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CLIENT SATISFACTION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND  
LAND REFORM IN SOUTH AFRICA

BY

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## **DECLARATION**

'I declare that the field study hereby handed in for the qualification of Magister in Business Administration at the UFS Business School at the University of the Free State is my own independent work and that I have not previously submitted the same work, either as a whole or part, for a qualification at/in another university/faculty.'

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CRDP	Comprehensive Rural Development Programme
DRDLR	Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
ICSAP	Internal Client Satisfaction Action Plan
LG	Local Government
QICSS	Quality Internal Client Satisfaction Service
RD	Rural Development
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SA	South Africa
TQM	Total Quality Management



## **ABSTRACT**

It is generally believed that the impact of interior client satisfaction can generate comparative advantages for institutional performance. The primary objective of this survey is to investigate the client satisfaction levels of the workforce of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) in South Africa (SA). It is impelled by the continuous complaining of the workforce who comes in direct contact with the exterior clients. Complaints revolve around the correct inputs to their disposal in order for them to respond to concerns of exterior clients.

In this survey a quantitative research approach in the form of a sample survey was used in order to document outcomes based on the respondents' responses during the survey. Data was collected from 1 080 employees from the DRDLR in SA through a structured electronic questionnaire. The results were replicated to ensure that the results are constant while the researcher was perceived as being exterior to the research, regardless of his identity.

The extent and acknowledgement of interior client satisfaction in the DRDLR is satisfactory (66.6 %), which revolves around the operations of the Department in terms of the provision of services to interior clients (employees). Although a 66.6 % satisfaction level was achieved, a narrative on additional comments made by the respondents showed that there are challenges with regards to flow of communication, recruitment and labour relation issues and performance appraisals approaches in the Department.

Even if the results were satisfactory, to enhance the interior institutional assistance to the workforce requires continuous research to improve the efficiency of work. In addition and even more significantly, advanced satisfaction levels among exterior as well as interior clients are vital for employee productivity, turnover rate and the Department's ability to attract talent.

**Keywords: Interior Client Satisfaction; Client Satisfaction Levels; Dimensions of Satisfaction**

## **CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND, PROBLEM STATEMENT AND OUTLINE OF THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Background**

According to Carter and Keswell (2011), since 1994 the national government of South Africa has focused on local government (LG) and rural development (RD). The two programmes are similar; however, local government has been progressively inaugurated and supported, as the third statutory sphere of government, in line with a comprehensive decentralisation programme whereby rural development has continuously become a talking point during party-political treatises since 1994. It has been promoted and executed through several policy guidelines, regulations and programmes, which have frequently been conceived and managed from a central point. This resulted in separated development programmes which have led to fragmented spatial development planning of the economy along historical lines and patterns. As a result, the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) was established in 2009, in line with the Polokwane directives (DRDLR, 2012) to address some of these fragmented spatial development programmes.

Following the creation of the new Department, it has instantly embarked on an intensive process to clarify as well as conceptualise what rural development should be, and to provide a structure on how it should be executed. In the process, the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) was developed and implemented which was directed at reducing the blight of poverty through the establishment of vibrant, equitable as well as maintainable communal societies (DRDLR, 2012; Carter & Keswell, 2011). Since then, the Department has been committed to the social and economic growth of communal areas in South Africa (SA). In addition, the Department is also dedicated to ensure that South Africans living in communal areas enjoy similar benefits as their urban counterparts, as guaranteed in the Constitution.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

Employees of the DRDLR who are in direct contact with exterior clients have continuously been heard to complain that they do not receive the correct inputs in order to respond to the concerns of exterior clients. This has resulted in a situation where some of the employees are doing no more than the routine activities entrusted to them. Some of the outcomes were frustrations and the non-existence of inspiration from the employees in providing the correct service to exterior clients. A lack of satisfactory interior service delivery is experienced in the DRDLR.

If the Department is not successful in addressing the above-mentioned concern, it may result in a negative impact on the implementation status of the programmes of the Department as well as the retention of the current workforce. It may also lead to a situation where interior clients show their frustrations to the exterior clients, which can significantly impact the loyalty, exterior client gratification and future operations of the Department.

## **1.3 Research objectives**

### **1.3.1 Primary research objective**

The primary objective of this survey is to investigate the client satisfaction levels of the workforce of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) in South Africa (SA).

### **1.3.2 Secondary research objectives**

The secondary objectives of this study are to:

1. Discuss client satisfaction;
2. Determine the effect of interior client services on exterior clients; and
3. Analyse the views of the workforce of the DRDLR about specific support services.

#### **1.4 Preliminary literature review**

Working environment made out an integral part of the employees (Obeng-Akrofi, 2009). Besides, a healthy and enthusiastic workforce can improve services to the broader public in an open, transparent and consistent manner (Obeng-Akrofi, 2009; Lodh, 2007). Consequently, by receiving information from the clients on their opinion of service delivery, one will better understand what needs are critical to serve in the future. In the same manner, one will be able to understand why clients purchase a series of services/products from a specific institution. Several, reporters on management issues have in recent years emphasised the significance of excellent interior service as one of the main, but also least understood, factors in the delivery of quality products and services externally. However, research evidence does reveal that there is a positive relationship between worker satisfaction and client satisfaction (Chang & Huang, 2010; Lodh, 2007).

Although there is no generally accepted definition of interior client satisfaction, initial perceptions of satisfaction studies have characteristically defined satisfaction as an after-choice evaluating ruling regarding a price buying-choice (Lodh, 2007). In addition, it is widely recognised as involving information dissemination as well as client expectations (Caliskan, 2010; Gardner, 2005).

Nonetheless, Kacmar, Andwews, van Rooy, Steilberg and Cerone (2006) point out that most of the satisfaction research done is based on concepts such as satisfaction, performance, expectations and disconfirmation. On the other hand, how these services are experienced by all interior clients is often unknown. Do these services meet everyday demands, are agreements adhered to, are the staff client-focussed or even proactive or merely client-friendly? The answers to the above-mentioned questions are vital for any management board to continue to pursue the organisational strategies and at the sometime ensure that the workforces are satisfied with the interior operations of the institutions.

## **1.5 Research method**

The research method was in the form of a survey. The population of the study was the total workforce of the DRDLR. For sampling purposes, the total workforce was selected randomly from the nine provinces of South Africa. The first employee was selected randomly; thereafter, every tenth employee was selected to ensure that every employee of the Department had a fair chance of being selected. The primary data collection tool was an online confidentially structured questionnaire for acquiring biographical data and statements on key business issues. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) as well as Microsoft Excel was used for data analyses.

## **1.6 Limitations of the study**

The study was limited to the workforce of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR). This could mean that other governmental departments may hold different views with respect to interior client satisfaction which could have been valuable to this study. In addition, the target population was the workforce of the DRDLR; therefore the findings cannot be generalised to the whole public sector. Closed ended questionnaires were used in the research design, which has limited the respondents to express their views in detail where necessary.

The Likert scale was used in the research, which has the limitation of the so-called acquiescence bias (Johns, 2010). As a result, the respondents had agree with statements irrespective of their content.

## **1.7 Layout of the study**

In order to address the research problem in the study, Chapter two will follow with the literature review. It will concentrate on the importance as well as the benefits of client satisfaction (interior as well as exterior) in order to put the literature in relation to the problem statement. Chapter three will examine the research methodology including the research design, sampling design, data collection and analyses as well

as ethical considerations. Chapter four will reflect on the analyses and interpretations of the data to deliberate on the outcome before resolutions will be made. Chapter five will include the recommendations as well as conclusions of the study.

## **1.8 Conclusion**

It is clear that surveys that deal with interior employee satisfaction can provide vital data on the soundness and general status of any business' perceptions by the workforce. In the same manner, enhancing interior institutional assistance to the workforce requires that research needs to be done on a continuous basis to improve the efficiency of work, but more significantly, advanced satisfaction levels among exterior as well as interior clients.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

One of the most important goals of the national government is to make sure that the provision of high quality services are provided to their clients (Ottenbacher & Gnoth, 2005). In the same vein, servicing clients is an essential task of public services (Cunningham & Rowley, 2010). Additionally, support services like Communication & Environment, Recruitment & Labour Relations, Human Resource Management & Performance Management and Personnel Appraisals & Culture play an influential part in the provision of a decent working environment and recognising interior clients as the main users of these support services is essential. Chang and Huang (2010) further argued that these services must respond effectively to the workforce's wishes and needs, whilst at the same time reflecting organisational objectives and the objectives of specific branches. These principles addressed three key Quality Internal Client Satisfaction Service (QICSS) related themes: information dissemination, consultation and communication (Ullah & Yasmin, 2013; Caliskan, 2010; Hemson, Meyer & Maphunye, 2004).

In acknowledgement of the necessity to improve service delivery, the South African government has launched the QICSS initiative in 2010. The purpose of this initiative was to support the broader acceptance to enhance client service values by government departments and branches. As a preliminary prerequisite, all the departments were requested to generate a two-year Internal Client Satisfaction Action Plan (ICSAP), demonstrating the full effect given to various guiding principles for the dissemination of excellent customer service (DRDLR, 2012; Carter & Keswell, 2011).

In this chapter, the focus will be on the international perspectives related to the QICSS initiatives with specific reference to the need for information dissemination and client expectations, retaining and satisfying clients as well as the importance of value for client satisfaction. Thereafter the significance of enhancing interior client

management will be discussed. The public and private sector perspectives in terms of the value of interior clients and the impact of interior client services on the exterior client services will be argued and lastly the benefits of interior clients' satisfaction will be focussed on.

## **2.2 International perspective regarding client satisfaction**

Obeng-Akrofi (2009) emphasises that the client is an integral part of any institution's working environment. A former Prime Minister of India, Mahatma Gandhi uttered the significance of clients by stating that (as quoted by Obeng-Akrofi, 2009):

*Clients are the most essential guest to a business. Clients are not in need of their business, but the business is in need of clients. In addition, clients are not a disruption to their work, but rather the purpose of it. Furthermore, clients are not a stranger to their business, but rather part of their business. The business is not doing the client a favour by helping them. The client is indeed doing the business a favour by providing the business with an opportunity.*

It is clear from the above-mentioned that any business can obtain, retain as well as improve the satisfaction level of their workforce if they acknowledge the valuable contribution of their clients. Nevertheless, a high satisfaction level of the workforce can lead to an improvement of the working conditions and may enhance a conducive work environment to advance organisational goals. It can also improve administrative functions to ensure that the workforce carries out their functions without inconvenience. Furthermore, a healthy and enthusiastic workforce can improve services to the broader public in an open, transparent and consistent manner (Obeng-Akrofi, 2009; Lodh, 2007).

### **2.2.1 The need for information dissemination and client expectations**

Information dissemination might be regarded as one of the most significant managerial tools available to an institution. A workforce without the required information to conduct their duties can cost the institution a great deal of money.



Therefore, the absence of correct information can also constrain employees or administrators from being able to reply appropriately to various aspects of their jobs. Besides, real time decision-making can only be efficient if the decision-makers have the relevant information to make up-to-date and precise choices. Haines, Jalette and Larose (2010) reason that partaking also includes information dissemination among the workforce, workforce suggested programmes, flexible work design and self-directed work groups. Furthermore, it is vital that institutional decisions are made timeously as well as precisely, based on reliable market-driven information and interactions (Chang & Huang, 2010).

Gonring (2008) further argued that successful institutions regard interaction with clients as their first priority and analyse their views for implementation. Besides, to gather information straight from the client is an efficient way to obtain information on excellence. By asking the client what the expectations of the workforce are and if it is achieved, will be a great advantage to the institution. This will result in a profitable way of better understanding the satisfaction levels of the workforce and knowing precisely what the obstacles are for delivering excellent service. Therefore, information dissemination can enable most of the workforce to become self-manageable from the bottom upward and advance their satisfaction levels (Caliskan, 2010; Gardner, 2005).

To understand client satisfaction, institutions should consider client expectations as well as how clients perceive service provision in comparison to their expectations. Satisfaction is mostly dependable on interaction, since most of the visible services to clients are provided during interaction with clients. Thus, the approach of interacting with clients is significant in determining client satisfaction. Furthermore, by incorporating technologies into human resources, will perhaps result in improve levels of client satisfaction. Kendall (2007) is of the opinion that two key explanations of satisfaction need to be considered; namely that satisfaction is a procedure and that satisfaction is an end product. In addition, initial perceptions of satisfaction

studies have characteristically defined satisfaction as an after-choice evaluating ruling regarding a precise buying-choice (Lodh, 2007).

Nevertheless, there are numerous concepts that must be assessed in order to advance client expectations. These concepts comprise of:

- setting performance standards for client services;
- training the workforce about quality services (Kacmar, Andwews, van Rooy, Steilberg & Cerone, 2006);
- assessing the level of service delivery;
- creating an atmosphere for the clients to define what services they want for the creation of a point of reference;
- forming service standards and remaining within the standards;
- rewarding the workers that performed well (Haines, Jalette & Larose, 2010);
- encourage an outstanding interior communiqué procedure; and
- finally acknowledging the client for the work done.

By assessing the above-mentioned concepts and by keeping to it the creation of a positive client service atmosphere will be obtained (Obeng-Akrofi, 2009; Kendall, 2007).

On the other hand, the entire planning process needs to be assessed in order to ensure successful service delivery. The process need to include empowering of individuals, exploring values and achieving consistency throughout the institution. To explore values means to understand the clients' values and what the clients consider as valuable in order to advance their satisfaction levels. These may include respect, convenience and moral support (Osman, Rosnah, Ismail, Tapsir & Sarimin, 2004). By acknowledging the values of clients, one will know what kind of service the client wants from the institution. The empowerment concept will be advanced by creating an atmosphere to ensure that the workforce perform their duties to the best of their abilities. Therefore communication, capturing the image as well as gaining commitment are critical to advance the performance of the workforce. Performance

objectives must be created and assessed for better understanding to ensure that the clients are receiving whatever they anticipate. By receiving information from the clients on their opinion of service delivery, one will better understand what needs are critical to serve in the future. The last process deals with the achievement of consistency across the whole institution. However, clients are building impressions about institutions, which can have positive or negative effects on their opinions about the institution they serve (Obeng-Akrofi, 2009; Kendall, 2007).

According to Kacmar *et al.* (2006), the disconfirmation paradigm in procedure philosophy provides the basis for most of the satisfaction research done and includes the following concepts: satisfaction, performance, expectations as well as disconfirmation. The effect of expectations is predominantly through disconfirmation, although numerous researchers argued that perceived performance have a direct effect on satisfaction. Morrow and McElroy (2007) further argued that satisfaction is related to performance that accomplishes expectations, whereas dissatisfaction occurs when performance does not meet expectations.

On the other hand, Kacmar *et al.* (2006) is of the opinion that the nature of satisfaction, in the form of emotion and fulfilment is a focal point. New research findings emphasised that the above-mentioned statement needs to be approached from two perspectives. It reflects that old methods regarding client satisfaction is basically the outcome of cognitive processes, while recent theoretical advancements proposed that sentimental or affective procedures contributes noticeably to the explanations and predictions of client satisfaction. In addition, satisfaction must be considered as outcomes based on continuous progress made with a certain service/product rather than as an exact phenomenon (Richard, Devinney, Yip, & Johnson, 2009; Morrow & McElroy, 2007).

### **2.2.2 The need for retaining and satisfying clients**

According to Jyothi and Venkatesh (2006), to satisfy, retain and obtain a client is a major concern for most of the institutions. By ensuring that clients are satisfied will lead to the enhancement of long term client loyalty. By keeping existing clients satisfied will decrease the costs and efforts of attracting new clients. According to Pransky, Gatchel, Linton and Loisel (2005), satisfied clients will more likely return to those who have provided them with good services, while it is anticipated that unhappy clients will leave. Therefore, by concentrating on existing clients for obtaining information on a continuous basis, one will be able to deliver excellent service on a constant basis. Maylett (2009) is of the opinion that an effort to retaining clients would be based on the fact that clients are loyal to an institution where they received valuable service. Therefore, it will be advisable to focus on aspects that clients perceive valuable to ensure the success of the operations of an institution (Urbano & Yordanova, 2008).

On the other hand, one can argue that retention of clients is contributed by numerous factors. Among the factors are competitiveness of the prices, quality of the service as well as the products provided. These are factors that can be managed, and by managing the manageable factors, client satisfaction will be obtained. The turnover rate is lower if positive client services are provided and maintained. Morrow and McElroy (2007) are of the opinion that if most capable individuals leave an institution, it will result in an interruption of most of the regular functions and therefore a weaker performance of the institution (Kacmar *et al.*, 2006). Therefore, clients will remain in the institution if one concentrates on the provision of quality services. Furthermore, to understand the present level of client satisfaction and the level of service needed by the client to satisfy each of them will result in loyal clients and development of the institution. Morrow and McElroy (2007) furthermore argues that each interaction of any workforce member with any client is a potential risk that needs to be managed with care. Such encounters can provoke numerous replies: satisfaction by fulfilling the anticipations as well as the needs; dissatisfaction by not meeting the anticipations and/or needs; or delight by surpassing the anticipations.

This fulfilling among the client and the worker are critical for service delivery as well as the institution in general. As a result, delight as well as satisfaction can be regarded as the primary aim of any successful institution while dissatisfaction must be circumvented at all times. Research shows that clients are presently demanding better services and that clients' perception of existing services often falls short of clients' anticipations (Urbano & Yordanova, 2008).

### 2.2.3 Importance of value for client satisfaction

According to Haines *et al.* (2010), value reflects what clients do with receiving, using, evaluating or disposing of the service/product. Value reflects a person's ruling as to what is valuable or significant in a lifecycle. Clients provide value by comparing the overall client value with the client cost. Various methods have been established to assist in the understanding of the value that clients expect from a certain service/product. For instance, convenience, excellence and efficiency of services/products can be listed as valuable for clients. Osman *et al.* (2004) is of the opinion that the buying price, acquisition cost, transport cost, poor performance or risk of failure is client cost. A vital concern of client satisfaction is to understand why clients purchase a series of services/products from a specific institution. Therefore, satisfaction can be seen as the end-product in the motivation technique which comprises of a work process (Urbano & Yordanova, 2008; Osman *et al.*, 2004).

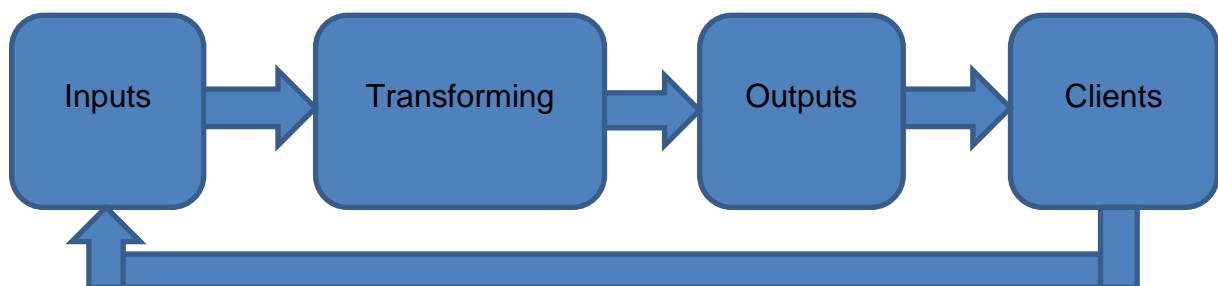


Figure 2.1: The activity flow process.

Source: Canadian Centre for Management Development, 2002

Figure 2.1 indicates that inputs, which refer to the knowledge as well as the skills of the workforce, are transformed to create outputs which are used by another member of the workforce and the work meets the needs of those who receive the outputs that are produced. Therefore, the added values are reflected by the level of satisfaction by the clients who have received the outputs. Another point stressed by Osman *et al.* (2004) is that the outputs will further assist any institution to get feedback from the clients who will be useful for future operations.

It is also clear that the way the workforce sees their working environment will determine their working process. If the working environment is unsympathetic, impassive, insensible or unfeeling, the workforce will take on equivalent values as well as attitudes. Therefore, culture as well as the way in which the workforce perform their duty will become part of the attitude and values the workforce adopt. Furthermore, service orientations do not originate where the institution networks with exterior clients. It develops from the behaviour inside the institution as well as by management which lead the strategic direction of the institution in terms of values, expectations and requirements. Sustainable exterior client satisfaction will only be possible if the interior atmosphere is devoted to similar ideas. It will be easy to envisage a working environment in which all workers are handled with respect, like the clients who need to be satisfied, and where the job descriptions of all workers are designed in such a way that it serves the needs of those that depend on them. Therefore, if a working environment is created in such a way that it is constantly improving interior clients' satisfaction levels; it will ensure that exterior clients are served in a similar manner (Urbano & Yordanova, 2008).

Client satisfaction can also be understood as the client's fulfilment reply. The dynamics of the interaction between the employer and the client are influenced by the precise expectations of interior clients to operate in an acceptable manner. It is significant that one needs to enhance what clients expect or want from the institution as well as services clients feel they are essentially getting (Urbano & Yordanova,

2008). Therefore, the importance of enhancing interior client management is critical for any institution.

### **2.3 The importance of enhancing interior client management**

In seeking to move forward with the QICSS initiative, some institutions became gradually alert about the enhancement of interior client management. This is in relation to their exterior clients if the needs of interior clients are met with equivalent standards of services. For instance, frontline personnel, dealing on an on-going basis with exterior clients, will be restricted in their efficiency without the compulsory interior support from corporate services such as training, human resource management and information technology. Similarly, the activities of the policy divisions depend heavily on the improvement of an efficient interior client service relationship with operational or service provision divisions within the institution (Lodh, 2007). According to Chang and Huang (2010), the involvement of supporting divisions is vital for any management to continue to pursue the institution's Quality Internal Client Satisfaction Services.

Urbano and Yordanova (2008) are of the opinion that involvement can be seen as the behaviour where people make a sensible choice. In fact, a person can decide to get involved or rather choose not to get involved in the participation to advance the operations of the institution. Even though marketing, finance, personnel as well as supply chain divisions can obtain direction from corporate goals and objectives, involvement of the workforce links them together and facilitates institutional success. Thus the significance of involvement of the workforce in any institution cannot be over-emphasized. This is because everything the administrators do has an impact on the workforce (Walker, 2007). All in all involvement is needed to increase efficiency, satisfy clients, and improve quality and to create innovative approaches (Ullah & Yasmin, 2013).

For a combined approach, operational divisions need to follow a holistic approach in order to ensure efficient service delivery in cross-cutting policy areas within departments. Productivity and a response strategy are vital areas in the private sector, national governments and public sector agencies that need to be concentrated on for service delivery and to evaluate their own service performances (Walker, 2007). De Ridder (2004) argued that efficient communication strategies have been identified as a critical success factor for institutions. Maintaining excellent communication, interior and exterior, is paramount to the accomplishment of the institutional goals, especially when changes occur. Knowledge and understanding of organizational goals and to enable the entire workforce to buy into the vision need to be communicated to the workforce. A good communication strategy also becomes a vital element of any successful change or development plan. For winning the responsiveness of individuals:

- messages should always be vibrant and reliable;
- avoiding jargon when communicating in English;
- creating constructive messages for stimulating and encouraging the participation of the workforce;
- sharing of knowledge, thoughts and feedback across all the divisions of the business;
- usage of several communicating methods to strengthen understanding;
- creating an environment of trust and honesty with all stakeholders and avoiding blaming of each other; and
- realizing that listening to interior and exterior clients is the key to success

are vital components for a successful communication strategy (Ullah & Yasmin, 2013; Walker, 2007).

Institutions have long ago realized that they must focus on ensuring that their workforce has good experiences during interactions at work. From a wider corporate perspective, the improvement of an efficient interior client service code can fundamentally transform the cultural values of a business and the quality of the work



atmosphere for its personnel, with a positive influence on productivity and the quality of services provided (Ullah & Yasmin, 2013; De Ridder, 2004).

Within a given institution, personnel also tend to rely on one another. Cunningham and Rowley (2010) found that more institutions focus on skills development of their internal clients to improve their abilities to maintain high levels of efficiency, reliability (Gomez, McLaughlin & Wittink, 2004) and quality among the workforce. When good service is not rendered internally, the interest of the workforce may not be aided and the work may not get done. Problems that interfere with these exchanges can have an even wider range of negative effects. These may become obvious externally and thereby diminish overall client satisfaction. Research showed that these individuals' satisfaction levels were not a priority for most institutions (Cunningham & Rowley, 2010; Morrow & McElroy, 2007).

Ullah and Yasmin (2013), Obeng-Akrofi (2009) and Gomez *et al.* (2004) are of the opinion that excellent interior client service provision can be achieved through:

1. Setting clear anticipations. For the advancement of excellent interior client service, everyone involved should have similar anticipations. The employer need to create reasonable as well as clear guidelines so that interior clients know exactly what is expected from them. On the other hand, interior clients also need to set clear anticipations and communicate such information in advance.
2. Explanation of interior client accountabilities. To meet and surpass client expectations, employers need to explain what is expected from the client to accomplish the demands. The employer needs to notify the client of all procedures, lead time as well as resources that are required. It is the employer's accountability to be proactive and to ensure that clients are realistic about their required time frames and expectations.
3. Defining interior client service accountabilities. Numerous interior client service concerns are raised when the workforce meet. Employees should not

only see their individual priorities and think that they are the only ones working hard. This attitude will set up a feeling of failure and build an atmosphere of disbelief and anger. Therefore, clients need to take accountability for understanding how demands are handled, and employers need to be accountable for clarifying the institutions workflow and how it fits into the arrangements of the entire institution.

4. Discussion of priorities. All the clients' views should be seen as a priority; however, it can have a destructive effect on institutional procedures (Urbano & Yordanova, 2008). Therefore, a clear communication and consultation process among the client as well as the employer is imperative to ensure that negotiations and understandings about priorities are clearly defined.

On the other hand, the focus of interior client satisfaction services is on perceptions and quantifying the client's impressions. These impressions may or may not accurately reproduce the real level of performance, but may assist with the effective response to client's needs. In fact, the response will indicate how well an institution is perceived by its clients in terms of weaknesses, strengths and areas of improvements. The interior client satisfaction services also quantify expectations in terms of what the client desires from the institution. Although a precise quantification of performance is significant, interior client satisfaction services capture what various specialists in organisational performance consider as significant for both the private and public sectors (Morrow & McElroy, 2007).

## **2.4 Overview of interior client satisfaction in the public and private sectors**

The public sector consists of all the public servants employed within similar departments and those departmental public servants employed in branches as well as other units under the management of that department. It would not, however, include those employed in other public service departments, parastatals or other public service structures. Those institutions would be considered as exterior clients (Obeng-Akrofi, 2009).

It is important for the national governments to realise that clients are compensating for the delivery of services. The national governments have started to make progress in recovering expenditure from the public that governments are serving directly. The public are holding national governments constantly responsible for the services they are getting. Therefore, the public needs to feel that the services are appropriate and needs to be pleased with the manner in which the services are provided. Most of the international literature on this subject is from a private sector's point of view and focuses on the significant role that the interior client code plays in the entire quality drive. In comprehensive terms, the concept of interior client service reflects the assertion that interior service quality is characterised by the attitudes that individuals have towards one another and the way individuals are serving each other in the institution. Therefore, interior clients need to be valued by employers as partners rather than workers (Chang & Huang, 2010; Haines, *et al.*, 2010; Obeng-Akrofi, 2009).

#### **2.4.1 Value of interior clients to an institution**

According to Gonring (2008), the concept of internal clients has originated approximately forty years ago. The concept was used when scrutinising various methods of managerial connections inside departments. While acknowledging it, Obeng-Akrofi (2009) found that the idea of an interior client evolved eventually with the purpose of making employment more acceptable, thereby supporting the enrolment as well as retention of personnel. Chang and Huang (2010) is of the opinion that institutions should view the workforce as interior clients, employment as interior products and thereby pursue to deliver interior products that satisfy the needs of interior clients and at the same time encouraging the values of the institution itself. However, Morrow and McElroy (2007) and Kacmar *et al.* (2006) argued that if management wants this, the workforce needs to provide an outstanding level of service to the clients and management must be willing to do great work with the workforce. On the other hand, Chang and Huang (2010) argue in favour of a client-driven structure within institutions that matches interior services and user needs in

order to assist with the achievement of success in the market. It is clear that a successful interior client service process has been valued as a fundamental element (Naidoo & Veriava, 2003) of Total Quality Management (TQM) for several years and not just in relation to the service industry (Urbano & Yordanova, 2008; Obeng-Akrofi, 2009).

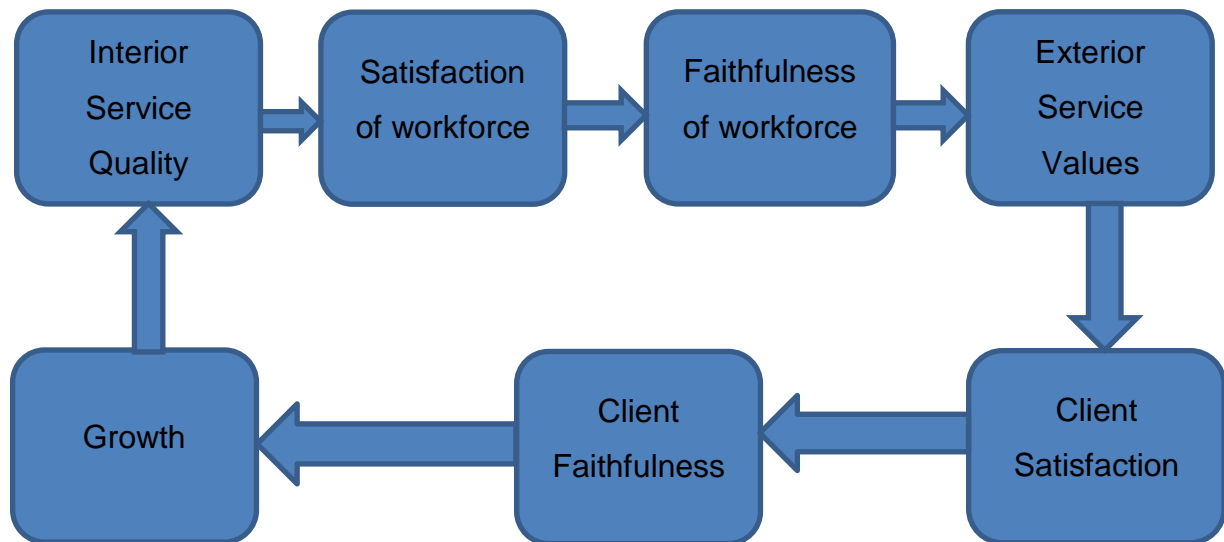
Among the leading goals of TQM are client satisfaction and an organisation wide orientation towards client requirements. In order to achieve these goals, the TQM method applies the basic principles of client orientation and also applies it within the business. Consequently, one has to deal with both the interior client orientation as well as the interior clients. Organisational divisions and their workforces are seen as service providers, the users of these services as interior clients, and the undertakings as internal services. In TQM systems, the entire workforce is encouraged to see each other as significant clients through the production or service provision methods and all the workforces in any institution should be seen as both the providers and receivers of services (Chang & Huang, 2010; Obeng-Akrofi, 2009).

Chang and Huang (2010) further explain that every service operation comprises of interior service operations that jointly support each other. If poor interior services occur, the final services to the exterior client will be diminished. Morrow and McElroy (2007) and Lodh (2007) are of the opinion that even though numerous members of the workforce do not come directly in contact with exterior clients themselves, they indirectly affect the delivery of quality services. To address this concern, workforces need to be aware of the value of interior clients and treat other workers with respect and as interior clients (Chang & Huang, 2010). Interior clients are as varied and diverse in their individual characters as exterior clients. It is essential to recognise and respond positively to diversity in the interior client bases. There are also various types of interior client service relationships, where some are critical to maintain in comparison to others. For instance, a complete information technology system failure will result in different consequences for service provision compared to poor relations among policy and operational divisions (Morrow & McElroy, 2007). It is

therefore significant not to assume that exterior and interior client service relationships are directly equivalent in character. In addition, interior clients are considered as paid users of the services they use. Therefore, they are overall more acquainted with and well-informed about the services that are delivered than exterior clients. Consequently, interior clients have a huge influence on the services which are provided to exterior clients (Maylett, 2009; Obeng-Akrofi, 2009).

#### ***2.4.2 Impact of internal client services upon external client services***

Numerous reporters on management issues have in recent years emphasised the significance of excellent interior service as one of the main, but also least understood factors in the delivery of quality products and services externally. In the same vein, research evidence gives the impression that there is a positive relationship between worker satisfaction and client satisfaction (Chang & Huang, 2010; Lodh, 2007). In particular, favourable interior perceptions of an institution's Human Resources Management performance can meaningfully be linked with clients' perceptions of excellent services. Chang and Huang (2010) is furthermore of the opinion that to accomplish continuous outstanding client support, interior systems need to be brought in line to serve the exterior client, with every interior sub-system adding value to others inside the institution (Lodh, 2007).



**Figure 2.2: The service profit chain.**

**Source: O’Riordan and Humphreys, 2003**

Figure 2.2 indicates that a positive view by the workforce about any institution towards how it conducts its business and the environment in which it functions, have advantageous effects on exterior clients, in terms of the quality of services delivered. Back office functions and management processes may be the cause of service failures, but the front-line personnel is the target of the client's dissatisfaction (Lodh, 2007). But personnel often have not been given the resources, autonomy or training to handle exterior service recovery. Negative responses from exterior clients can induce the service providers e.g. when members of the workforce believe a particular result (for instance a dissatisfied or satisfied client) is independent of what they do themselves. As a result, the personnel become irritated and disillusioned by service failures towards progress of which they have had no contribution and little control over their mode of provision (Chang & Huang, 2010; O’Riordan & Humphreys, 2003).

On the other hand, an encounter between the client and the workforce can aggravate a range of reactions such as:

- displeasure, by not satisfying the expectations or desires,
- pleasure, by satisfying the desires and expectations or
- happiness, by surpassing the expectations in some way.

To surpass the expectations of a client is to go above and further than the fundamentals of client service. Furthermore, satisfaction of the clients' desires and expectations can be met by the provision of services and goods to the satisfaction level of the client (Lodh, 2007; O'Riordan & Humphreys, 2003).

Obeng-Akrofi (2009) argued that there is a solid relationship between client satisfaction and cheerfulness of the workforce. In addition, there is a constructive connection among client satisfaction evaluations and employee descriptions of their work atmosphere. The workforce of an institution is an integral part of client satisfaction, but there are other elements that need to be assessed to better understand the technique of producing client satisfaction. There is important experimental proof that clients who make contact with exterior clients have a positive effect on client satisfaction (O'Riordan & Humphreys, 2003).

It is also occasionally challenging for the workforce to appreciate the influence of their performance on the actual quality of service provided to the client, especially for those who doesn't make direct contact with clients. Even though interior relationships may occasionally be very straightforward, sometimes they can be reasonably complex; for instance when both parties service each other or when one part of the institution depends on the interior service delivered by another part. Consequently, accountability for service provision and accomplishment of client satisfaction needs to be implemented across the whole institution (Morrow & McElroy, 2007).

## **2.5 Benefits of an interior client satisfaction survey**

Workforce loyalty and satisfaction are considered critical elements by institutions to respond efficiently to client needs, while driving down costs through reduced

employment and skills development aspects. Thus, the overall objective of interior client satisfaction surveys are revolving around the advancement of the institutions, workforce and the clients it serve. To advance in the above-mentioned objectives, some of the benefits of interior client satisfaction surveys include (Caliskan, 2010; Obeng-Akrofi, 2009; Kendall, 2007; Morrow & McElroy, 2007):

1. The measurement of satisfaction levels of internal clients and to provide a quantitative baseline to compare results. Over time this outcome can be used for comparison, benchmarking, measuring and identifying long-term trends, which in turn will enable fact based decision-making.
2. Pointing out some of the strengths as well as weaknesses in the organisation in order to take full advantage of the strengths and rectify the weaknesses.
3. Measuring the internal client satisfaction levels to reinforce the business's service orientation, values and mission.
4. Motivation of the workforce to ensure that everybody contribute towards a common goal of excellent client service both internally and externally. An internal client satisfaction target may be set as a benchmark for all departments to strive to.
5. Reward and recognise staff members as teams and/or individuals who have performed well by recognising and rewarding them visibly, which may improve the moral of the concerned staff members.
6. Help to direct training expenditure into much needed areas by identifying the areas where groups and/or individuals have not performed well.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

It is clear that client service activities need to be related to management and similar restructured programmes for public service employees to accomplish an internalisation of the service division. This highlights the fact that interior client satisfaction initiatives cannot be considered in separation from the rest of the public service or private sector restructuring processes (Gonring, 2008). It is also clear that internal client satisfaction is a strong driver of citizen trust and confidence in public or



private organisations. Besides, there is an absence of acknowledgement of the full consequences of the interior client principle, which revolves not only around consultation of the workforce in relation to the provision of exterior services, but also encompasses interior information dissemination, communication and responsive strategies (Obeng-Akrofi, 2009).

It is also important to notice that the concept of interior client is not new, neither is it exceptional to the public service nor to private sector involvement. In an atmosphere of on-going economic limitations, there is a need to respond to the increasing demand for the provision of better services to clients through constantly improving services to the clients. It can be done through improving effectiveness, enhancing services and by continuously reviewing and improving programmes.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In the following section, an outline of the research method and design selected for this survey, which examines the level of interior client satisfaction of the workforce of the DRDLR in South Africa (SA), will be discussed. In this chapter a discussion of the research design, sample design, data gathering and analysis technique as well as the ethical considerations are included.

### **3.2 Research design**

According to Lesser (2007) investigative research examines an identified problem for the aim of shedding new light upon the problem and, subsequently gains new information. The first objective of the research survey ties in directly with the above-mentioned statement, and is exploratory in nature (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2008). In this survey an exploratory design was needed in order to determine the level of interior client satisfaction of the workforce of the DRDLR in SA.

Creswell (2009) stated that the selection of the research approach is critical if the articulated objectives are to be satisfied and to assist in the selection of the appropriate design to satisfy the survey requirements. The researcher was independent of the research and did not have any view or values in respect of the outcomes. The investigative method is deductive and displays cause and effect which may lead to likelihoods (Lesser, 2007), descriptions and understanding. In addition, quantitative tools also guarantee (as far as possible) objectivity, generalizability and reliability (Creswell, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2007). Accordingly, in this survey a quantitative research approach in the form of a sample survey was used in order to document outcomes based on the respondents' responses during the survey. The survey was replicated to ensure that the results are constant while the researcher was perceived as being exterior to the research, regardless of his identity (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2008). This method enabled the researcher

to collect information from the respondents and the information provided an understanding of the challenges, strengths, weaknesses and opportunities that DRDLR in SA is facing in meeting its objectives of interior client satisfaction and human capital development. The research survey has involved fieldwork (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2008) which was carried out among the workforce of the DRDLR in SA.

### **3.3 Sample design**

Sample design refers to the procedure of choosing a group of persons for a survey in such a way that this group will be representative of the larger group from which they were selected. The selected persons will comprise the sample while the larger group is referred to as the population from which the sample was selected (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2008; Lesser, 2007).

The population for this survey comprised of the entire workforce of all nine provinces in the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) in South Africa (SA). De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delpont (2002) stated that in most cases, a thirty two per cent sample will be sufficient for a total population size of 200, while a twenty per cent sample will be sufficient for a total population size of 500. For questionnaire surveys it is essential to draw upon a large number from the sample group. However, such an approach is not necessary if a degree of uncertainty is acceptable in terms of the conclusions that will be drawn from the research (Collis & Hussey, 2003). Leedy and Ormrod (2001) suggest the following guidelines in selecting a sample size:

1. If the population size is smaller than 100, then the whole population must be surveyed.
2. For a population size of 500, twenty per cent of the population must be surveyed.
3. For a population size of approximately 1 500, fifteen per cent of the population must be surveyed.

4. For a population size of more than 5 000, the sample size must be approximately eight per cent of the population.

In order to ensure that the sample is representative, probability (systematic random) sampling was employed as this type of sampling aims at relating the findings of the evaluation to the entire study population (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2008). Bearing in mind the financial constraints as well as time, the sample size (eight per cent of the population) was a fair representative of the workforce of the DRDLR. In addition, most of the workforce has similar working conditions, share similar social demographic indicators and economic circumstances.

Therefore, in this survey, in order to ensure that each worker had a known and equal chance of selection (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2008; Lesser, 2007), the first worker was selected randomly. Subsequently, every tenth worker on the list out of the total number (13 503) of the workforce of the DRDLR in SA was selected. This gives a fair knowledge of the views of the workforce on interior client satisfaction as well as supporting services provided by the Department.

### **3.4 Data collection (systematic random sampling)**

Firstly an intensive publicity campaign was launched during June 2014 to inform the workforce of the DRDLR about the survey. The marketing campaign included pop-up messages on emails. It was also emphasised that participation in the survey was entirely voluntary, while respondents' personal information and responses were treated as confidential.

Then during July 2014 the primary data collection tool was an online confidential structured questionnaire for acquiring biographical data and statements on key business issues. This questionnaire comprised of structured questions to ensure that all the respondents received exactly the same set of questions in the same

sequence (Collis & Hussey, 2003). Background information such as age, race, occupational level, gender, marital status and length of service was populated in section A of the survey questionnaire. In section B of the questionnaire, possible interior client motivational variables were discussed. Respondents were requested to give feedback on support services such as communications and working environment, Human Resources and performance management, recruitment and labour relations, performance appraisals and culture. Respondents' responses to the statements were measured on a five-point likert scale ranging from completely agree (5), agree (4), undecided (3), disagree (2) to completely disagree (1) (Creswell, 2009; Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2008; Cooper & Schindler, 2006). All the completed questionnaires were captured in order to make statistical analysis possible.

### **3.5 Data analysis**

In order to make statistical analysis possible, the data was converted into a computable format. The data obtained from the questionnaires were coded; variables were created, and then decoded before data validation and imputation took place. A customised template sheet was designed by making use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 software as well as Microsoft Excel Programmes (Field, 2010).

Before the data was interpreted, frequency distribution (a histogram and pie charts), percentages (Creswell, 2009) and Pareto analyses were prepared. Histograms represent the average opinion score and the distribution of opinions alongside a numerical scale. Pareto analyses were used for non-numeric data (Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2008). For the purpose of this assessment, stated opinions about what is currently working well and opportunities for improvement (problems, issues and causes) were analysed (Creswell, 2009).

### **3.6 Ethical considerations**

The standard ethical considerations of confidentiality as well as anonymity were followed during the survey. In addition, the participating persons were informed that participation in the survey is voluntary (Creswell, 2009; Blumberg, Cooper & Schindler, 2008). It is therefore assumed that no challenges concerning acquiring information or data collection was encountered because all the persons voluntarily participated in the survey. In the case where substantial assessment results have prevailed that might identify a specific employee, the outcomes were firstly deliberated with the concerned persons to get their approval before the outcomes were disseminated (Creswell, 2009). Respondents were updated on a frequent base about the progress of the survey.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

It is clear that the research must identify the aim of the study by relating the problem statement to the research objectives. This is the exact approach that this survey has adopted. On the other hand, in order to ensure fairness and promotion of transparency, views or feelings of respondents were presented according to a pre-prepared scale of prearranged selections. The importance of confidentiality as well as anonymity is critical for the credibility of the survey, which were also adhered to in the survey.

## **CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The focus point in chapter three was on the research design and methodology, while chapter four focuses on the breakdown of the data collected through the questionnaire. It will also give interpretations thereof leading to the main findings of the study.

A total of 1 080 questionnaires were completed and collected from a representative sample from the workforce of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) out of which 864 were completed correctly and 216 were spoiled. This represented a response rate of 80% of the total sampled population.

### **4.2 Demographic characteristics of respondents**

Table 4.1 below shows the composition of respondents. The majority of the sampled respondents (60.0%) were females. It also reveals that the majority (22.6%) of the respondents were in the age category of 38 – 42 years, although it was not significant given that 21.4% of the sampled respondents were in the 28 – 32 years age category. The majority (49.0%) of the respondents were married; while a significant number (38.7%) were single. The data further indicates that most (80.7%) of the respondents were general workers. In terms of length of service, the majority (55.9%) of the respondents have between 1 – 5 years of service in the DRDLR. 34.4% of the respondents were in a position of different National Diplomas and lastly 20.0% of the respondents were isiXhosa speaking, although it was not significant given that 18.6% of the sampled respondents were Tswana speaking.

**Table 4.1: Descriptive statistics of demographic data of the respondents**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Males	346	40.0
	Females	518	60.0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age Group</b>	18 – 22	38	4.4
	23 – 27	24	2.8
	28 – 32	185	21.4
	33 – 37	158	18.3
	38 – 42	195	22.6
	43 – 47	143	16.6
	48 – 52	33	3.8
	53 – 57	25	2.9
	58 – 62	49	5.7
	63 <sup>+</sup>	8	0.9
	No Answer	6	0.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	334	38.7
	Married	423	49.0
	Divorced	41	4.7
	Widow	23	2.7
	No Answer	43	5.0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Job Title</b>	Supervisor	61	7.1
	Team Leader	99	11.5
	General Worker	697	80.7
	No Answer	7	0.8
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Years of Service in the Department</b>	Less than one year	6	0.7
	1 – 5 years	483	55.9
	6 – 10 years	319	36.9
	Over 10 years	47	5.4
	No Answer	9	1.0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Highest Qualification</b>	None	13	1.5
	Grade 12	223	25.8
	National Diploma	297	34.4
	Degree	183	21.2
	Masters	67	7.8
	Other	81	9.4
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Home Language</b>	Tswana	161	18.6
	isiXhosa	173	20.0
	Afrikaans	108	12.5
	English	57	6.6
	isiZulu	135	15.6
	Venda	117	13.5
	Sotho	67	7.8
	No Answer	46	5.3
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>100</b>



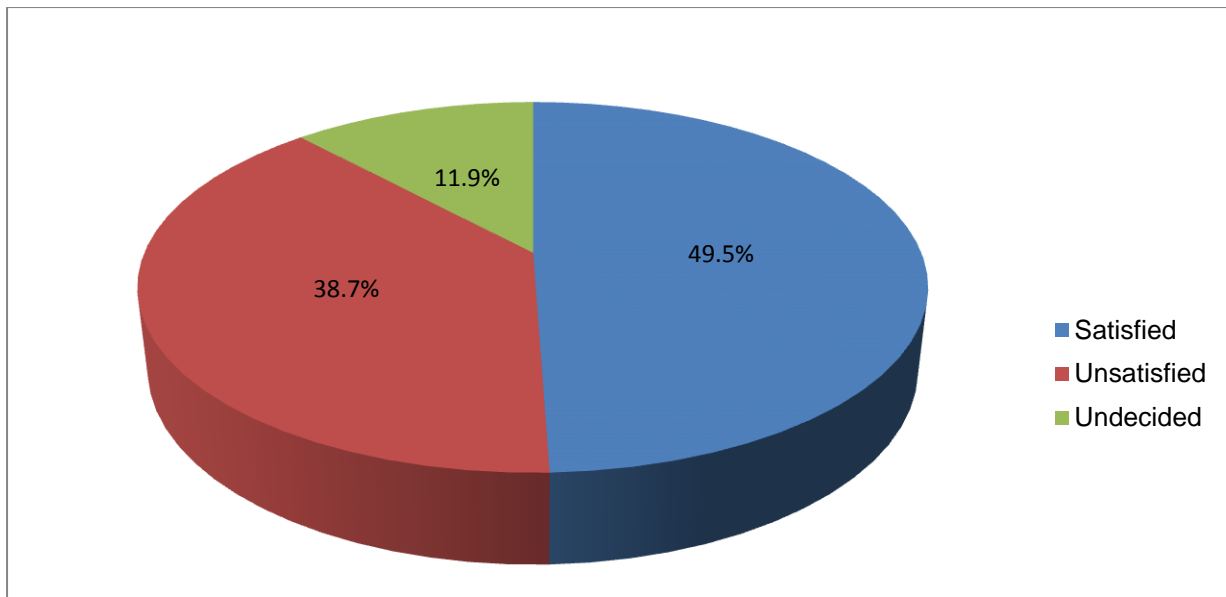
**Table 4.2: Responses of respondents on communication and the working environment on internal client satisfaction**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Completely Agree	<b>229</b>	<b>26.5</b>
Agree	<b>198</b>	<b>22.9</b>
Undecided	<b>103</b>	<b>11.9</b>
Completely Disagree	<b>194</b>	<b>22.5</b>
Disagree	<b>140</b>	<b>16.2</b>

**Source: Field data, 2014.**

Communication is one of the fundamental organisational facets that impacts directly on any business's working environment (De Ridder, 2004). As noted in table 4.2 above, 26.5% of the respondents completely agreed, while 22.9% agreed with the interior communication and the physical set-up (working environment) in the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR). That gives an indication that 49.4% of the respondents were satisfied with the interior communication and consider the physical set-up as "conducive to the Department's goals".

On the other hand, 22.5% of the respondents completely disagreed, while 16.2% disagreed with the interior communication and the physical set-up in the DRDLR, while 11.9% were unsure. That gives the indication that 38.7% of the respondents were not satisfied with the interior communication and physical set-up in the Department (illustrated in figure 4.1).



**Figure: 4.1: Overall satisfaction level of respondents based on communication and the working environment**

**Table 4.3: Responses of respondents on recruitment and labour relations on internal client satisfaction**

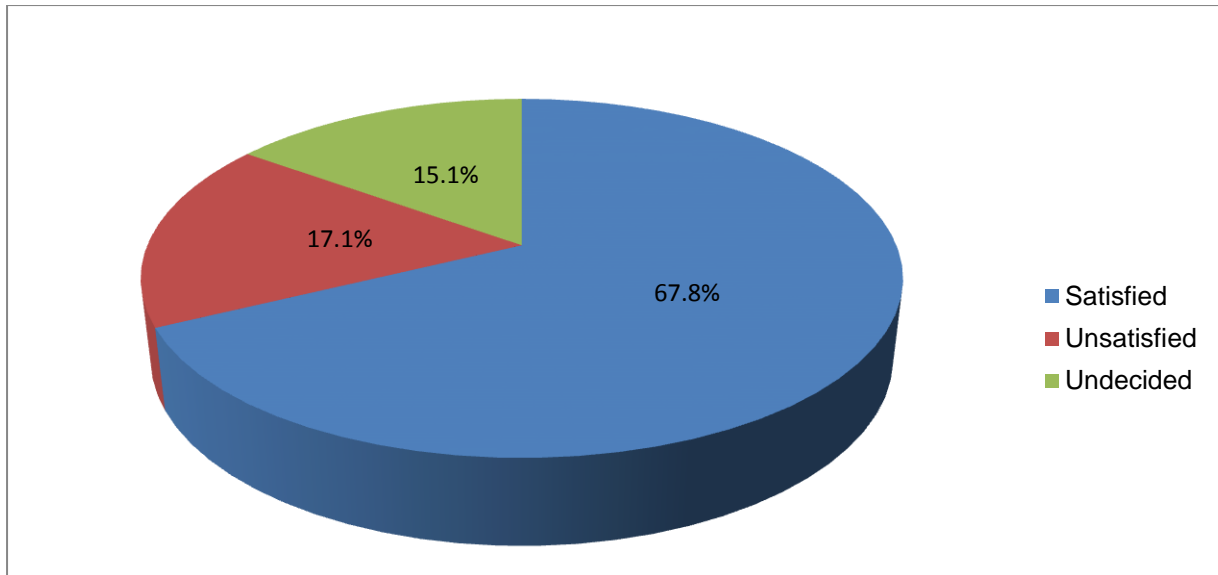
Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Completely Agree	396	45.8
Agree	190	22.0
Undecided	130	15.1
Completely Disagree	90	10.4
Disagree	58	6.7

Source: Field data, 2014.

From table 4.3 above, 45.8% of the respondents completely agreed, while 22.0% agreed with the recruitment process and labour relations in the DRDLR. All in all 67.8% of the respondents were satisfied with the recruitment process and labour relations in the Department.

On the other hand, 10.4% of the respondents completely disagreed, while 6.7% disagreed with the recruitment process and labour relations in the DRDLR and

15.1% were unsure. All in all 17.1% of the respondents were not satisfied with the recruitment process and labour relations in the Department (illustrated in figure 4.2).



**Figure: 4.2: Overall satisfaction level of respondents based on recruitment and labour relations**

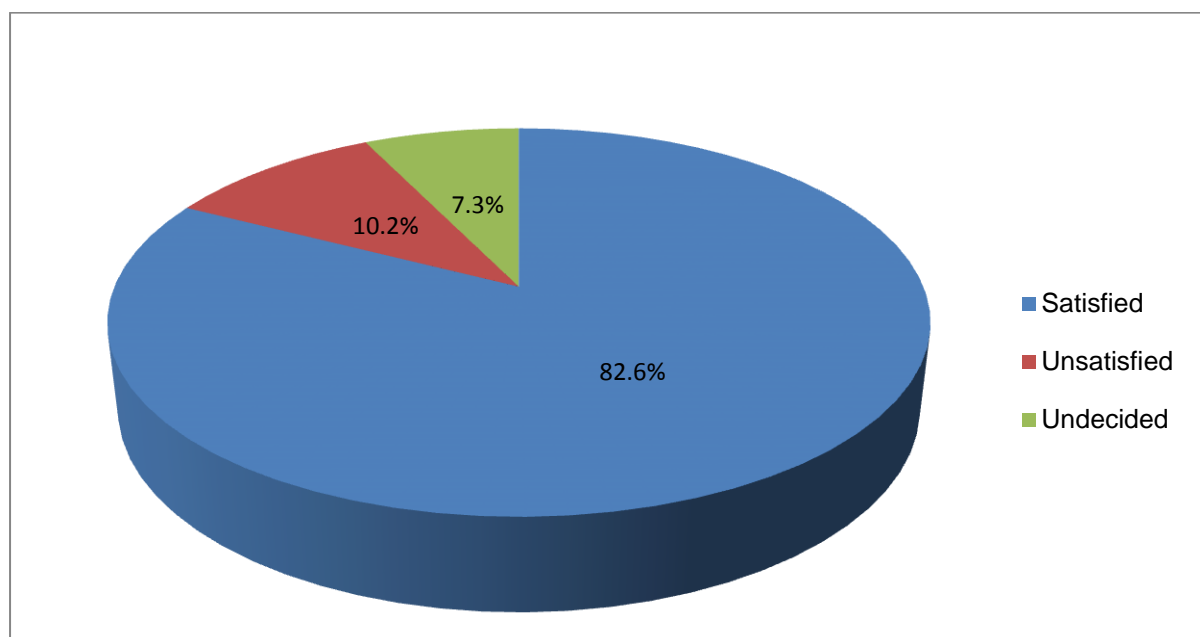
**Table 4.4: Responses of respondents on human resource and performance management on internal client satisfaction**

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Completely Agree	550	63.7
Agree	163	18.9
Undecided	63	7.3
Completely Disagree	53	6.1
Disagree	35	4.1

Source: Field data, 2014.

From table 4.4 above, it can be seen that 63.7% of the respondents completely agreed, while 18.9% agreed with the human resource and performance management process in the DRDLR. That gives an indication that there were overwhelming consensus (82.6%) with the respondents, which are satisfied with the human resource and performance management processes in the Department.

On the other hand, 6.1% of the respondents completely disagreed, while 4.1% disagreed with the human resource and performance management processes in the DRDLR, while 7.3% were unsure. In total 10.2% of the respondents were not satisfied with the human resource and performance management processes in the Department (illustrated in figure 4.3).



**Figure: 4.3: Overall satisfaction level of respondents based on human resources and performance management**

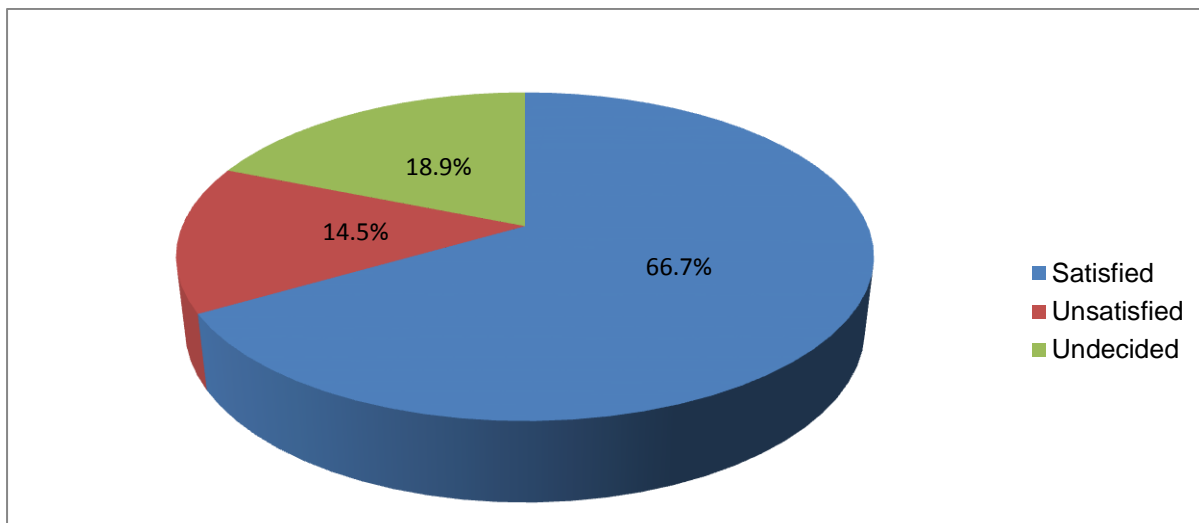
**Table 4.5: Responses of respondents on performance appraisals and culture on internal client satisfaction**

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Completely Agree	359	41.6
Agree	217	25.1
Undecided	163	18.9
Completely Disagree	87	10.1
Disagree	38	4.4

Source: Field data, 2014.

From the data in table 4.5 above, 41.6% of the respondents completely agreed, while 25.1% agreed with the performance appraisals and culture in the DRDLR. Overall 66.7% of the respondents were satisfied with the performance management and culture in the Department.

On the other hand, 10.1% of the respondents completely disagreed, while 4.4% disagreed with the performance appraisals and culture in the DRDLR, while 18.9% were unsure. In total, 14.5% of the respondents were not satisfied with the performance appraisals and culture in the Department (illustrated in figure 4.4).

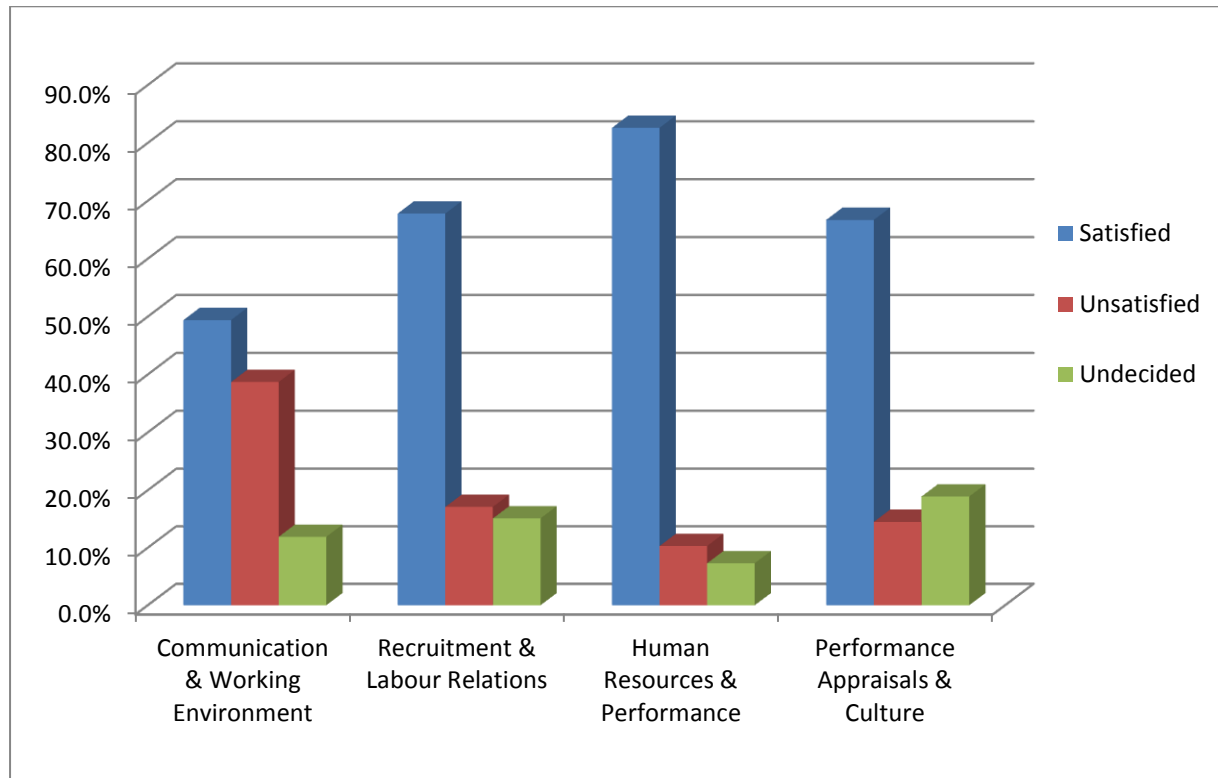


**Figure: 4.4: Overall satisfaction level of respondents based on performance appraisals and culture**

### **4.3 Interpretation of data**

In this study, interior client satisfaction of the workforce of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) was investigated. A methodology as well as a questionnaire was drawn up, after the literature was studied and certain trends were observed. The respondents who were involved in the study were the workforce of the DRDLR. The sample comprised of 1 080 out of the 13 501 workforce members of the DRDLR. Based on the replies from the administrated

questionnaires, percentages, frequencies, tables, a histogram (figure 4.5) and pie charts (figure 4.1 to figure 4.4) were generated by the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).



**Figure: 4.5 Satisfaction level based on different components**

The study discloses that 49.4% of the respondents were satisfied, while 38.7% were not satisfied with the interior communication and physical set-up in the DRDLR. This reflected that less than 50.0% of the respondents indicated that information was disseminated appropriately, which implies that the flow of communication from management level to subordinates remains a challenge. It may lead to a lack of open communication in the Department, which will result in suspicion, rumours mongering, general misrepresentation of facts and indeed lack of confidence among the workforce. Furthermore, 49.4% of the respondents believe that the physical set-up is “conducive to the Department’s goals”, suggesting that there is room for improvement with regards to the working environment. This requires that the working environment needs to be neatly preserved as well as furnished with chairs, desks

and technology to provide exceptional service to the final end user. It is also clear that an unfavourable working environment, both physical and psychosocial, prolongs obvious influence on employees' job satisfaction and performance, and insight into the effectiveness of the Department. It is therefore against this backdrop that interior communication and working environment as a service must be understood and promoted in the Department. Thus, the DRDLR must attentively link interior client satisfaction information with the Department's strategic planning process at all operational levels.

Appropriate technologies and tools used in the recruitment process and labour relations in the Department have led to a satisfaction level of 67.8%, while 17.1% of the workforce was not satisfied. The outcome indicates that the widespread usage of an incorporated tactic to effective recruitment and labour relations practices yield productive results in terms of their impact on organisational efficiency. It also gives an indication that the workforce of the Department agrees that the current processes are implemented objectively and fairly in accordance with the prevailing norms and standards. However, one needs to be proactive in terms of managing and improving the current standards, reasons being if capable members of the workforce leave the Department, the result will be interruptions to the regular functions and a decrease in performances in the Department.

It is generally believed that the impact of Human Resource Practices on interior client satisfaction can create comparative advantages for organisational performance (Haines, Jalette & Larose, 2010). It is also realistic to encourage the Human Resource Division to continuously explore the human potential in a manner to provide them with education and enabling them to be creative for the Department and society in general. Hence, it is no surprise that human resources and performance management was found to be a factor that strongly determines interior client satisfaction and must be properly managed for interior clients to stay satisfied. These are reflected in the outcome of an 82.6% satisfaction level, while 10.3% of the workforce was not satisfied. In addition, it also reflects an optimistic impact of the

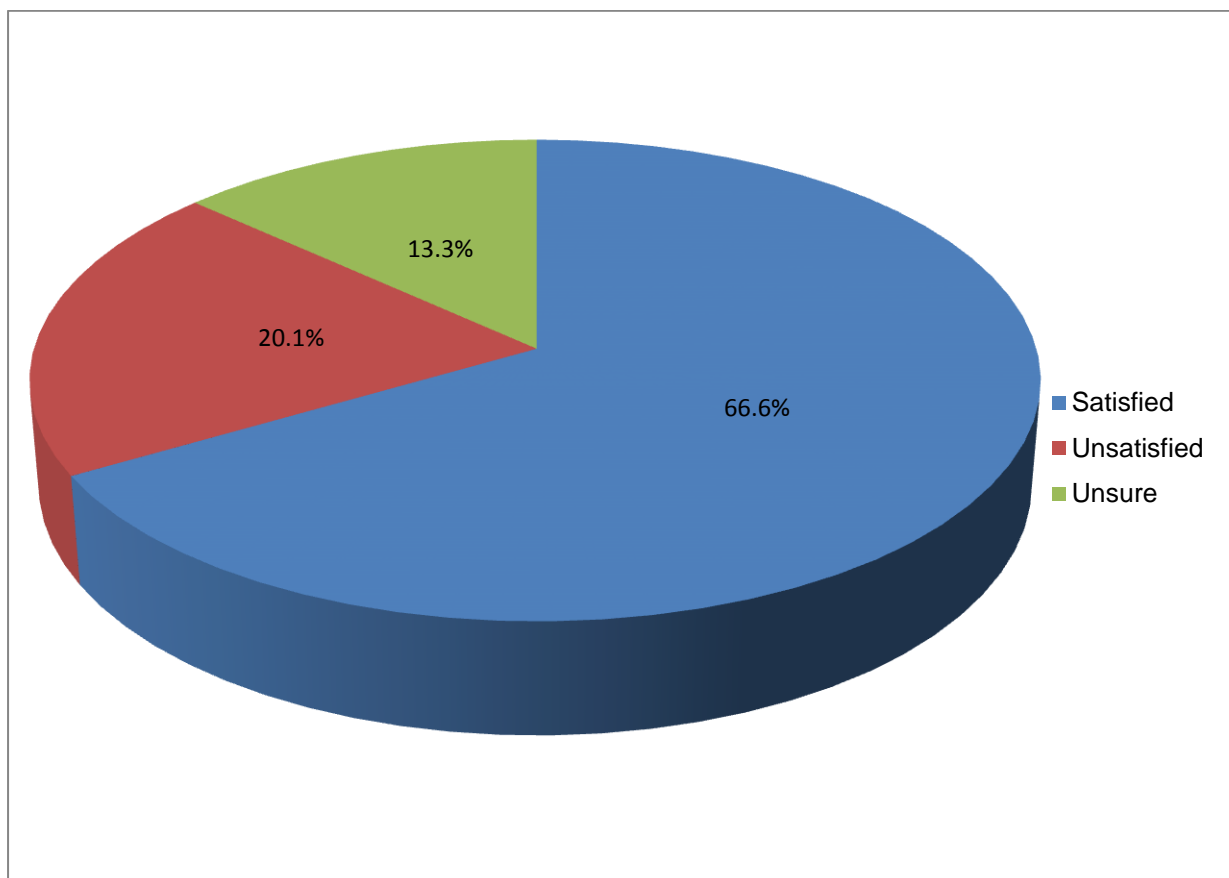
human resource practises on organisational efficiencies of the Department. The outcomes further point out that there is a substantial association of job security, skills development and flexibility in management approaches. Additional aspects that were found to have a strong relationship with interior client satisfaction are a caring management, involvement of the workforce as well as supporting subdivisions. Therefore, systematically observing the performance and by providing continuous feedback about performance is critical to acquire the anticipated outcomes.

Performance appraisals and culture play a vital role in enhancing higher levels of organisational performance and job satisfaction. This study points out that employees' participation in setting performance objectives, transparency about performance criteria, flexibility of the system to reply to the moving necessities, and an employee's right to petition against performance appraisals are vigorous characteristics of an effective performance appraisal that donates toward higher performance by employees. Besides, it also provides accurate information to be used in decision-making. Eventually all these lead to a positive organisational environment and also a culture that is favourable for higher performance. These are reflected in the outcome of a 66.7% satisfaction level, while 14.5% of the workforce was not satisfied. The study also points out that rewards may improve the monetary welfare of people through salaries, gratuities, or profit distribution, or indirectly through departmental sponsored aids for instance retirement plans, compensated holidays and compensated medical vacations. Consequently, the reward issue cannot be disregarded as it will generate a state in which the anticipation or the tangible objective focused performance of an individual or group are infertile or are about to be fruitless. Furthermore, the Department needs to continue to strive towards accommodating different beliefs and ethnic cultures of all employees in the work place. That may have a positive impact in terms of promoting diversity at the Department in general.

The overall outcome shows that 66.6% (44.4% + 22.2%) of the workforce (interior clients) was satisfied with the operations of the Department, while 20.2% (12.3% +



7.9%) was not satisfied and the remaining 13.3% was not sure (illustrated in figure 4.6). Although a 66.6% satisfaction level was achieved, a narrative on additional comments made by the respondents' shows that there are challenges with flow of communication from management to subordinates where a few opportunities exist for dialogue with management about issues that affected them. Furthermore, management needs to be proactive in earmarking performance appraisals for the workforce. Besides, the treatment of each worker with dignity is indispensable. The Department also needs to take the initiative to improve organisational aspects related to participation, selection and recruitment as well as labour relations practises.



**Figure: 4.6: Overall satisfaction rate of the survey**

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

Over the past few years there has been a heightened accentuation on service quality and customer satisfaction in government. Quality service delivery and high levels of client satisfaction are perceived as two key aims by service providers in order to improve their organisational performance. But the accomplishment of client satisfaction and the concomitant faithfulness and organisational success depends on the inspiration and satisfaction level of the workforce. To satisfy the workforce (interior clients), the study highlights the satisfaction rate based on communication and working environment, recruitment and labour relations, human resource and performance management and performance appraisals and culture in the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. Based on the above-mentioned components, the workforce of the Department is satisfied with the operations, although there is room for improvements. Consequently, having satisfied as well as motivated interior clients is a highly worthy goal for any employer to meet exterior clients' expectations.

## **CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The main objective of this study was to investigate the client satisfaction levels of the workforce of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) in South Africa (SA).

In order to achieve the objective, the study first conducted a literature review to understand the background of interior client satisfaction. Upon obtaining the information, a research survey was conducted to investigate the problem to make some recommendations. This chapter consist of the recommendations on the findings of the study, as well as the significance of and conclusion to the study.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made based on the outcomes of this study:

1. Information cascaded to line managers need to be understandable, clear and the purpose of the information needs to be classified. This will also contribute towards the identification of the recipients. It can be done through the creation of a follow up system from the origin of the communiqué to track both cascading of information and progress thereof with regards to further information or additional new tasks executed.
2. The management of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) must continuously reward as well as praise those individuals who deliver excellent client services. It can be done in various forms and it does not always need to be an expensive activity to be efficient. In addition, employees that perform beyond or above the set targets need to be praised in the form of gifts and certificates as a way of appreciation in front of their managers and co-workers.
3. The way in which the workforce is treated by management has a direct influence on the way those personnel provide services to exterior clients.

Therefore, with the correct treatment of the workforce, service delivery to exterior clients will improve.

4. Interior client satisfaction is essential for the provision of outstanding interior service to the workforce and the Department in general. Organisational aspects may be attained if management encourages participation, improves labour relations, performance management and identifying employees with their core competences (recruitment and selection). Therefore, the above-mentioned aspects need to be encouraged among the workforce on a continuous basis.
5. The reasons why the 'undecided' category was chosen in the study need to be investigated. Therefore, future surveys need to be structured in such a way that respondents can express their views more openly.

### **5.3 Significance and Conclusion**

This study contributes towards:

1. Better understanding of the existing perceptions regarding interior client satisfaction in the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform.
2. Identifying some obstacles which may affect the implementation of interior client satisfaction measures in the Department.
3. Understanding what the workforce considers as compulsory in order to simplify their work for successful delivering of the Department's strategic goals.

It is clear that interior client satisfaction and continuous motivation is essential for both the employee and employer and these in turn affect the quality of services provided to exterior clients of every organisation and for that matter the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR). The following conclusions emerge from this study of interior client satisfaction for interior clients of the DRDLR. Firstly, interior client satisfaction determines the services that will be provided to the exterior client. Satisfaction of both managers and co-workers are critical to a large

degree in the Department. In addition, by advancing factors such as technological sufficiency, efficient management, customer-centred culture and behaviour, co-operation and communication, good management approaches and job security will significantly increase interior client satisfaction in the Department. For clients' satisfaction personnel need tools, skills development, empowerment and flexibility in their approach. Therefore, any efforts towards client satisfaction must focus predominantly on ensuring interior client satisfaction with an expected positive impact on the provision of exterior services.

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## APPENDIX A

### Research Questionnaire

Questionnaire Number: .....

I am a MBA student affiliated to the Free State University in Bloemfontein. This questionnaire is about interior client satisfaction of the workforce of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR). Please take a few minutes of your time to complete this questionnaire. Your precise responses will be entirely unknown, but your opinions, in combination with those of others, are extremely significant and there is no right or wrong response.

### Section A: Biographical Information

#### A 1 Gender

Male	Female

#### A 2 Age Group

18 - 22	23 - 27	28 - 32	33 - 37	38 - 42	43 - 47	48 - 52	53 - 57	58 - 62	63 <sup>+</sup>

#### A 3 Marital Status

Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed	Other

#### A 4 Job Title

Supervisor	Team Leader	General Worker

#### A 5 Years of service in the department

Less than 1 year	1 - 5 years	6 - 10 years	Over 10 years

#### A 6 Highest qualification

None	Grade 12	National Diploma	Degree	Masters	Other

**A 7 Home language**

Tswana	isiXhosa	Afrikaans	English	isiZulu	Venda	Sotho	Other

**A 8 Province in which you are working**

National office	Northern Cape	Free State	North West	Mpumalanga	KwaZulu Natal	Eastern Cape	Western Cape	Gauteng	Limpopo

**Section B: Please select the most appropriate option for each statement**

**B 1 Communication and Environment**

Communication takes place freely among co-workers and management in the working environment.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
Sufficient opportunities are given to employees to let management know how they feel about matters that affect them.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
The work environment is conducive and allows me to do my work efficiently.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
My division is continuously trying to improve the working conditions for us.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
Management resolutions are always communicated to the relevant workers.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
The interior email and intranet messages, newsletters and interior circulars supply me with enough information about my working or structural environment.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
My supervisor provides me with sufficient information about the DRDLR as well as my working environment.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree

## B 2 Recruitment and Labour Relations

Discipline at the DRDLR is managed within the framework of policy regulations.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
Labour relations policies and procedures/practice are fair.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
The recruitment procedures are executed impartially as well as objectively.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
Complaints at the DRDLR are managed in accordance with policy guidelines.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
The execution of the Employment Equity Legislation policy is impartial.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree

## B 3 Human Resource Management and Performance Management

I have received the necessary training I need to perform my work.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
I annually draw-up a performance treaty with my manager.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
I understand my work requirements.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
My manager reviews my performance on a quarterly base and provides me with constructive feedback.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
The DRDLR provides me with subsequent training and support me to meet my personal development needs.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree

## B 4 Performance Appraisals and Culture

All the different ethnic cultures as well as beliefs of the workers are catered for by the DRDLR in the workplace.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
Workers remain highly motivated to see the Department succeed.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
The DRDLR treats all the workers with the necessary respect at all times.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
Work is carried out as team work in our division.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
There is an excellent cooperation among co-workers in our division and those in other divisions.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
I am permitted to do my work in the way I think it must be done to advance service provision.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
Discipline at the DRDLR is managed within the framework of the guidelines.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
My immediate supervisor assigns the available resources efficiently.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
The DRDLR encourages all its workers to be involved in decision-making and take accountability for their work.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
My immediate supervisor sets achievable goals.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree
My immediate manager considers the views of his/her subordinates when making decisions.	Disagree Absolutely	Disagree	Neutral	Agree Absolutely	Agree

