that office. Though six (6) neither agree nor disagree, it is quite evident that service delivery in the DHA in Lichtenburg is of high quality. Quality of services in the public sector is in many cases under suspicion or is an issue and is negatively perceived by the public. The statistics presented by this study are however so positive, as reflected in the positive finding of 92% satisfaction by the respondents, that the deduction can well be made that the DHA in the Lichtenburg Office is delivering services of high quality to the public.

Table 4.8.13: Question 8: I receive the service in the department that was promised to me

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	23	28.75	23	28.75
2. Agree (A)	56	70.00	79	98.75
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (AD)	1	1.25	80	100.00
4. Disagree (D)	----	----	----	----
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	----	-----	----	-----

Table 4.8.13 reveals that only one respondent (1.25%) neither agrees nor disagrees that he or she receives the services promised to him or her. The rest, namely 79 (98.75%), agree or strongly agree that they receive the service that was promised to them. This aspect, which is also addressed in the Batho Pele principles, is of major importance to the DHA Office in Lichtenburg, because it is closely related to the image reflected by the Office. It is also closely related to the effective delivery of services, because poor service delivery amounts to a breaching of promises.

Section two of the questionnaire: questions on effective communication

Table 4.8.14: Question 1: I always fully understand the information that is offered to me by the front desk officials in the DHA

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	19	23.75	19	23.75
2. Agree (A)	55	68.75	74	92.5
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (AD)	5	6.25	79	98.75
4. Disagree (D)	1	1.25	80	100.00
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	----	-----	----	---

It is important for the public to understand the information presented to them by the front desk officials, else misunderstanding will occur which will be time-consuming for the public and which will be related to poor service delivery and poor communication practices. This concern about communication seems to be unfounded in the DHA Office in Lichtenburg because 74 (92.5%) of the respondents indicated that they understand (agree strongly and agree) the information offered to them by the front desk officials. Communication between the public and office is thus satisfactory.

Table 4.8.15: Question 2: My problems are solved through communication with the officials in the DHA

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	23	28.75	23	28.75
2. Agree (A)	52	65.00	75	93.75
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (AD)	4	5.00	79	98.75
4. Disagree (D)	----	----	---	----
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	1	1.25	80	100.00

Table 4.8.15 indicates that most of the respondents at 93.75% (75 respondents) feel that their problems are solved through communication with the officials in the DHA. Only one (1) at 1.25% disagreed strongly with the statement and four (5.00%) neither agreed nor disagreed.

Table 4.8.16: Question 3: I have no problem in believing that the information that is given to me by the officials in the DHA is true

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	16	20.00	16	20.00
2. Agree (A)	49	61.25	65	81.25
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (AD)	11	13.75	76	95.00
4. Disagree (D)	3	3.75	79	98.75
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	1	1.25	80	100.00

Table 4.8.16 assesses whether respondents believe that information given to them is true. Altogether 65 (61.25%) of the respondents indicated that they agree (agree strongly and agree) to the question being asked and that they believe in the correctness of the information being given to them by the front desk officials in the DHA Office in Lichtenburg. Of the respondents, four (4) at 5.00% do not believe that information given to them by the DHA officials is true. Eleven (11) at 13.75% are not sure whether the information being given to them is true. The fact that only 61.25% trust the information being given to them should be worrisome to management because the DHA is the only department rendering the service of issuing enabling documents such as IDs hence the information given should be trusted by all. The management of the DHA Office in Lichtenburg should investigate this communication problem in the hope of finding an answer that will rectify the problem. This problem regarding the trustworthiness of information and (by implication) possible poor communication by the public will be taken up in a recommendation for further analysis in Chapter Five.

Table 4.8.17: Question 4: The non-verbal face-to-face communication of the officials in the DHA is acceptable

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	13	16.25	13	16.25
2. Agree (A)	14	17.5	27	33.75
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (AD)	9	11.25	36	74.00
4. Disagree (D)	36	45.00	72	90.00
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	8	10.00	80	100.00

Table 4.8.17 reveals that the majority of the respondents feel that the facial expression of the officials at DHA in the Lichtenburg Office is not acceptable, in other

words they are unfriendly. Forty-four (55.00%) of the respondents indicated (disagree strongly or disagree) that the officials at the front desk's face-to-face communication is not acceptable. Nine (9) at 11.25% are not sure of this statement which complicates the situation because their vote could have gone either way. Should it have gone to the negative side, the figure of 55.0% could become even more damaging. The fact that only twenty-seven (27) at 33.75% of the respondents are of the opinion that non-verbal face communication is acceptable needs further investigation. . In Table 4.8.6, 88.75% of the respondents implied that officials of the DHA in the Lichtenburg Office address them in a friendly manner. This contradiction is troublesome for the researcher, but it falls outside the spectrum of this study to address it and the dilemma will be referred for further attention. A recommendation in this regard will be made in Chapter Five.

Table 4.8.18: Question 5: I fully understand the language that is used by the officials in the DHA

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	27	33.75	27	33.75
2. Agree (A)	42	52.5	69	86.25
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (AD)	6	7.5	75	93.75
4. Disagree (D)	2	2.5	77	96.25
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	3	3.75	80	100.00

Table 4.8.18 reveals that 69 respondents indicated that they fully understand the language used by the DHA officials in the Lichtenburg Office. This represents a positive percentage of 86.25%. Five (5) at 6% do not fully understand the language used by the officials and six respondents (7.5%) are uncertain whether this is the case or not. The fact that in total 11 respondents (13.75%) has a communication

problem with the officials at the front desk is somewhat concerning. This issue can be investigated by the management on the assumption that solutions can be found to make communication more favourable to the public. This will also be a recommendation in Chapter Five.

Table 4.8.19: Question 6: I'm in constant conflict with the officials at the front desk of the DHA.

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	1	1.25	1	1.25
2. Agree (A)	1	1.25	2	2.5
3. Neither Agree or Disagree (AD)	6	7.5	8	10.00
4. Disagree (D)	34	42.5	42	52.5
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	38	47.5	80	100.00

Table 4.8.19 reveals that only two (2) respondents strongly agree or agree that they are in constant conflict with the officials at the front desk of the DHA, Six (6) respondents neither agree nor disagree and the rest (72 respondents) at 90% disagree and strongly disagree with the statement. These statistics indicate that there is no major problem that leads to conflict in the Office. The odd disagreement sometimes will occur, but this is a normal tendency in all public and private institutions where there is communication with the public. This indicates that officials at the front desk in the DHA are more than capable of communicating with and assisting public members so that conflicts are minimal.

Table 4.8.20: Question 7: The officials of the DHA are supportive when I need verbal assistance

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	23	28.75	23	28.75
2. Agree (A)	53	66.25	76	95.00
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (AD)	4	5.00	80	100.00
4. Disagree (D)	----	-----	---	----
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	-----	-----	----	----

Table 4.8.20 reveals that the majority of the respondents, except four at 5% (who neither agree nor disagree) believe that officials of the DHA in Lichtenburg office are supportive when verbal assistance is needed. This means that 76 respondents (95.0%) are satisfied with the verbal communication between them and the officials at the front desk. The fact that four respondents (5%) of the total population of 80 respondents are in disagreement or strong disagreement is not a reason for concern because of the exceptionally positive comments by the respondents on this question. This is an indication that officials at the DHA in the Lichtenburg Office are good verbal communicators.

Table 4.8.21: Question 8: I experience an effective communication culture in the DHA as a whole

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	4	5.00	4	5.00
2. Agree (A)	68	85.00	72	90.00
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (AD)	5	6.25	77	96.25
4. Disagree (D)	2	2.5	79	98.75
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	1	1.25	80	100.00

Most of the respondents to this question indicate that they experience a good communication culture in the DHA as a whole. A positive 72 (90.0%) of the respondents experienced a positive communication culture in the Office. Only three (3) at 3.75% of the respondents do not see it in that way and five (5) at 6.25% neither agree nor disagree with the statement. The management of the DHA Office in Lichtenburg thus need not embark on immediate action to address communication matters related to the department in Lichtenburg.

Section three of the questionnaire: questions and guidelines on the BATHO PELE principles

Table 4. 8.22: Question 1: I am consulted (asked) by the officials on the quality of the services delivered by the DHA

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	11	13.75	11	13.75
2. Agree (A)	60	75.00	71	88.75
3. Neither Agree or Disagree (AD)	7	8.75	78	97.5
4. Disagree (D)	2	2.5	80	100.00
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	----	----	----	-----

Table 4.8.22 indicates that seven (7) respondents (8.75%) neither agree nor disagree whether they are consulted by the officials on the quality services delivered by the DHA and two (2) (2.5%) disagree with the statement. The majority of the respondents (71) at 88.75% of the respondents agree that they are consulted by the desk officials on the quality of the services delivered by the DHA Office in Lichtenburg. This means the communities' perception about service delivery with special reference to consultation by the DHA in Lichtenburg is positive.

Table 4.8.23: Question 2: The service delivery efforts of officials in the DHA compare favourably with other institutions that I visit.

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	8	10.00	8	10.00
2. Agree (A)	11	13.75	19	23.75
3. Neither Agree or Disagree (AD)	15	18.75	34	42.5
4. Disagree (D)	35	43.75	69	86.25
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	11	13.75	80	100.00

Table 4.8.23 reveals that most of the respondents (46) at 57.5% indicate that service delivery efforts of officials in the DHA do not compare favourably with other institutions they visited, while 18.75% (15) respondents neither agree nor disagree and only 23.75% agree or agree strongly with the statement. These statistics should be of grave concern to the DHA management in Lichtenburg. There may be concrete reasons for this state of affairs, such as that the delivery of services is really poor, or there may be other more hidden reasons that could not be detected by this study. An obvious reason in this regard can be that the question was incorrectly or wrongly interpreted by the respondents. Whatever the case might be, these statistics should be tested by an individual study. A recommendation in this regard will be made in Chapter Five.

Table 4.8.24: Question 3: I feel that I receive value for money when I visit the DHA

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	17	21.25	17	21.25
2. Agree (A)	62	77.5	79	98.75
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (AD)	1	1.25	80	100.00
4. Disagree (D)	---	-----	----	---
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	—	-----	----	----

Table 4.8.24 reveals that seventy-nine (79) at 98.75% of the respondents feel that they receive value for money when they visit the DHA. Value for money in this instance is that they are content with the service they receive from the department and its officials. The fact that only one respondent (1.25%) neither agreed nor disagreed and that not one respondent disagreed or strongly disagreed emphasises the fact that the public regarded the actual service delivery activities of the DHA in Lichtenburg as very satisfactory.

Table 4.8.25: Question 4: I have a positive attitude towards the services delivered by the officials in the DHA

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	16	20.00	16	20.00
2. Agree (A)	60	75.00	76	95.00
3. Neither Agree or Disagree (AD)	4	5.00	80	100.00
4. Disagree (D)	----	----	----	----
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	-----	-----	----	----

Table 4.8.25 indicates that 76 of the respondents (95%) have a positive attitude towards the services delivered by the officials in the DHA in Lichtenburg. Only four (4) respondents at 5.00% neither agree nor disagree with the statement. It is positive for the study that not one respondent indicated having a negative feeling on the service delivery activities of the officials. This means, in the final analysis, the community is to a large extent happy with the services rendered by the DHA in Lichtenburg.

Table 4.8.26: Question 5: When I need someone to help me with information, I find it difficult to find such a person

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	1	1.25	1	1.25
2. Agree (A)	2	2.5	3	3.75
3. Neither Agree or Disagree (AD)	7	8.75	10	12.5
4. Disagree (D)	24	30.00	34	42.5
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	46	57.5	80	100.00

The majority of the respondents do not find it difficult to get someone to assist when they need help. Statistics here show that 70 respondents (87.5%) feel that they find support when they ask for assistance on home affairs matters in the Lichtenburg Office. Three (3) at 3.75% find it difficult to find such a person and seven respondents (8.75%) are uncertain regarding the question. The absence of a help-desk may contribute to the fact that 10 respondents find it difficult to get hold of an official in the process of seeking information. Taking into account that 12.5% of the respondents are not satisfied with the situation and what the situation is if this percentage is projected to the entire population, then a help desk to assist the public with information should be considered by the DHA management in Lichtenburg.

Table 4.8.27: Question 6: I have opportunities to make suggestions to better the service delivery by front desk officials in the DHA

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	53	66.25	53	66.25
2. Agree (A)	25	31.25	78	97.5
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (AD)	2	2.5	80	100.00
4. Disagree (D)	-----	-----	-----	-----
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	-----	-----	-----	-----

Table 4.8.27 reveals that out of eighty (80) respondents, only two (2) of the respondents (2.5%) are neither agreeing nor disagreeing whether they have an opportunity to make suggestions to better the service delivery by front desk officials of the DHA in Lichtenburg. The remaining 78 (97.5) are of the opinion that they have the opportunity to make suggestions to better service delivery. The statistics imply that this aspect needs not to be regarded as a problem for the Lichtenburg Office.

4.8.28: Question 7: The front desk officials handle my complaints with sympathy (understanding)

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	19	23.75	19	23.75
2. Agree (A)	54	67.5	73	91.25
3. Neither Agree or	6	7.5	79	98.75

Disagree (AD)				
4. Disagree (D)	1	1.25	80	100.00
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	---	---	---	---

Table 4.8.28 reveals that 91.25% of the respondents (73) feel that the officials handle complaints with sympathy and understanding. One (1) respondent disagrees with the statement and six (6) neither agree nor disagree. In total 8.75% of the respondents disagree or are uncertain regarding this question. Theoretically one would strive for a 100% positive response in this regard because this is one of the cornerstones of effective service delivery. The 73 positive responses are an indication that officials understand their roles in the DHA in Lichtenburg and are more than willing to assist the public.

Table 4.8.29: Question 8: I have been rejected before by the front desk officials when presenting my enquiry on something

Response	Frequency	Per cent	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative per cent
1. Agree Strongly (AS)	---	---	---	---
2. Agree (A)	3	3.75	3	3.75
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree (AD)	1	1.25	4	5.00
4. Disagree (D)	27	33.75	31	38.75
5. Disagree Strongly (DS)	49	61.25	80	100.00

Table 4.8.29 indicates that seventy-six (76) of the respondents (95%) indicated that they receive quality services from the DHA Office in Lichtenburg and have never

been rejected by the officials at the front desk. Only three (3) respondents (3.75%) experienced problems with rejection. One (1) respondent (1.25%) is uncertain on this aspect. The majority (95.00%) who disagree with the statement reflect a statistically sound number which need not concern the management of the Lichtenburg Office.

4.9 Analysis and contextualisation of data

Quantitative research attempts to precisely measure something and to produce the results in facts and details. Quantitative analysis is used in research to find answers to questions that can be measured. This type of analysis answers questions related to how much, how often, how many, when and who. Quantitative analysis collects data that are factual and which can be measured and presented statistically. The data are thus reduced to numbers so that they can be presented without any manipulation. This procedure also gives the reader the basic knowledge to understand the contents of a specific phenomenon such as effective service delivery and quality communication. It also provides important facts and statistics that can help develop solutions to problems and that will yield future innovations. The findings of the survey, which were discussed above, produced certain facts and statistics. The majority of the findings implied that the respondents were satisfied with the level of services presented effectively by the officials in the DHA Office at Lichtenburg and that they regarded communication also as effective. Certain problems have however been identified that need to be addressed. In order to contextualise these findings and to determine whether the service delivery and communication activities in the DHA Office in Lichtenburg are generally effective the results of the study will be formalised next.

4.9.1 Section one of the questionnaires: questions and guidelines on effective service delivery by the Lichtenburg office of DHA

Question1: *The officials at the front desk address me in a friendly manner.* Altogether 71 out of a total of 80 respondents indicated that they are of the opinion that the front desk officials address them in a friendly manner. With 88.75% of the respondents being positive, this question or statement can be regarded as having yielded a positive response to the effective delivery of services as well as confirming that communication aspects are in place.

Question 2: *The officials at the front desk are motivated people.* Some 70 out of 80 respondents are of the opinion that officials at the front desk are motivated. The indication here is that the majority of the community are of the opinion that officials at the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA are motivated so that poor service delivery may be caused by anything but not a lack of motivated staff. The issue on the motivation of staff by management is not a matter of priority.

Question 3: *The officials at the front desk are more than willing to assist me when I have a problem.* Some 72 of 80 of the respondents feels that officials at the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA are more than willing to assist the public when problems are encountered. Of special importance is that there is no single respondent who has an experience of not being assisted when facing problems. Officials at the Lichtenburg Office are thus dedicated to service delivery.

Question 4: *I wait long periods of time in queues.* Altogether 72.5% disagree and strongly disagree with the statement that they have to wait too long in the queue and 19 at 23.75% neither agree nor disagree with the statement and 3 (3.75%) agree that they waited too long in the queue. The 19 is a large number and raised concern. Management of the Lichtenburg Office have to check the situation and see how best the problem can be resolved. The recommendation will be outlined in Chapter Five.

Question 5: *I have a feeling of happiness when I do business with the officials in the Department.* The indication here is that the majority of the respondents (74 out of 80 or 92.5%) feel happy to do business with the officials in the DHA except for six (6) who chose to remain neutral. This aspect does not need attention especially since none of the respondents disagreed and/or disagreed strongly with the statement.

Question 6: *I believe that services are delivered to the customers without bias (fairly).* Altogether 77 out of 80 (96.25%) of the respondents reveal that services are delivered to them without bias. This is an indication that the Lichtenburg Office delivers services in an effective manner.

Question 7: *The delivery of services by the front desk officials in the DHA is of high quality.*

In responding to this question, none of the respondents has a negative perception about the quality of the services by the officials and it can be deduced that the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA is delivering a high quality service to its community.

Question 8: *I receive the services in this Department that were promised to me.* Some 79 out of 80 respondents agree and agree strongly that they received the service that the department promised them. This is an indication that there is effective service delivery in the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA. The services promised to the clients are delivered.

In this section on effective service delivery by the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA, the question that raised concern is question 4 which deals with time spent by clients in the queues waiting. Management of the Office must address this concern either by increasing the officials at front desk and/or by deploying back office officials to the front during busy days/ times. The remaining questions, namely questions 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8, yielded positive responses from the respondents. In general, the majority of the respondents which represented the entire population of the area have a positive perception of service delivery by the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA.

4.9.2 Section two of the questionnaire regarding effective communication in the DHA

Question 1: *I always fully understand the information that is offered to me by the front desk officials in the DHA.* It is important for the community to understand the information given so as to avoid unnecessary delays and queries. The concern about communication seems to be unfounded as 74 (92.5%) respondents indicated that they understand the information given by the front desk officials at the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA.

Question 2: *My problems are solved through communication with the officials in the DHA.* Some 75 out of 80 respondents indicated that their problems are resolved through communication with the officials of the DHA. One disagreed strongly with the statement and four neither agreed nor disagreed. The indication here is that officials in the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA are good communicators.

Question 3: *I have no problem in believing that the information that is given to me by the officials in the DHA is true.* The findings are worrisome as only 65 out of 80

(85.25%) have no doubts about the information given by the officials of the DHA. Altogether 4 (5%) do not believe the information from the DHA officials. The management have to look into and address this matter accordingly. The recommendation on this matter will be presented in Chapter Five.

Question 4: *The non-verbal face-to-face communication side of the officials in the DHA is acceptable.* The majority of the respondents feel that the facial expression of the DHA officials is not acceptable, while nine are not sure and this demands more attention. The response obtained is worrisome and must receive management's attention. This will be addressed in Chapter Five.

Question 5: *I fully understand the language that is used by the officials in the DHA.* Altogether 69 out of 80 of the respondents indicated that they fully understand the language used by the officials in the DHA. For the five (7.5%) that do not understand management's attention is required. The researcher will present the recommendation in Chapter Five.

Question 6: *I am in constant conflict with the officials at the front desk of the DHA.* Some 72 out of 80 of the respondents indicated that they are not in constant conflict with the officials at the front desk of the DHA. The statistics indicate that there is no major challenge that leads to conflict in the Office as officials are capable in their communication.

Question 7: *The officials of the DHA are supportive when I need verbal assistance.* The indication here is that the officials at the Lichtenburg Office are supportive when verbal assistance is needed and no one disagreed or disagreed strongly with the statement. The four (5%) that were neutral are not worrisome as there was no negative indication.

Question 8: *I experience an effective communication culture present in the DHA at large.* Some 72 out of 80 respondents experienced a positive communication culture in the Office. The management of the Office need not worry much on this matter as the majority of the respondents have a positive perception of this aspect.

Out of eight questions, five are positive (questions 1, 2, 6, 7, 8) and three (3, 4 and 5) need the attention of management in the Office at Lichtenburg. The recommendations for questions 3, 4 and 5 will be provided in Chapter Five of this study.

4.9.3 Section three of the questionnaire: questions and guidelines on the BATHO PELE principles

Question 1: *I am consulted (asked) by the officials about the quality of the services delivered by the DHA.* The majority of the respondents at 88.75% agree and strongly agree that they are consulted by the front desk officials on the quality of services delivered to them. This means the perception of the community with special reference to consultation by the DHA is positive. Management of the Office need not do much in addressing this matter.

Question 2: *The service delivery efforts of officials in the DHA compare well with other institutions that I visit.* Some 46 out of 80 (57.5%) indicated that service delivery efforts of the officials in the DHA do not compare favourably with other institutions they visited. There could have been a misinterpretation of the question where others might have seen the officials of the DHA in good standing in terms of service delivery as compared to officials of other departments. The researcher will outline the recommendation in Chapter Five.

Question 3: *I feel that I receive value for money when I visit the DHA.* Some 79 out of 80 (98.75%) feel that they receive value for money when they visit the DHA. This is an indication that service delivery in the Lichtenburg Office is of good quality and the community is satisfied with it.

Question 4: *I have a positive attitude towards the services delivered by the officials in the DHA.* None of the respondents indicated that they have a negative attitude towards services delivered by the officials in the DHA. The community is to a large extent happy with the services delivered by the officials in the DHA.

Question 5: *When I need someone to help me with information I find it difficult to find such a person.* Some 70 out of 80 (87.5%) respondents feel that they find support when they seek assistance on Home Affairs matters in the Lichtenburg

Office, while only 3(375%) find it difficult to get assistance and seven remain neutral. A recommendation will be provided in Chapter Five.

Question 6: *I have opportunities to make suggestions to better the service delivery by front desk officials in the DHA.* Altogether 78 out of 80 (97.5%) respondents are of the opinion that they have an opportunity to make suggestions for better service delivery. This aspect does not need attention.

Question 7: *The front desk officials handle my complaints with sympathy (understanding).* The 73 (91.25) of the respondents feel that officials handle their complaints with sympathy and this implies that the officials of the Lichtenburg Office are more than willing to assist.

Question 8: *I have been rejected before by front desk officials when presenting an enquiry on something.* Some 76 out of 80 (95%) indicated that they had never been rejected before when they presented an enquiry and three indicated that they had been rejected before. The management of the Lichtenburg Office need not concentrate more on this aspect as the majority's response is positive.

Statistics indicated that **18 out of 24** statements were received positively which thus emphasises that the DHA Office in Lichtenburg delivers effective services as well as good communication practices.

Statistics indicated that **6 out of 24** questions were negatively received and this is an indication that there are indeed certain problems regarding the delivery of effective services as well as good communication practices.

This statistics could be further analysed, but it is believed that what has been presented is enough to determine whether the hypothesis is true or false. The hypothesis is that service delivery and related effective communication in the Lichtenburg Office of the Department of Home Affairs is, according to the community around Lichtenburg, poor and this leads to unsatisfied citizens.

The survey and analysis of data indicated that the hypothesis is in fact false and that the delivery of services delivery and related effective communication in the DHA Office in Lichtenburg is as a matter of fact effective.

4.10 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to present the empirical findings of this study. In so doing the following was reported. A total of eighty (80) respondents participated in this research. Everyone participated willingly and there were no spoiled or incomplete questionnaires. All categories were represented in terms of gender, age, race, education and disability. A range of issues surfaced from the data collected. Findings that were brought about by both the literature review and data analysis reveal that the majority of the respondents disagree with the study's hypothesis that service delivery and effective communication between the DHA and the community around Lichtenburg is poor and this leads to unsatisfied citizens. When taking the total picture into account, it becomes clear that the hypothesis has been proven incorrect.

However, a significant number had a negative perception on service delivery and communication by the Lichtenburg office of the DHA. Recommendations to the management of the Office will be discussed in the next chapter.

Government institutions are increasingly recognising the importance of consistent quality of service when responding to the diversity of citizens' needs. This creates new challenges for frontline staff, who are working in environments that demand professionalism and high ethical standards at all times. In the following chapter recommendations will be made based on the findings provided in this investigation.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to assess the perceptions of the Lichtenburg community regarding service delivery and communication by the DHA. Chapter One discussed the background of the study and outlined the problem statement. Chapter Two focused on effective service delivery in government institutions, providing a broad definition of service delivery and discussing the challenges facing it. Chapter Three explored various pieces of the legislative framework related to services delivered by the DHA, and dealt with communication in government institutions. Chapter Four discussed the methodology used to gather information and indicated how the data were analysed and presented.

This chapter summarises the study by chapter, elaborates on the findings of the study and provides recommendations. The recommendations form an important part of the study because they lay the foundation for further research and create a platform for action for the Department to address identified problems.

5.2 Summary of the Study

Chapter one of this study described the background of South Africa since 1994, following the start of democracy and the implementation of the new Constitution of 1996. The Constitution as a supreme law gave effect to the development of various pieces of legislation that provide guidelines in addressing gaps and the emerging challenges of South African citizens. Public administration is one of the primary themes of the Constitution and in section 197(1) it is stipulated that “within public administration there is a public service for the Republic, which must function, and be structured, in terms of national legislation, and which must loyally execute the lawful policies of the government of the day” (section 197(1)).

Among the Constitution’s more important stipulations are the following.

- Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias.
- People’s needs must be responded to and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making.

- Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible, and accurate information and public administration must be development-oriented.

These stipulations underline the importance of effective and efficient performance by public officials and a system that will enhance performance.

Further, Chapter One also outlined the problem statement and hypothesis as follows: ***Effective service delivery and related effective communication practices in the Lichtenburg Office of the Department of Home Affairs are, according to the community around Lichtenburg, poor and this leads to unsatisfied citizens.***

The researcher had to prove whether this statement was true or false through the empirical study. It is in this chapter that the purpose of the study was outlined and elaborated upon.

Chapter Two focused on service delivery in government institutions. The legislative framework relating to the DHA – namely the strategic plan, Acts, policies, circulars and memorandums were discussed, and literature relating to service delivery explored. The characteristics and constraints of service delivery within government institutions were also discussed. The Batho Pele Principles were analysed and discussed in detail. Batho Pele means ‘People First’, meaning that consumers or clients of government services should receive first priority when it comes to service delivery. It emerged from this chapter that any service delivery oriented institution should adhere to and comply with the Batho Pele Principles, which are a guiding tool for good governance.

Chapter Three focused on communication within the government institutions. It defined and provided examples of communication. Challenges to communication, which include obstacles to effective communication, were also outlined.

Chapter Four discussed the methodology used for the study, and presented the data, and an analysis and interpretation of the data. It was in this chapter that respondents were given the opportunity to express their views regarding service delivery and communication by the DHA in Lichtenburg. Eighty respondents took part voluntarily in the research and there were no spoiled questionnaires.

Chapter Five is an extension of Chapter Four and analyses findings from Chapter Four and presents the recommendations and conclusion.

5.3 Findings

The study's research objectives, based on the primary and the secondary research questions, were as follows:

- To analyse the theoretical guidelines and principles that form the foundation of the phenomenon of effective service delivery in government context.
- To analyse the theoretical guidelines and principles that form the foundation of the phenomenon of communication with special reference to government institutions.
- To establish what the Batho Pele principles state regarding communication and service delivery in government institutions.
- To determine what the current state of affairs is in the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA regarding satisfactory communication practices and effective service delivery actions.

These objectives have been attained in this study. They are represented in the various chapters of this study.

The hypothesis of the study was proved to be wrong. This means that the research determined that service delivery and related effective communication practices in the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA are indeed delivered to the satisfaction of the community.

The primary data collection instrument was a close-ended questionnaire.

Section one comprised eight questions which determined how the community perceives service delivery in the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA.

Section two addressed the effectiveness of communication in the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA within the context of service delivery. This section also had eight questions.

Section three which also had eight questions concentrated on the Batho Pele Principles and effective service delivery.

Questions for sections one to three were based on the theoretical discussion as presented in Chapters Two and Three and were placed on a 5-point Likert scale in the following way:

AS = Agree Strongly, A = Agree, AD = neither agree nor disagree, D = Disagree, DS = Disagree Strongly

5.3.1 Personal Particulars: respondents' profile

The eighty (80) respondents were randomly selected irrespective of what service they were seeking on the day of the study. Participants included blacks, whites, Indians and coloureds, who were both male and female, of differing qualifications and ages. Disabled respondents also took part in this study. Every tenth person entering the office was asked to complete the questionnaire. This method secured population validity, where the results obtained from the sample could be generalised for the total population. The questionnaires were distributed by the researcher, who also collected the completed questionnaires for evaluation. This was a five-day exercise from 2 to 6 September 2013 and the returns on the questionnaires were 100%.

5.3.2 Section one of the questionnaire: questions and guidelines on effective service delivery by the Lichtenburg office of the DHA

The following is a summary of findings under this section as discussed in Chapter Four.

As shown in table 4.8.6, the majority of public members agreed at varying levels (88.75%) that front desk officials addressed them in a friendly manner except one (1.25%) who disagreed with the statement. Eight at 10.00% neither agreed nor disagreed. The indication here is that the community feels that the Lichtenburg Officials of the DHA address them in a friendly manner. This is indicative enough that front desk officials are dealing with public members professionally.

Regarding statement 2 as shown in Table 4.8.7, four at 5% disagreed at varying levels that front desk officials at Lichtenburg Office of the DHA are motivated, six at

7.5% neither agreed nor disagreed and the majority at 87.5% agreed that officials at the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA are motivated. Motivated officials contribute positively to effective service delivery. Since the officials are motivated they addressed the community in a friendly manner thus contributing to the enhancement of service delivery by the office.

As reflected in Table 4.8.8, none of the respondents disagreed that officials are more than willing to assist them when they have problems. Eight at 10.00% neither agreed nor disagreed. The indication here is that the officials at the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA have problem-solving skills which contribute to good service delivery.

As seen in Table 4.8.9, there are those at 3.75% who indicated that they waited too long in the queue, and nineteen at 23.75% who neither agreed nor disagreed. The remaining respondents at 72% disagreed. The cause of waiting too long might be the timing when most of the officials are on leave or during busy calendar days. Management of the Office must look into this matter and come up with remedial action.

As reflected in Table 4.8.10, the majority of the respondents at 92.5% feel happy to do business with the officials of the DHA. This is an indication that service delivery in Lichtenburg is of good quality because they received services promised to them and thus feel happy to do business with the department.

Table 4.8.11 shows that the majority of respondents at 96.25% believed that services are delivered to customers without bias, meaning that customers are treated fairly. Only one at 1.25% disagreed with the statement and two neither agreed nor disagreed. This is an indication that the officials are motivated and implement the Batho Pele Principles to benefit the services of the department.

Table 4.8.12, reveals that only six at 7.5% neither agreed nor disagreed that service delivery by the officials in the DHA is of high quality and the remaining respondents agreed with the statement. Motivated, friendly officials who treat the community fairly produce high quality service.

The last statement in this section addressed the question of receiving promised services from the DHA in the Lichtenburg Office. The results are exceptionally good

at 98.25%. The respondents indicated that they had received the services that were promised to them.

In this section, the respondents' responses reveal that in general, service delivery is good at the DHA's Lichtenburg Office. This is due to the fact they find the officials have been motivated, address them in a friendly manner, treat them fairly and respond well to any questions that they might have. The only concern is in regard to question 4 where respondents feel that they wait too long in the queue. A recommendation will be provided for management to implement. In general, the community have a positive perception about service delivery by the DHA's Lichtenburg Office.

5.3.3 Section two of the questionnaire regarding effective communication by the DHA

This section had eight questions which were responded to by the respondents.

Table 4.8.14 reveals that one at 1.25% did not fully understand the information offered by the front desk officials in the DHA, and five at 6.25% neither agreed nor disagreed. The remaining respondents at 92.5% fully understood the information given by the front desk officials. This might have reflected the language, age and literacy level of the respondents. The profile of the respondents differs according to age, race and qualification. In general the majority understand the information given.

In Table 4.8.15, one respondent at 1.25% revealed that their problems are not solved through communication with the officials in the DHA and four at 5.00% neither agreed nor disagreed. The majority at 93.75% revealed that their problems are solved through communicating with the officials in the DHA. This is an indication that officials have sound communication skills so that they are able to solve problems of the community through communication.

In Table 4.8.16, the statistics revealed that four of the respondents at 5.00% had problems in believing that the information given by the front desk officials in the DHA was true. Eleven neither believed nor disbelieved the statement and sixty-five at 81.25% were confident regarding the truth of the information given by officials at the front desk. The figure of four is disturbing; however, as there might be some reason for not believing that the information given is true. This demands serious attention

as the DHA is the only department that renders services such as issuing enabling documents like identity documents. One way of enhancing service delivery is by providing information that is trusted by all.

Regarding Table 4.8.17 there is a concern about the non-verbal face-to-face communication of the officials in the DHA. Forty-four respondents at 55.00% expressed their concern in that regard and only a few at twenty-seven (33.75%) agreed and strongly agreed. This contradicts most of the respondents' views in section one; however people differ in terms of how they express themselves facially. Facial expression if not taken care of might dent the image of the office and make people not be happy. A recommendation to address this matter will be provided.

As shown in Table 4.8.18, five respondents at 6.25% did not understand the language used by the DHA officials in the Lichtenburg Office and sixty-five at 86.25% understood the language used. In this instance there should be an interpreter present so that all get the correct information at all times. The DHA provides services to all irrespective of race. A recommendation will be provided to the management of the Lichtenburg Office.

In Table 4.8.19, 90% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. The indication here is that they are not in constant conflict with the front desk officials in the DHA. This indicates a positive attitude of front desk officials and their willingness to serve clients in a friendly manner. This shows adherence to the Batho Pele Principles where public members must be treated with courtesy. The two who claimed constant conflict with the officials of the DHA might have other reasons and the matter needs serious attention.

In Table 4.8.20, it is shown that 95% of the respondents feel that officials are supportive when they need verbal assistance. This is an indication that communication is effective in the DHA.

The final table in this section was all about an effective communication culture in the DHA as a whole. Some 90% agreed with the statement except three at 3.75%. In general there is effective communication in the DHA's Lichtenburg Office so that service delivery is regarded as being of good quality.

There should be clear communication in every institution so that service can be appreciated by the beneficiaries thereof. The community is happy about communication in the DHA in Lichtenburg and therefore they enjoy doing business with the department. Effective communication enhances service delivery. The questions raised in 3, 4 and 5 will need the attention of the management of the Lichtenburg Office.

5.3.4 Section three of the questionnaire: questions and guidelines on theBATHO PELE principles

The section had eight questions summarised as follows:

Table 4.8.22 addressed the Principle of Batho Pele which deals with consultation. Out of eighty respondents, seventy-one at 88.75% indicated that they were constantly consulted about the quality of service delivered by the DHA except two at 2.5%. This is an indication that the communities' perception regarding communication in the DHA is positive as they had been consulted accordingly. The officials practise the Batho Pele Principles.

In Table 4.8.23, the feeling is expressed by forty-six respondents at 57.5% that the DHA services do not compare favourably with those of other institutions they visited. The fifteen that neither agreed nor disagreed may be those who had not visited other institutions. The eleven at 13.75% did agree. The indication here is that from the responses already analysed, it emerged that the DHA is doing well in terms of service delivery and that other institutions might not be doing well as compared with the DHA. The DHA must do its best to ensure that it remains highly rated.

Table 4.8.24 deals with value for money as one of the Batho Pele Principles. The response in this regard is very positive as almost all respondents feel that they receive value for money at the DHA. This supports Table4.8.13 where 98.25% of the respondents indicated that they received the services that they were promised.

In Table 4.8.25, the majority of respondents at 95.00% revealed that they had a positive attitude towards services delivered by the officials in the DHA. This is due to the fact they receive high quality service delivery. They also receive value for money from the DHA.

In Table 4.8.26, the majority of the respondents at 85.5% do not find it difficult to get someone to assist them when they need information. Only three at 3.75% found it difficult to find such a person and seven at 8.75% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Although there is no major challenge here, a recommendation should be submitted to advise managers on how they can do better regarding this matter.

In Table 4.8.27, the majority of the respondents at 97.5% indicated that they were given an opportunity to make suggestions to better the service delivery by the front desk officials of the DHA. Seeing that the communities can make suggestions, then the finding that front desk officials of the DHA produce high quality services is true.

In Table 4.8.28, only one respondent at 1.25% indicated that his or her complaints were not handled with understanding. The majority at 91.00% agreed with the statement that their complaints were handled with understanding. This was because the officials at the front desk address them in a friendly manner.

In the last table of this section, 95.00% indicated that they had never been rejected when they presented an enquiry. Three indicated that they had been rejected before. The indication here is that the community around Lichtenburg have a positive perception of communication and service by the DHA in the Lichtenburg Office. It may thus be confidently asserted that the Batho Pele Principles are adhered to in the DHA in the area concerned and therefore the improved service delivery and communication.

In general, the community is happy about service delivery and communication by the DHA in the Lichtenburg Office.

5.4 Recommendations

The following are recommendations on matters where the majority of the respondents were negative towards service delivery and effective communication by the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA. Out 24 issues, only six need to be attended by the management of the Lichtenburg Office.

5.4.1 Section one of the questionnaire: questions and guidelines on effective service delivery by the Lichtenburg Office of the DHA

Under this section, there is only one matter raised by question 4 regarding the long time spent in the queue by the respondents and the recommendation is as follows:

Recommendation: question 4: The analysis of data regarding the time spent in queues indicated that some of the public spend long periods of time in queues. Although only a small number complained (3.75%), what backs up this statement are the 19 respondents (23.75%) that neither agreed nor disagreed – this is worrisome and demands attention.

The manner in which the service provider addresses the customer, *the maximum length of time within which responses must be made to enquiries and applications*, the *user friendliness* of forms and *the lengths of time standing in queues* all have an impact on whether the public will experience service positively (Van der Walddt & Du Toit, 1997).

It is thus recommended that the DHA Office in Lichtenburg examine the situation and see how best it can address it and see to it that these problems are investigated and corrective actions be put into place. Strict supervision and visibility of management can be one of the mechanisms to deal with this aspect.

5.4.2 Section two of the questionnaire, questions regarding effective communication in the DHA

In this section three questions need attention. The recommendations are as follows:

Recommendation: Question 3: This is the analysis of the data regarding the trustworthiness of the information given by the front desk officials of the DHA. Managers and employees should regularly seek to make information about the institution and all other service delivery related matters, available to fellow staff members. Citizens should also be given full and accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive (White Paper, 1997). This is a compliance matter and has to be implemented accordingly.

Recommendation: Question 4: The issue of non-verbal facial expressions raised concern. Verbal and non-verbal messages should support each other. Because

point of delivery, but for users who are far from the point of delivery, other arrangements will be needed. Citizens should also be given full and accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive. The help desk should be established and managed accordingly (White Paper, 1997 – Batho Pele).

These recommendations should be communicated to the management of the DHA Office in Lichtenburg for implementation.

5.5 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to summarise the findings of this study and then propose certain recommendations. This was done by firstly providing an overview of the whole dissertation as to its overall goal, problem statement, hypothesis as well as an overview of each of the chapters.

As for the final chapter, everyone has a different way of perceiving things. These perceptions may be influenced by various factors like background, culture, previous experience, and beliefs. The study's hypothesis, as outlined in Chapter One, is that service delivery and effective communication between the DHA and the community around Lichtenburg is poor and this leads to unsatisfied citizens. The purpose of this study was to test and find out whether this statement is true or false.

Chapter one outlined the study's background, problem statement and chapter layout, to provide the reader with an overall picture of what the researcher intended to study. The chapter on the literature review addressed issues such as the characteristics, definition and constraints regarding service delivery. Its purpose was to provide an understanding of the relevant concepts under investigation to be able to provide an answer to the statements given. This assisted in formulating statements relevant to the study in order to be able to test the hypothesis. Chapter Three focused on communication within the government institutions. Chapter Four concerned the methodology to be employed to generate data. The type of questionnaire and the ethical aspects were also addressed. The chapter's objective was to give the reader direction and understanding of the method to be used in the study. Chapter Five as an extension of Chapter Four analysed findings from Chapter Four and presented the recommendations and conclusion.

Findings from both the literature review and the data analysis revealed that respondents disagree with the hypothesis that service delivery and effective communication between the DHA and the community around Lichtenburg is poor and this leads to unsatisfied citizens. When taking the total picture into account, it becomes clear that the hypothesis has been proven incorrect. It is recommended that research similar to this study be conducted at regular intervals in order to evaluate how the community perceives the department in relation to service delivery. This will help to create a good opportunity for engaging with the public, obtaining their opinions, interpreting these and providing feedback to them. In so doing, the department will be able to better assess itself and make improvements where need be.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION ONE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE: QUESTIONS AND GUIDELINES ON EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY BY THE LICHTENBURG OFFICE OF DHA

Question 1: *The officials at the front desk address me in a friendly manner*

Other department employees, such as front office clerks, have to conduct their business according to the defined performance standards. These standards may include the manner in which customers are addressed, identification of staff by name tags, striving to be gender sensitive and the utilisation and development of user friendly forms (Van der Waldt & Du Toit, 1997). *The manner in which the service provider addresses the customer*, the maximum length of time within which responses must be made to enquiries and applications, the *user friendliness* of forms and the style and tone of communication all have an impact on service delivery (Van der Waldt & Du Toit, 1997).

Institutions that provide services to customers have to work hard at all times to ensure that they *produce high-quality work*. It is important that service delivery improvement plans are adopted, which specify how service delivery will be monitored and reported on as well as the management of information systems that will support such initiatives (Van der Waldt & Du Toit, 1997). The Public Service Commission, Directorate Communication and Information Services. 2005. Evaluation of Service Standards in the Public Service. Pretoria: ISBN: 0-621-35939-4 p10-16

Question 2: *The officials at the front desk are motivated people*

Employees should be *encouraged and motivated* to deliver quality work. Unacceptable conduct should be identified and be dealt with in line with the designed legislative framework. Employees should be familiarised with the Code of Conduct on a regular basis to prevent them from losing sight of what is expected of them.

Question 3: *The officials at the front desk are more than willing to assist me when I have a problem*

Dealing with clients directly requires certain skills. These include communication skills (both written and verbal), listening skills, interviewing skills, *problem-solving skills* and analytical skills. *When a problem is presented, the officials should be able to interview the customer to get to the root of the problem*, listen attentively, and to analyse the problem in order to make an informed decision. Having empathy with the customer is critical for the service provider. Unnecessary delays and requirements must be avoided. For example, empathetic frontline clerks will not leave clients waiting in a *queue* while they enjoy their lunch or tea. (Hattingh, 1998).

Question 4: *I wait long periods of time in queues*

The manner in which the service provider addresses the customer, *the maximum length of time within which responses must be made to enquiries and applications*, the *user friendliness* of forms and *the length of time standing in queues* all have an impact on service delivery (Van der Waldt & Du Toit, 1997). Here the employees reflect on the *quality of their work* and explore ways of improving it. Some of these ways may involve *upgrading technology* used by that institution, implementing quality checking devices and/or timeous updating of guiding legislative frameworks. This is a developmental approach that is intended to enable people to do their best when performing their tasks.

The attainment of a good quality of life for all demands an environment that provides equal opportunities for all individuals to develop maintain and enjoy a satisfactory quality of life. This can be achieved in an environment in which *equal opportunities* exist for all individuals to subsist, where people feel safe and are able to live without fear of social, political and economic disruption (Du Toit, 2001:63).

Question 5: *I have a feeling of happiness when I do business with the officials in the Department*

Empowered customer service frontline clerks are not only knowledgeable about the service they provide but can also impart knowledge to their customers. They demonstrate confidence but not arrogance, friendliness but not familiarity, helpfulness but not insistence, and attentiveness but not intrusiveness. They will act

in the best interests of the institution. Frontline clerks should project a strong, positive image of the organisation and a sincere interest in helping the customers. Following interaction with the clerks, customers should *feel happy about doing business* with the institution whose employees are warm, friendly, efficient and competent (Green Paper, 17 December 1996).

Question 6: *I believe that services are delivered to the customers without bias (fairly)*

Government operates with limited resources, such as financial and human resources. Every department has therefore to determine the most critical needs that it has to satisfy and list them in order of priority. Prioritisation is crucial because in most instances the needs always exceed the available human and financial resources. (Commission for Africa, 2005:138). As a principle for effective service delivery, the South African Public Service Commission states in its public service report (2005:23) that services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and *without bias (without unfairness)*. Services should be provided to all irrespective of their historical background, gender, race or religion. Government services should reach even those in the far-flung areas and farms and not only in urban areas (White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery –Batho Pele Principles).

Question 7: *The delivery of services by the front desk officials in the DHA is high quality*

Service delivery concerns the provision of a product or service by a government or government body to a community to whom the service was promised, or which is expected by that community. It is important to understand that *service quality* is not negotiable in the public sector. Therefore, to achieve quality, the institution must understand the needs of the clients they serve. Customers' satisfaction should thus be key in all spheres of government (Green Paper Transforming Public Service Delivery, Department of Public Service Administration, 17 December 1996)

Question 8:*I receive the service in this Department that was promised to me*

Standards that are precise and measurable are required to enable users to judge for themselves whether they are receiving what was promised. Some standards will

cover processes, such as the length of time taken to authorise a housing claim, to issue a passport or ID, or even to respond to letters. To achieve the goal of making South Africa globally competitive, standards should be benchmarked (where applicable) against those used internationally, taking into account South Africa's current level of development (White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery – Batho Pele Principles).

SECTION TWO OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN THE DHA

Question 1: *I always fully understand the information that is offered to me by the front desk officials in the DHA*

According to Robbins (1997:124), communication serves four major functions within a group or organisation, namely control, motivation, emotional expression, and information. It is essential to point out that the four major functions of communication, as identified by Robbins (1997), are important for managers, particularly in ensuring that *information that is first encoded and then transmitted through a channel to the receiver, is interpreted in the same way by the recipients who, in turn, will respond through a desired action and feedback*. The general aim of communication is to establish understanding or meaning between a communicator and a receiver (Skinner & Von Essen, 1994). More specific aims may be to persuade, to inform, to influence attitudes and to bring about action. These specific aims are related to the required outcome of the communication.

Question 2: *My problems are solved through communication with the officials in the DHA*

Effective communication within organisations and among organisations and their external public members produces many tangible benefits. These benefits include a user-friendly internal atmosphere, more satisfied employees and customers, greater levels of productivity and innovation, and enhanced service delivery. In general, staff in an organisation regards effective *communication as the way to resolve most problems* and to enrich their work life (Weaver & Richard, 2004:4).

Question 3: *I have known problems in believing that the information that is given to me by the officials in the DHA is true*

For communication to reach the target market effectively, *the source of information must be credible*. Ferguson (1999:115) argues that “the credibility of a source can have a dramatic impact on how audiences receive messages; audiences accept messages from credible sources and reject the same message from less credible sources”. Ferguson (1999:131) also elucidates the factors that influence audience perceptions of source credibility. These factors can indicate elements that an organisation should acknowledge when choosing a source to communicate a message to a target market. These factors are: level of experience, composure, trustworthiness, dynamism, sociability, extroversion and similarity to audience.

Question 4: *The non-verbal face-to-face communication side of the officials in the DHA is acceptable*

To achieve effective communication, it is vital to know what kind of information is to be communicated. Knowledge of the kind of information is vital when deciding to whom the information is relevant, and what channel is suitable for communicating such information. *Another contributor to effective communication is unambiguous, non-verbal communication, such as vocal intonation and body language, particularly when communicating face-to-face*. In addition, the information should be conveyed in a manner that strives to create dialogue. It is important that the receivers have the opportunity to request a further exchange of ideas, and that they possess interpersonal communication understanding and skills in order to fulfil their communication role.

Question 5: *I fully understand the language that is used by the officials in the DHA*

Another reason is that the conceptualisation and establishment of barriers to communication – such as noise, differing perceptions, cultural backgrounds, *languages*, inconsistencies in communication, differences in status, distrust, behavioural and attitudinal factors such as apathy, and resistance to change – are common, prevailing and perpetual factors within organisations. Slisburyte (2004:192) argues *that using face-to-face communication; being sensitive to the backgrounds of others; using direct unambiguous language* and frequent repetitions; being

supportive to counteract defensiveness; and being a good listener can assist managers in eliminating barriers to effective communication.

Question 6: *I am in constant conflict with the officials at the front desk of the DHA*

Poor communication is a *primary cause of concern in most organisations because it is frequently cited as a source of conflict between the communicator and the receiver of the message*. Furthermore, over the past ten years a number of studies have demonstrated a growing problem of information overload (Quirke, 2008:298). According to the author, in 2000 a survey by the Institute of Management linked email to workplace stress in general. Another study of Fortune 1000 workers found that corporate staff are inundated with so many communication tools – such as email, teleconferencing, video-conferencing, postal mail and voicemail – that they don't know which to use for which task – which leads to conflict.

Question 7: *The officials of the DHA are supportive when I need verbal assistance*

According to De Vito (1986), *the characteristics of effective communication in an institutional context are openness, empathy, supportiveness, positivity and equality*. In practice, if effective organisational communication does not occur and vital information is not reaching its target audiences, the blockages in the communication channel need to be identified and dealt with

Question 8: *I experience an effective communication culture present in the DHA at large*

Therefore communication systems and practices should be carefully designed, implemented and evaluated. An organisation should focus on creating an effective communication culture. This will ensure the proactive exchange of knowledge, opinions and ideas by every worker and stakeholder in an organisation (Hargie & Tourish, 1996). Schonfelder (1998) *states that a positive and effective communication culture "should include faster decision making, increased productivity and empowerment"*.

SECTION THREE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE: QUESTIONS AND GUIDELINES ON THE BATHO PELE PRINCIPLES

Question 1: I am consulted (asked) by the officials on the quality of the services delivered by the DHA

***i) Consultation:** Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public service they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services that should be/are offered to them. There are many ways to consult users of services, including conducting customer surveys; interviews with individual users; consultation with groups; and holding meetings with consumer representative bodies, NGOs and CBOs. Often, more than one method of consultation will be necessary to ensure comprehensiveness and representativeness. Consultation is a powerful tool that enriches and shapes government policies such as the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and their implementation in the local government sphere (White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery –Batho Pele Principles).*

Question 2: The service delivery efforts of officials in the DHA compare well with other institutions that I visit

***ii) Setting service standards:** This principle reinforces the need for benchmarks to constantly measure the extent to which citizens are satisfied with the service or products they receive from departments. It also plays a critical role in the development of service delivery improvement plans to ensure a better life for all South Africans. Citizens should be involved in the development of service standards. They should be told what level and quality of public services they will receive so that they can monitor the situation (White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery – Batho Pele Principles).*

Question 3: I feel that I receive value for money when I visit the DHA

***iii) Increasing access:** One of the primary aims of Batho Pele is to provide a framework for making decisions about delivering public services to the many South Africans who do not have access to them. Batho Pele also aims to rectify the inequalities in the distribution of existing services. Examples of initiatives by government to improve access to services include such platforms as the Gateway,*

multi-purpose community centres and call centres. All citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled. Access to information and services empowers and gives citizen's value for money (White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery – Batho Pele).

Question 4: *I have a positive attitude towards the services delivered by the officials in the DHA*

iv) Ensuring courtesy: This goes beyond a polite smile and a 'please' and 'thank you'. It requires *service providers to empathise with citizens and treat them with as much consideration and respect as they would like for themselves*. The public service is committed to continuous, honest and transparent communication with citizens. This involves communication of services, products, information and problems, which may hamper or delay the efficient delivery of services to promised standards. If applied properly, the principle will help to *demystify the negative perceptions that citizens in general have about the attitude of public servants* (White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery – Batho Pele Principles).

Question 5: *When I need someone to help me with information I find it difficult to find such a person*

v) Providing information: As a requirement, available information about services should be at the point of delivery, but for users who are far from the point of delivery, other arrangements will be needed. Managers and employees should regularly seek to make information about service delivery related matters available to fellow staff members. Citizens should also be given full and accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive (White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery – Batho Pele Principles).

Question 6: *I have opportunities to make suggestions to better the service delivery by front desk officials in the DHA*

vi) Openness and transparency: A key aspect of openness and transparency is that the public should know more about the way national, provincial and local government institutions operate, how well they utilise the resources they consume,

APPENDIX B**INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE**

Please indicate your choice of response with 'a cross' (X) on the column/ box

SECTION A RESPONDENTS' PROFILE					
Age	15-20 years	21-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	51 years and above
Gender	Male	Female			
Qualification	No qualification	Grade 1-5	Grade 6-8	Grade 9-12	Post-matric
Race	Black	White	Indian	Coloured	Other
Disability	Yes	No			

SECTION ONE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE: QUESTIONS AND GUIDELINES ON EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY BY THE LICHTENBURG OFFICE OF DEA						
	Agree Strongly (AS)	Agree (A)	Neither Agree/Disagree (AD)	Disagree (D)	Disagree Strongly (DS)	
Question 1: <i>The officials at the front desk address me in a friendly manner</i>						
Question 2: <i>The officials at the front desk are motivated people</i>						
Question 3: <i>The officials at the front desk are more than willing to assist me when I have a problem</i>						
Question 4: <i>I wait long periods of times in queues</i>						
Question 5: <i>I have a feeling of happiness when I do business with the officials in the Department</i>						
Question 6: <i>I believe that services are delivered to the customers without bias (fairly)</i>						
Question 7: <i>The delivery of services by the front desk officials in the DEA is of high quality</i>						

SECTION THREE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE: QUESTIONS AND GUIDELINES ON THE BATHO PELE PRINCIPLES					
<i>Question 1: I am consulted (asked) by the officials on the quality of the services delivered by the DHA</i>					
<i>Question 2: The service delivery efforts of officials in the DHA compare good with other institutions that I visit</i>					
<i>Question 3: I feel that I receive value for money when I visit the DHA</i>					
<i>Question 4: I have a positive attitude towards the services delivered by the officials in the DHA</i>					
<i>Question 5: When I need someone to help me for with information I find it difficult to find such a person.</i>					
<i>Question 6: I have opportunities to make suggestions to better the service delivery by front desk officials in the DHA</i>					
<i>Question 7: The front desk officials handle my complains with sympathy (understanding)</i>					
<i>Question 8: I have been rejected before by front desk officials when presenting an enquiry on something</i>					