

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**ROMANCE IN THE WORKPLACE, PERCEPTIONS,
PERFORMANCES AND PITFALLS.**

BY

NTOKOZO EUNICE DLAMINI

204519660

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of
Master of Business Administration**

**College of Law and Management Studies and Graduate School of Business
and Leadership**

Supervisor: Gill Manion

2013

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the following individuals, without whose assistance, this study would not have been possible:

- Gill Manion, my Supervisor
- Wendy Clarke
- Zarina Bullyraj
- My respondents-MBA students
- My Family, Nokulunga Lindani and Anele
- My friends
- To my husband-Mnyamezeli Memela

DECLARATION

INtokozo Eunice Dlamini.....declare that

(i) The research reported in this dissertation/thesis, except where otherwise indicated, and is my original research.

(ii) This dissertation/thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

(iii) This dissertation/thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.

(iv) This dissertation/thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:

a) Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced:

b) Where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed inside quotation marks, and referenced.

(v) This dissertation/thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the dissertation/thesis and in the References sections.

Signature:



ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to create, through a comprehensive review of historic and contemporary literature, critical contributors to the development of workplace romance as a challenge, its effects on the organization's performance and its employees, as well as strategies for action. This study analyses the impact of workplace romance in organisations. The study further explores the extent to which workplace romance influences employee performance and the perceived influence on the relationship between employees and employers, as well as between co-workers. It further establishes differences in perceptions of workplace romance. The increase of female workers in organisations has impacted on and has therefore increased the possibility of workplace romance occurring.

This study employs quantitative analysis because the study seeks explanations and predictions that generate meaningful analysis of the data. The population of this study is currently registered MBA students, due to the small number it was decided to do a census. The nature of the study and the small population of 100 deemed acceptable to use census. An electronic questionnaire sent via QuestionPro was used to collect the data. The questionnaire was pretested to ascertain whether it was suitable, and would yield the desired results. The electronic questionnaire was perceived to be the least inconvenient sampling method. It was also compatible with SPSS, a widely used computer software tool for the analysis of quantitative data.

Organisations need to develop healthy working environments for their employees, middle management and top management. In South African, law does not cover the dissolved workplace romance apart from where there are allegations of sexual harassment. The study can benefit organisations in identifying these problems, and recommends strategies that can be used in dealing with dilemma of romance in the workplace. Organisation may also develop a policy on workplace romance. This will protect not only employees, but the organisation against publicity of lawsuit.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	7
1.1 INTRODUCTION	7
1.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT	7
1.3 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT-USA	8
1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY	9
1.5 THE VALUE OF THE STUDY	9
1.6 PROBLEM STATEMENT	10
1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	11
1.8 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH	11
1.9 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	12
1.10 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	12
1.11 ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS	13
1.12 QUESTIONNAIRE	13
1.13 DATA ANALYSIS	13
1.14 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY	14
1.15 SUMMARY	14
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	16
2.1 INTRODUCTION	16
2.2 ROMANCE IN THE WORKPLACE	16
2.3 THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN ROMANCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT	17
2.4 WHAT DRIVES SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS IN THE WORKPLACE?	17
2.5 SEXUALITY AND THE ORGANISATION: INSEPARABLE LINK	18
2.6 SEXUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE: AN ASSET OR LIABILITY?	19

2.7 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION IN THE WORKPLACE	20
2.7.1 ATTITUDE SIMILARITY	20
2.7.2 PERFORMANCE.....	20
2.7.3 PERCEPTION	21
2.8THE EFFECT OF WORKPLACE ROMANCE.....	22
2.8.1 MOTIVATION.....	22
2.8.2 JOB SATISFATION	22
2.8.3 MORALE AND WORK CLIMATE.....	23
2.9 MINIMIZING THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF WORKPLACE ROMANCE.....	25
2.9.1 THE NEED FOR POLICY	27
2.9.2 RESPONDING TO WORKPLACE ROMANCE: A PROACTIVE AND PRAGMATIC APPROACH.....	26
2.10 TYPES OF WORKPLACE ROMANCE.....	28
2.10.1 HIERACHAL ROMANCE.....	28
.....	
2.10.2 LATERAL ROMANCE.....	28
2.11 EMPLOYEE GUIDELINES	29
2.12EMPLOYER GUIDELINES	30
2.13CASE LAW DEVELOPED BY COURTS IN UNITES STATES (US).....	32
2.14SUMMMARY.....	33
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	34
3.1 INTRODUCTION	34
3.2 AIM OF THE STUDY	35
3.3 SAMPLING.....	35
3.4 PRETESTING OF QUESTIONS	36
3.5 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD	36
3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS.....	37

3.7 ETHICS IN DATA COLLECTION	38
3.8 THE QUESTIONNAIRE	38
3.8.1 MAIL QUESTIONNAIRE.....	38
3.8.2 CONSTRUCTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE	38
3.8.3 TYPES AND FORMS OF QUESTIONS	39
3.9 SCALE	39
3.10 VALIDITY	40
3.11 ANALYSIS OF DATA	40
3.12 CODING.....	40
3.13 ANALYSES USED.....	40
.....	
3.13.1 REGRESSION AND CORRELATION ANALYSIS.....	40
.....	
3.13.2 CROSS-TABULATION	41
.....	
3.13.3 CRONBACH'S ALPHA.....	41
3.13.4 GRAPHS AND TALBES.....	42
3.14 SUMMARY	42
CHAPTER 4 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS.....	43
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	43
4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS.....	43
4.2.1 GENDER	44
4.2.2 MARITAL STATUS.....	44
4.2.3 AGE CATEGORY	45
4.2.4 EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	45
4.3 ROMANCE IN THE WORKPLACE	46
4.3.1 IS WORKPLACE ROMANCE ACCEPTBLE?	46
4.3.2 I ENCOURAGE WORKPLACE ROMANCE	47

4.3.3 I CONSIDER WORKPLACE ROMANCE AS AN ABUSE OF POWER BY SUPERIORS	48
4.3.4 OLDER MANAGERS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUNGER EMPLOYEES	48
4.3.5 WORKPLACE ROMANCE MAKES THE ATMOSPHERE PLEASANT AT WORK	49
4.3.6 WORKPLACE ROMANCE ENCOURAGES BAD BEHAVIOUR	49
4.3.7 WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES THE TIME EMPLOYEES SPEND SOCIALIZING.....	50
4.3.8 WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES INEQUITIES AMONGST STAFF ...	50
4.3.9 WORKPLACE ROMANCE REDUCES COMPLIANCE WITH OFFICE ROUTINES BY THE EMPLOYEES INVOLVED.....	51
4.3.10 WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES SECRETIVE BEHAVIOUR BY EMPLOYEES	52
4.3.11 WORKPLACE ROMANCE DAMAGES THE REPUTATION OF THE LOWER LEVEL EMPLOYEES	52
4.3.12 WORKPLACE ROMANCE DAMAGES THE REPUTATION OF THE HIGHER LEVEL EMPLOYEES	53
4.3.13 WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES PERFORMANCE OF THE INVOLVED EMPLOYEES.....	53
4.3.14 WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES THE PRODUCTIVITY LEVEL OF THOSE INVOLVED	54
4.3.15 EMPLOYEES INVOLVED IN WORKPLACE ROMANCE WITH A SUPERIOR SHOW LESS RESPECT FOR THEIR COLLEAGUES	55
4.3.16 STRESS FROM SUPERIORS INFLUENCES WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS ..	55
.....	55
.3.17 SOME EMPLOYEES SEEK OUT ROMANCE TO ADVANCE THEIR POSITIONS	56
.....	56
4.3.18 SOME MANAGERS SEEK OUT ROMANCE TO MANIPULATE LOWER LEVEL EMPLOYEES	57
4.3.19 EXPLAIN HOW YOU THINK WORKPLACE ROMANCE IMPACTS THE ATMOSPHERE IN THE WORKPLACE (EITHER POSITIVELY OR NEGATIVELY)	57
.....	57
4.3.19.1 NEGATIVE IMPACT.....	57

4.3.19.2 POSITIVE IMPACT	58
4.4 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF ROMANCE IN THE WORKPLACE.....	60
4.4.1 A HISTOGRAM OF THE SCORES IS DISPLAYED.....	60
4.4.2 NORMAL Q-Q PLOT.....	62
4.5 LINEAR REGRESSION MODEL.....	62
4.6 CROSS-TABULATION	63
4.6.1 MARITAL STATUS AND WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES THE TIME EMPLOYEES SPEND SOCIALIZING	63
4.6.2 GENDER AND WORKPLACE ROMANCE ENCOURAGES BAD BEHAVIOUR	64
4.6.3 GENDER AND WORKPLACE ROMANCE REDUCE COMPLIANCE WITH OFFICE ROUTINES BY THE EMPLOYEES INVOLVED	65
4.6.4 AGE CATEGORY, EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES THE PRODUCTIVITY LEVEL OF THOSE INVOLVED	66
4.6.4 AGE CATEGORY, EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES THE PRODUCTIVITY LEVEL OF THOSE INVOLVED	67
4.6.5 MARITAL STATUS, EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND WORKPLACE ROMANCE MAKES THE ATMOSPHERE PLEASANT AT WORK	68
4.6 SUMMARY	70
CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION	73
5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	73
5.2 OBJECTIVES.....	73
5.2.1 TO EXPLORE THE EXTENT TO WHICH WORKPLACE ROMANCE INFLUENCES PERFORMANCE.	74
5.2.2 TO ESTABLISH IF DIFFERENCES IN THE PERCEPTIONS OF WORKPLACE ROMANCE VARY ACCORDING TO DEMOGRAPHICS, LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND POSITION HELD.	75
5.2.3 TO IDENTIFY THE PITFALLS ASSOCIATED WITH WORKPLACE ROMANCE	74

5.2.4 TO EXPLORE THE PERCEIVED INFLUENCES SURROUNDING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SUPERIORS AND SUBORDINATES.....	74
.....	
5.3 SOUTH AFRICAN PERPECTIVE	78
5.4 THE WORKPLACE IS A COMMON PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO MEET	77
5.5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ORGANISATION’S OBLIGATION TO STAKEHOLDERS.....	80
5.6 PERSONAL DISCOMFORT.....	80
5.7 WORKPLACE POWER STRUGGLES	80
5.8 ETHICAL AND MORALE ISSUES	80
5.9 PRODUCTIVITY.....	79
5.10 PERFORMANCE.....	79
5.11 STRESS.....	79
5.12 MOTIVATION.....	82
5.13SUMMARY	82
CHAPTER 6 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.....	84
6.1 INTRODUCTION	84
6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS	84
6.2.1 DEVELOPMENT OF WORKPLACE ROMANCE POLICY	84
6.2.2 STRESS MANAGEMENT	85
6.2.3 ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR.....	86
6.2.4 PERFORMANCE.....	84
6.2.5 PRODUCTIVITY	84
6.3 SUMMARY	86
BIBLIOGRAPHY	87

CHAPTER INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study analyses the impact of workplace romance in organisations. The study further explores the extent to which workplace romance influences employee performance and the perceived influence on the relationship between employees and employers, as well as between co-workers. It further establishes differences in perceptions of workplace romance. The increase of female workers in organisations has impacted on and has therefore increased the possibility of workplace romance occurring.

The study employs quantitative research methodologies. By employing this research methodology the study is able to generate meaningful analysis of the data. It is aimed at determining people's perceptions about workplace romance. The quantitative approach is important in the study because it reveals findings using correlation, cross tabulation and linear regression analyses. Least Squares estimation was used to generate a linear regression model. Coefficient estimates and associated statistics are also utilised in the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The inspiration for the study was the changes in recent years in South African politics, with more women being able to enter the general workplace. Previously, communities were led to believe that women belonged at home and not in the working environment. They were expected to raise children and take care of their husbands and homes by cooking and cleaning as opposed to going to work. They were not expected to join the workforce or working class

In South African history, women marched to the Union Building in 1956 to demonstrate against carrying of the *dompass* (passiontounderstand.blogspot.com/.../this-day-in-history-9). This was one of the few occasions when women in South Africa fought for their rights. For decades, the workplace was dominated by men, giving them power over women. Women slowly started to enter the workforce and gradually increased in numbers. It was

difficult for women to be promoted into high positions as their ability and dedication were constantly undermined (*passiontounderstand.blogspot.com/.../this-day-in-history-9*).

It was necessary for women to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that they could perform equally or better than men in the business world. Workplace romances became an issue as there were both genders within one organisation. It was also an embarrassment to talk about these relationships within organisations. The complex working environment caused individuals to be attracted to each other which resulted in the phenomenon known as workplace romance (Powell & Foley, 1998). Employees spend eight hours a day together in an organisation, so it is likely for some of them to develop feelings for each other. This study explores what really drives employees into workplace romance. The study explores what are the hidden core problems in organisations that allow these relationships to develop.

In South Africa there has been an acknowledgement to comprehensively address on the social and legal issues relating to sexual harassment. No study carried out in the South Africa context was sourced, thus the literature used in the study was conducted in United States (US) and other European countries.

The law emphasizes sexual harassment and the National Economic Development and Labour Council-NEDLAC has recently developed and amended the Code of Good Practice on Sexual Harassment. This came into effect in 2005. The manual has been designed to deal with the latest changes and case law developments in relation to sexual harassment since 1994 in South Africa (Naylor & O'Sullivan, 2010).

1.3 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT-USA

Following World War II, women became more involved in the workforce (Domenico & Jones, 2006). In history, working women were regarded as immoral and unfeminine objects of disappointment. They were criticized and accused of being bad mothers (Domenico & Jones, 2006). Valdez and Gutek (1987) argue that female workers are not regarded seriously by their bosses, colleagues and society. They are expected to perform duties as a wife and mother and at the same time are expected to fulfil their professional responsibilities (Tinklin, Croxford, Ducklin & Frame, 2005).

By mid-1990 about 46 % of the American workforce was female. Perez and Liberman (2010) pose a realistic argument about the subject of workplace romance. The authors argue that organisational leaders who assert that sexuality does not belong in a workplace must come to terms with an unsettling reality. A study by the Bureau of National Affairs carried out twenty years ago found that nearly one-third of all romances begin in the workplace and between six and eight million people enter into such relationships annually. Half of them find themselves in long-term relationships (Perez & Liberman, 2010). The authors further state that 20 % of employees admit they have been involved in social-sexual experiences in the workplace.

An examination of American norms indicates that the country is at a turning point, where organisations have a need to understand and to manage romance as part of the workplace environment, (Perez & Liberman, 2010). The difficulty is often how to manage this so that both organisations and employees are respected and employee rights are not compromised.

Large numbers of women resist the old fashioned belief that their role is to stay at home as mothers and rely on their husbands to be the breadwinners for the family (Stephenson & Burger, 1997). This study unpacks the complexity of workplace romance, the concept of it and whether there is indeed a need to develop a policy to reduce this phenomenon. No matter how small an organisation is, it can be affected by workplace romance.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to understand the impact of workplace romance in organisation. The workplace romance has an impact on an organisation in terms of productivity, staff performances and problems encounters by employees. In some instances junior employees are said to use their relationship with a senior manager to climb the corporate ladder and to obtain better performance scores during performance periods. Organisations are faced with the occurrence of workplace relationships. Productivity and performances are often compromised and the integrity and rights of human beings and organisations are affected. The study also unveils people's perceptions of the topic.

1.5 THE VALUE OF THE STUDY

The study was undertaken as a result of the researcher's observation of situations when the employees who were involved in the relationship, cite sexual harassment when the relationship ends, which may result in dismissal of innocent employees. Since the superiors have more power, they might dismiss the other party merely because they regret the failed relationship. This has happened in many organisations, where individual's dismissal occurred as a direct result of a workplace romance gone wrong (Lickey, Berry & Whelan-Berry, (2009).

The author has been saddened by the dismissal of dear friends and colleagues as a result of this phenomenon. The literature review on workplace romance has revealed the lack of commitment from top management in taking control of the situation and taking a firm stand on these relationships within the organisation. The literature reveals that, American companies are engaging in developing a romance in the workplace policy.

It is important in South Africa to develop romance in workplace policies which clarify the contractual obligation between the employer and employee professionals. The policy needs to outline acceptable behaviour from both superiors and subordinates. The policy makers and authors of labour law, and those who write about women in the workplace in South Africa will be able to use this study to unpack the negativity of sexual harassment and potentially see it against the backdrop of a failed workplace romance.

1.6 PROBLEM STATEMENT

A problem statement can be described as the reasoning of two scenarios, namely an ideal scenario where the system under consideration is functioning optimally and an actual real-world scenario where the system is broken (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/statement>). It is evident that romance in the workplace has not been considered as a major concern organisations in South Africa (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/statement>).

The problem with sexual harassment is that it does not happen overnight. There is usually some level of a relationship between two employees, The problem occurs when the relationship dissolves and one or other of the parties involved perceive it as having

constituted sexual harassment. The law has protected female employees but it has not taken both sides into consideration when deciding on the cases. The law should be reviewed to consider romance within the work environment and protect individuals should the relationship dissolve and a lawsuit is instituted. It is imperative for both employer and employees to understand the distinction between sexual harassment and dissolved workplace relationships. The problem is that the two terms are mostly interpreted incorrectly.

The study uses MBA students as respondents to the questionnaires. They were deemed to be aware that romance in the workplace occurs where there has been mutual relationship between employees, employees and superiors and managers.

The study further establishes whether the organisation's concerns about poor performance can really be blamed on workplace relationships or may just be due to the employees' lack of knowledge of the job and what is expected of them. The organisation should ensure that work ethics and performances are not jeopardised by workplace romance.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs quantitative analysis because the study seeks explanations and predictions that generate meaningful analysis of the data. The population of this study is currently registered MBA students, due to the small number it was decided to do a census. The nature of the study and the small population of 100 deemed acceptable to use census. Electronic questionnaires sent via QuestionPro were used to collect the data. The questionnaire was pretested to ascertain whether it was suitable, and would yield the desired results. The electronic questionnaire was perceived to be the least inconvenient sampling method. It was also compatible with SPSS, a widely used computer software tool for the analysis of quantitative data.

1.8 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

The quantitative research method is a formal, objective, systematic process whereby numerical data are used to obtain evidence about the study. This research method is used to distinguish variables, to examine relationships among variables and to determine the reasons

and effects of the interaction between variables (Burn & Grove, 2005). A quantitative research model is employed in this study to gather, analyse, interpret and report factual information regarding romance in the workplace, its pitfalls, staff performance and perceptions.

1.9 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

For the purpose of the study, the major objectives have been set out, including the theoretical approach of the research. Comprehensive questions guide the execution of the study. The objectives explore the extent to which workplace romance influences performance. The objectives unveil whether, in some cases, an employee's involvement is used to cover up their poor performance.

Below are four main objectives of the study:

- To explore the extent to which workplace romance influences performance.
- To establish if differences in the perceptions of workplace romance vary according to demographics, level of education and position held.
- To identify pitfalls associated with workplace romance.
- To explore the perceived influence in the relationship between superiors and subordinates.

1.10 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

For the purpose of the study, critical questions were identified which the study intends to answer. The questions below assist and guide the study towards achieving its objectives. These questions are included in the questionnaire.

- Does romance in the workplace motivate employees and increase performance?
- What impact does romance in the workplace have amongst employees?
- Do older or senior managers take advantage of younger or new employees and promise them promotion in return for a relationship?
- Is romance in the workplace the abuse of power from management?

- Does romance in the workplace increase productivity?
- What happens within the organisation when the relationship dissolves?
- Should organisations establish policies and guidelines on romance in the workplace?
- Are employees protected by any South African law when it comes to workplace romance?

1.11 ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS

Prior to undertaking the research, an ethical clearance process was followed, which requires the researcher to give due consideration to what it is like to be a participant in a research study (study.itee.uq.edu.au). The nature and quality of participant performance is kept strictly confidential. This study reports findings in a complete and honest manner.

1.12 QUESTIONNAIRE

To conduct quantitative research, twenty two questions including those on the demographics of the participants were formulated and there were one hundred respondents. The questions were structured on a Likert Scale where 1 indicated that they strongly agree with the statement and 5 indicated that they strongly disagree.

1.13 DATA ANALYSIS

Data was analysed using SPSS computer software. “This is a statistical and data management package for analysts and researchers. SPSS statistics software offers greater insight into the actions, attributes and the attitudes of people. SPSS is a modular, tightly integrated, full-featured product line for analytical process-planning, data collecting, data access, data management and preparation, data analysis, reporting and deployment” (<http://www.spss.com/spss/>). By using SPSS, the study is able to do statistical analyses such as regression analysis and correlation analysis. (<http://www.utexas.edu/its/rc/tutorials/stat/spss/spss1>).

The task of regression is to establish two values by establishing the exact nature of the linear relationship. Once the exact equation for the relationship is known, research is then able to

predict values for the one variable, given the required values of the other variable (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 278). A quantitative approach is also important because by presenting the findings using correlation and regression analyses, it sheds light on the problem statement. For the purpose of the research, a quantitative method is used to determine people's perceptions about workplace romance and to identify the factors that influence employees' behaviour in this regard.

Regression and correlation have certain fundamental differences. "In regression analysis there is symmetry in the way the dependent and explanatory variables are treated. The dependent variable is assumed to be statistical, random, or stochastic, that is, to have a probability distribution. The explanatory variables, on the other hand, are assumed to have fixed values. In correlation analysis, two variables are treated symmetrically; there is no distinction between the dependent and explanatory variables" (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/quantitiveresearch>).

1.14 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The main limitation of this study was that some MBA students were not willing to participate in the survey. The findings of this study did not lead to conclusive results with regard to the situation being investigated. Rather, the findings suggest areas for future research.

1.15 SUMMARY

Chapter one provides an overview of the study and describes the problem that is the focus of the study. As mentioned, this study focuses on romance in the workplace, the pitfalls, perception and performances. Chapter two presents a review of literature on the issue of romance in the workplace, pitfalls, perception and performances. This chapter further looks at other countries and how they deal with this problem.

Chapter three presents a detailed review of research methodology and details the methodology selected for this study. Quantitative and qualitative research methods are research methodologies used to collect data in the research. In this study a quantitative methodology is used. Chapter four provides analyzes of the data and presents the results of the various analyses undertaken. Data was analysed using computer programs called SPSS.

Chapter five discusses the findings from Chapter four, in the context of the objectives and aims for the study.

Chapter six summarises the findings, makes recommendations and draw conclusions on the subject of the study.

The next chapter presents a review of literature on the topic of this study

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the writings and research of different authors on the topic of romance in the workplace. This review focuses on the perceptions of different sets of employees and includes topics such as how workplace romance affects performance, production and promotions and how it informs the attitudes of other employees, as well as the pitfalls associated with workplace romance. It defines the commonly used terms on the subject and guidelines for employers and employees in dealing with workplace romance and explores whether organisations have policies on romance.

As Schaefer and Tudor (2001) state romance is a private matter. However, in many instances, what happens in an employee's private life, affects their professional life and therefore, also the organisation in which they work. These authors argue that the only time that personal issues become an organisational matter is when they affect production and performance. The amount of time people spend at work makes the workplace the ideal environment for romance to flourish. Of concern to an organisation is whether romantic relationships contribute towards destabilizing or harmonizing the workplace (Schaefer & Tudor, 2001).

2.2 ROMANCE IN THE WORKPLACE

There are different views about what the word romance means, and there is no generally accepted absolute definition (Pierce, Aguinis & Adams, 2006). For the purpose of this paper, romance will be used to describe a mutually desired relationship involving physical attraction and an intimate relationship between two people. Pierce *et al.*, 2000: 6-7 define workplace romance as “mutually desired relationships involving physical attraction between two employees of the same organisation”.

Pierce, *et al.*, (2000:869) define workplace romances “as any heterosexual relationship between two members of the same organisation that entails mutual sexual attraction”. They state that a close relationship between two employees at work can be considered a workplace romance at the point when they have acknowledged their mutual attraction to one another

and have physically acted upon their romantic feelings in the form of dating or otherwise intimate association”.

2.3 THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN ROMANCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

According to Pierce *et al.*, (2000), there is a thin line between workplace romance and sexual harassment. It is therefore important to draw the distinction between the two. The former has already been defined above. Sexual harassment on the other hand, entails unwanted sexual attention, usually in the form of requests for sexual favours, unwelcome sexual advances, and other unwanted physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature. Workplace relationships which end acrimoniously may trigger sexual false harassment claims.

Pierce *et al.*, (2000), however, argue that 24 % of the respondents in their study suggested that sexual harassment reports in the workplace were often a result of failed workplace romances. As workplace romance dissolves, it may give rise to sexually harassing behaviour between the former partners.

In South African companies, sexual harassment charges may result in the dismissal of employees. The sexual harassment charges are characterized as the violation of right to integrity of body and personality which belongs to every person. During the apartheid regime, sexual harassment was neither recognized nor defined as a social or legal problem. Prior to 1998 there was no legislation specifically addressing the problem of sexual harassment in South Africa (Zalesne, 2002).

2.4 WHAT DRIVES SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS IN THE WORKPLACE?

Perez and Liberman (2010) argue that the concept of power is the main key variable to understanding the dynamics of workplace romance. It must be understood in terms of the power dynamics that exist between the couple. They further argue that the social exchange perspective provides an explanation for why employees involve themselves romantically with other organisational members. This theory maintains that employees who are dependent on other employees in higher ranks benefit from valued resources when they are

romantically linked these superiors. These resources may involve for example task matters and career matters (Perez & Liberman, 2010). There are consequences when these resources are introduced into the workplace. For example, when the sexual work relationship is utilitarian in nature, it is able to be used to shift the power and dependency dynamics so that one or both employees achieve either work related or sexual rewards (Perez & Liberman, 2010). According to Perez and Liberman (2010), the presence of romance and sexuality in the workplace generates a new set of interpersonal considerations that are unrelated to the organisation's own goals, for example affection, sex, and companionship.

Townsend (1998) argues that as much as it is difficult and misleading to attribute motives to people's behaviour, his research found four possible reasons why people become involved in workplace romance.

- **Love motive-** when two people are in love and have become sincerely involved, their interest is more long-term and may lead to a permanent relationship.
- **Ego Motive-** this relationship is a fling which is characterized by a search for personal reward, for example excitement, adventure or sexual experience.
- **Job Motive-** where a person's job will benefit from the relationship, for example from promotions, a pay rise, and job security.
- **Power Motive-** this motive involves both off the job and on the job benefits. Both participants may enhance their power and visibility through the relationship.

2. 5 SEXUALITY AND THE ORGANISATION: INSEPARABLE LINK

According to Perez and Liberman (2010), some managers have attempted to either reduce or totally eliminate sexuality in the workplace. Sexuality is how people express and experience themselves as sexual being. Research by Perez and Liberman (2010) shows that such a manager's attitude commonly reflects a converted image of sexuality, as an irrational, biological force that must be controlled and channelled for the organisation to profit and for individuals to succeed. Perez and Liberman (2010) further argue that employees refrain from engaging in sexual relationships because of the organisational fears that productivity will decrease and that sexual harassment lawsuits may follow. On the other hand, the employee's sexual relationship may increase productivity because employees are motivated and keen to

be at work in order to satisfy their personal egos. In these cases, the workplace romance increases their enthusiasm and is therefore beneficial to the company (Perez & Liberman, 2010). Perez and Liberman (2010) further argue that sexuality threatens organisational stability as it gives rise to a conflict of interest between work and organisational objectives.

This conflict of interest may result in complaints from other employees, citing favouritism and an unfair allocation of resources. Perez and Liberman (2010) also state that as a result, traditional management approaches dictated that employees should relate to each other as professionals rather than as sexual beings, or as occupants of positions rather than individuals. Some have argued that confining sexuality to non-work relationships is an unattainable reality because sex roles are too broadly based to be compartmentalized from one situation to another. They further state that sexuality is a personal attribute that will certainly be expressed in most roles and that will sooner or later seep into the workplace. One of the reasons that the workplace is so conducive to romance is that individuals often derive their self-concept (which encompasses their sexual identity) from their occupation. As a result, the workplace is regarded as the ideal place for people to express their masculinity or femininity.

Anderson and Fisher's (1991) study confirms that the key to productivity lies within the social groups that make up an organisation rather than being found in the technology and processes that are used to generate output. Perez and Liberman (2010) also examined social and demographical changes which could explain why organisations are becoming more conducive to romantic and sexual encounters in the workplace. The composition of the labour force has changed over the past few decades in terms of the ratios between men and women. This is confirmed by US Department of Labour (1981) where at that time women comprised 46 % of the labour force. They projected that between 2006 and 2016 this would increase to 49 %, and that 39 % of these women would be in management and professional positions.

2. 6 SEXUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE: AN ASSET OR LIABILITY?

Powell and Foley (1998) cited by Perez and Liberman (2010) propose certain reasons why workplace romances develop. They argue that workplace relationships may affect both

individual and group performance. These relationships can be regarded as either assets or liabilities for the organisation. The workplace romance is unique, and is not like other work relationships that are approved of because their sole purpose is to achieve productivity and meet organisational goals. The primary purpose of a romance, on the other hand, is to satisfy individual needs and not organisational goals. The question that organisations face is the cost of organisational romance when measured against its benefits (Powell and Foley, 1998 cited by Perez and Liberman, 2010). Some researchers Perez & Liberman 2010 suggest that workplace romance may result in loss of productivity. The employees involved in the romance may, in certain cases, use their time chatting to or emailing one another, may miss meetings and may cause costly errors to the organisation because they are distracted.

On the contrary, Powell and Foley (1998) as cited by Perez and Liberman (2010) argued that workplace romance may increase productivity and the quality of work might improve. They give as a reason for this, the thinking that when employees are happy, they tend to concentrate more on their performance. Furthermore, it is argued that work motivation is improved because a workplace romance increases the employee's enthusiasm for being at work.

2.7 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION IN THE WORKPLACE

2.7.1 ATTITUDE SIMILARITY

Kreitner and Kinicki (2008) define attitude as a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner to a given object. If employees have a positive attitude towards their jobs, they are more willing to extend their working hours and also to work harder. In this case, attitude propels people to act in a specific way in a specific context. They further argue that attitude affects behaviour at a different level than do values. Attitude relates more to behaviour directed towards specific objects, persons, and or situations. According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2008) there are three components of attitude: affective, cognitive and behavioural.

2.7.2 PERFORMANCE

According to Stoner, Freeman, Gilbert and James (2001), performance appraisal is the comparison of an individual performance in the job to the standards and objectives set up for the position by an organisation. If the individual is not meeting the required performance standard, it is argued that corrective actions must be taken, for example by offering more training to the individual. On other hand, high performers may be rewarded in the form of a salary increase, a promotion and bonuses.

Meyer (1998) argues that, if handled well, workplace romance can in fact improve the performance of the individuals involved. Some researchers Meyer (1998) argue that management should not worry about workplace romance unless it has an adverse impact on the productivity. That is, workplace romance should be allowed for as long as it does not affect other employees' productivity. Certain research suggests that such relationships can enhance or impede job productivity (Mainiero (1995) cited in Pierce *et al.*, 2000). According to Pierce *et al.*, (2000) earlier research on workplace romance focused on its effect on employee job satisfaction, productivity, morale and motivation, managerial decisions regarding promotions, relocations and termination of employment of the employees involved.

2.7.3 PERCEPTIONS

Psychologists define perception as the recognition and interpretation of sensory stimuli based chiefly on memory or the neurological processes by which such recognition and interpretation are affected. The English language definition is the insight, intuition, or knowledge gained by perceiving and/ or the capacity for such insight. There are two angles from which workplace romance can be perceived: namely, the manager's view and the employee's view (Hurley & Fagenson-Eland, 1996). Perceptions vary according to whether one is or has been involved in a workplace romance or not. Each group may have a different view on the subject (Hurley & Fagenson-Eland, 1996).

Pierce *et al.* (2000) study found that the main concerns of supervisors were favouritism and the potential for breached confidentiality. This would be a case where a subordinate is involved in a relationship with a superior. Pierce *et al.* (2000) who compared to peer-peer relationships found that hierarchical relationships are perceived with more negativity.

However, hierarchical relationship between direct supervisor and the subordinate is viewed with more resentment than if the manager was from another division or department within the company.

According to Hurley and Fagenson-Eland (1996: 4249) "Because of the potential for conflict of interest, exploitation, favoritism, and bias, such relationships may undermine the real or perceived integrity of the supervision and evaluation provided, and the trust inherent particularly in the teacher-student context. They may, moreover, be less consensual than the individual whose position confers power believes. The relationship is likely to be perceived in different ways by each of the parties to it, especially in retrospect."

2.8 THE EFFECT OF WORKPLACE ROMANCE

2.8.1 MOTIVATION

Mainiero (1995) cited in Pierce *et al.*, (2000) argued that workplace romance is not different from other variables in the workplace and said that workplace romance can produce different results, either positive or negative which impact on workers' commitment to doing their jobs. Mainiero (1995) cited in Pierce *et al.*, (2000) established that employees' enthusiasm levels were high when they were involved in an intimate relationship in the organisation. Mainiero (1995) cited in Pierce *et al.*, (2000) suggests that these affairs are "uplifting for participants, who feel better about themselves and therefore are more motivated towards their work and on the job" (Mainiero, 1995: 8 cited in Pierce *et al.*, 2000).

Research results show that 40 % of men and 57 % of women interviewed, who had participated in romantic relationships on the job, felt their general job motivation levels increased as a result of the romance (Dillard & Broetzmann, 1989 cited by Mainiero, 1995).

2.8.2 JOB SATISFACTION

According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2008), job satisfaction is the extent to which an individual likes his or her job in the workplace. The reinforcement-affect exemplary was

established by Clore and Byrne (1974), this model gave evidence that results from the romantic relationship can create progressive results which can fall over into and inspire the whole team's job satisfaction level. In addition, Pierce *et al.* (2000) had overlapping ideas on other theories of social exchange. Pierce *et al.* (2000) stressed that workers who distinguish the outcomes of such a relationship to surpass his or her expectations, will develop a high level of satisfaction within their job. Pierce *et al.* (2000) also determined that workers who are happy with their workplace romance are expected to be happy with any job given to them. This will be the result of workplace romance.

2.8.3 MORALE AND WORK CLIMATE

Researchers have indicated that the attitude and essence of a work group in the organization may be compressed because of workplace romances (Mainiero, 1995 cited in Pierce *et al.*, 2000). In the research by Steingold, F.S. (2007) it was proven that when there is a superior-subordinate affiliation in the work environment, this affiliation is disturbing to other workers.

Mainiero (1995) also surveyed US women executives and found that 78 % of them acknowledged disliking hierarchical relationships as they had a negative effect on workplace determination. Only 21 % noted and felt the same about peer-to-peer workplace involvement (Mainiero, 1995). It is manifest that a hierarchical relationship is the one that is noticeable and acknowledged by all, and is more likely to affect overall employee morale than a relationship that is not out in the open (Pierce *et al.*, 2000). Research also proved that these workplace interactions between employees can disturb the processes of the work group and may impact negatively on the group's objectives. The most exhaustive research on this variable was conducted by Dillard (1987) cited by Mainiero (1995). Dillard (1987) found that workplace relationships increase back chatting amongst employees, which could be either positive or negative but this would depend on the kind of relationship and the perceived motives of each person.

If employees pursue an affiliation for love and for an honest motive, in this case, they are likely to make and promote constructive and good gossip among their co-workers, thereby causing the affiliation to be looked at more favourably and be perceived as sincere (Sternberg, 1986; Quinn, 1977 cited by Mainiero, 1995). While Sternberg (1986) and Quinn

(1977 cited by Mainiero, 1995) on the other hand, concluded that women idea of involvement are all to be job-related, this will cause a far greater stricter treatment from the other colleagues.

2.8.4 PRODUCTIVITY

Appelbaum, Klenin, Marinescu and Bytautas. (2007) confirmed that workstation romances could have both a positive and a negative effect. Mainiero (1995 cited by Appelbaum *et al.*, 2007) also argued that workplace romance could have either an enhancing or an impeding effect on an employee's quantity and quality of work output. In that study, it was shown that a workplace romance could in fact enhance an employee's productivity level by channeling the energy of the attraction into work goals in mixed work groups. This has allowed workers in mixed gender groups to reach a higher level of productivity than same sex groups (Mainiero, 1995 cited by Appelbaum *et al.*, 2007).

According to Mainiero (1995) cited by Appelbaum *et al.* (2007) another aspect of the workplace romance is that it has impact on production. The participant's motive for engaging in such relations is true love or consummate love. Couples engaging in workplace relationships with a love motive, characterized by Quinn (1977) cited by Appelbaum *et al.*, (2007) as *true love* and by Sternberg (1986) also cited by Appelbaum *et al.*, (2007) as *consummate love*, are driven by their anxiety of damaging consequences which then increases productivity.

2.8.5 PITFALLS

Highly visible romances are subject to gossip, and rumours about them spread very fast across the organisation. If one of the partners gets a promotion, it is presumed that this is linked to the relationship they have with their higher-ranking romantic partner. Other employees may resent the promotion, even if it was achieved purely on merit. Amaral (2006) argues that if they fail, such relationships can bring discomfort and hostility within the workplace. Similarly, it is in these kinds of relationships that funds may be misused for business trips that are in fact little more than love trysts on company time. In addition to

that, if the romance involves an extramarital affair on the part of one or both people, it can drag the involved people's spouses into the workplace and the workplace could become a battlefield and a constant place for spousal arbitrations (Hurley & Fagenson-Eland, 1996). There are special risks in any sexual or romantic relationship between individuals in inherently unequal positions, and parties in such a relationship assume those risks.

2.9 MINIMIZING THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF WORKPLACE ROMANCE

Appelbaum *et al.* (2007) mentioned that office romance has the potential to have both positive and negative effects on the individuals involved and also for the organisation. Therefore, according to Appelbaum *et al.* (2007) it is important to address the questions and options that organisations have at their disposal to reduce the negative results of workplace romance.

2.9.1 THE NEED FOR POLICY

The study by Appelbaum *et al.* (2007) conducted between 2001 and 2005 revealed that 70 % of the organisations did not have a policy pertaining romance in the workplace. According to Gurcheik (2006) cited by Appelbaum *et al.* (2007), the reason why most organisations do not have a policy in place to address workplace romance and its implication for the business, is the sensitive nature of the matter, when dealing with the hierarchical type of workplace romance. Moreover, companies tend to discourage romantic involvement among employees. On the other hand, other companies appear to have different attitudes towards lateral romance and hierarchal romance, with more emphasis on the latter, resulting in different policies. For example Marriot International (a worldwide reservation centre) has separate consequences for lateral and hierarchal relationships. It also stipulates that when it comes to peer pressure, it is necessary to maintain and display professionalism while on the company grounds and premises. It is also crucial to be cautious that such relationships do not to infringe on the other employees' civil rights (Kruse & Kleiner, 1999).

Organisations are starting to review the need for company policy on workplace romance, especially those between supervisors and subordinates (Kruse & Kleiner, 1999). Most organisations are in favour of adopting such policies, in order to safeguard themselves from

liability which may take the form of perceived favouritism and the legal implications of sexual harassment. Wilson, Filosa and Fennel (2003) further confirm that workplace romance is a sensitive matter, more especially when it involves supervisors and employees who are in relationships. Companies which do not have rules or policy have a tendency to ignore the romantic relationship unless it has an obvious negative impact on the organisation. Unless organisations can alter their policy, then organisational problems with workplace romance will continue to occur (Powell & Foley, 1998).

It is the obligation of the organisation's management to draft rules and guidelines to maintain office or workplace environments, to ensure that productivity is not affected, and to protect the organisation from possible future legal proceedings which may arise from workplace romances (Wilson, Filosa and Fennel, 2003). Lickey, Berry and Whelan-Berry (2009) argue that to reduce the possibility of organisations having to deal with the undesirable consequences of workplace romance, it is essential for organisations to institute a clear workplace romance policy. The argument from Schaefer and Tudor (2001) states that the reasonable position to begin with in terms of the policy making is to acknowledge that employers or management cannot control whether employees become romantically involved in the workplace. They therefore need to establish basic ground rules for behaviour by employees involved in the romance. Lickey *et al.*, 2009 state that there are number of resources available to help practitioners in drafting and evaluating the workplace romance policy.

2.9.2 RESPONDING TO WORKPLACE ROMANCE: A PROACTIVE AND PRAGMATIC APPROACH

Table 2.1: Key issues to be considered in a workplace romance policy

ISSUE	COMMENTS
Acknowledgement of workplace as perhaps the common meeting place for people who become romantically attached.	Provide context for the policy by acknowledging that romances often begin by people knowing each other in the workplace.
Acknowledgement of organisation's obligation to many stakeholders, all with different needs and expectation.	To note that the organisation does have an obligation to protect its employees, managers, owners, customers, and the work environment from the potentially harmful effects that may result from romantic and or intimate relationships.
Identify all of the various types of workplace romances.	Name the types of workplace romances for example hierarchical or peer.
Describe expected action to occur when a workplace romance begins.	Be as specific as possible about the obligation of the individuals involved in the romance to report the romance and be clear about their supervisor's and manager's responsibilities.
Identify links to other policies.	Workplace romance policies may overlap with policies on sexual harassment, privacy and confidentiality, and grievances.
Explain the potential organisational actions that can occur in response to a workplace romance.	State the potential action that can occur, for example: one employee may be asked to leave the organisation: or in the instance of a hierarchical romance, one employee may not directly report to the other.
Emphasize the responsibility to maintain confidentiality and privacy.	It is important to emphasize the organisations and the individual's responsibility to maintain confidentiality, privacy, and security related to the

	organisation's business, transactions, and processes.
Define sexual behaviour in the workplace.	Identify what behaviour is not acceptable in the workplace and the consequences for engaging in unacceptable behaviour.
Specify the consequences for failing to report a workplace romance (if that is required by the policy).	Reporting may limit the organisation's liability, and lack of notification may result in the termination of contract for an employee.

Adapted from: The Journal of Business Inquiry 2009, 8, 1,100-119.

[http://www.uvu.edu/woodbury/jbi/volume 8](http://www.uvu.edu/woodbury/jbi/volume%208), rresponding to *Workplace Romance: A Proactive and Pragmatic Approach*

2.10 TYPES OF WORKPLACE ROMANCE

There are two types of workplace romance that will be described, for example the hierarchal and the lateral romance. The hierarchal romance involves individuals at different levels in the hierarchy of the company while the lateral romance occurs between colleagues in the company. These are discussed in detail below.

2.10.1 HIERARCHAL ROMANCE

Lickey *et al.* (2009) describe the hierarchal romance as a romance that involves individuals at different levels in the hierarchy of the company. When one employee is a manager or executive, this has the potential to create complications beyond the involvement of peer employees. Appelbaum *et al.* (2007) state that employers and employees should agree on policy concerning the hierarchal relationship. He found that individuals within an organisation generally believe that supervisors involved in a hierarchal relationship should face some form of disciplinary action, while a neutral stance should be taken towards the subordinates involved. It is believed that punitive measures should be taken against both parties involved in the relationship, should the relationship result in the conflict of interest between parties.

Furthermore, Appelbaum *et al.* (2007) argued that there is a general consensus that hierarchal affiliation between employees should be avoided and this must be evidently and clearly explained in a company policy. It is further mentioned in the literature that many officially authorized experts are of the general consensus that organisations must be protected against potential lawsuits, and this can be done by making a decision on the type of policy permitted within the organisation and under which condition the policy must be issued (Schaefer & Tudor, 2001 cited by Appelbaum *et al.*, 2007).

2.10.2 LATERAL ROMANCE

Lickey, *et al.* (2009) describe the lateral romance as a romance between peers, in other words, the two parties work in similar positions in terms of the organisational hierarchy. Lateral romance normally occurs as a result of employees spending more than eight hours a day in the workplace; the more employees spend time together the more likely they are to be attracted to each other. It includes that social settings, for example restaurants or public venues, gym, community meetings, church work or volunteer projects (Shellenbarger, 2004 and Powell and Foley, 1998 cited by Lickey *et al.*, 2009) also contribute to the development of workplace romances. The policy concerning lateral romances in the workplace is the most difficult policy to implement. While employees agree that a workplace romance policy is the correct policy when dealing with hierarchical romance in the workplace, there are mixed feelings and emotions about lateral relationships (Appelbaum *et al.*, 2007).

In the study conducted by Parks (2006) for the Society for Human Resource Management, it was discovered that employees dispute management interference on issues of office romance. Another study conducted by Gurchiek (2006) cited by Appelbaum *et al.*, (2007) found that 75 % of company CEO's responded that they believed that the office romance was none of the organisation's business. Gurchiek (2006) further argued that an office romance or workplace affiliation must not be stopped but must be managed accordingly.

Schaefer and Tudor (2001) posed the question of how organisations should address lateral romances and what criteria the organisation should base their policy on. Mainiero (1995) cited by Lickey *et al.* (2009) suggested a solution on the policy for lateral workplace romance. They put forward that the criteria an organisation should use is the effect of the

romance on productivity. This should be the guideline used by management to determine what action, if any, to take. If work performance is affected, then management should take action, but where performance is consistent there is little reason to for management to act.

2.11 EMPLOYEE GUIDELINES

The guidelines mentioned below are suggested for individuals who might decide to become involved in a workplace romance. These guidelines should be incorporated into the employer's policy in order to reduce the risk for individual's liability in terms of loss of income and career damage (Schaefer & Tudor, 2001).

- Employees must watch what they say: sexual or suggestive comments should be avoided.
- Remember that women and men interpret remarks differently.
- Employees must watch their body language, be cautious of the signals they are sending and how these might be interpreted.
- Employees must keep intensity in check: when people work together in team activities and share an understanding, they must make a conscious effort not to confuse the different types of relationships between colleagues.
- Employees must know the risks involved: a workplace romance can ruin a career, cost a job and wreck a marriage.
- Employees must not cross the line: in the event of legal action, the standard courts will rule based on whether a reasonable person would consider the behaviour abusive or hostile.

2.12 EMPLOYER GUIDELINES

It is important that employers take note of this advice and should construct the company policy in order to reduce the risks and grant the optimum working environment for employees while ensuring that all employees are treated fairly and equitably (Schaefer & Tudor, 2001). The guidelines mentioned below are recommended to assist organisations in protecting the integrity and image of the organisation (Schaefer & Tudor, 2001).

- Every organisation must have a policy prohibiting all types of sexual harassment. It must be communicated clearly and reviewed in the orientation of all new employees.
- The organisation must develop a written policy on managing workplace romance that is tailored specifically to the organisational environment.
- A written policy must be developed which requires employees to disclose the start and termination of a relationship if it involves a subordinate and supervisor or another employee who is in a position to have influence over that employee's career. This disclosure serves two purposes: it confirms that the relationship is consensual and it protects employers against future claims of *quid pro quo* sexual harassment in which both parties were involved.
- Employers must maintain the confidentiality of any relationship information disclosed to management or Human Resources.
- Organisations must be consistent in applying the policy they have created.
- Management must distribute discipline fairly and equally to both parties.
- Organisations must establish clear rules for expected conduct in the workplace and remind the parties of the consequences when company policies are violated.
- Managers and supervisors must be fully trained on company policy and its enforcement, emphasizing the gravity of consistent application.
- Organisations must warn all superiors of the risk involved if they choose to become romantically involved with a subordinate. Potential consequences must be explained.
- The employer must use mediation when necessary for conflict resolution if a failed romance affects the working environment.
- The organisation must provide sound reasons for the company policy. Employees will understand reasonable policies, for example the prohibition or restrictions of supervisor-subordinate relationships.
- Employers must be careful not to infringe on an employee's rights to privacy.

Pierce *et al.*, (2000) cited three most common types of workplace romances:

- a companionate romance where each partner has a sincere love motive;
- a fling where each partner has an ego motive; and
- a utilitarian romance which is when a lower-ranked employee has a job-related motive and a higher-ranked employee has an ego motive, each of which occur with approximately equal frequency.

This last type of romance is a potentially unethical one as either party may try to ensure that they achieve their goal of promoting their job-related interests at the expense of the both the organisation and the object of their affection. According to Pierce *et al.*, (2000) romantic relationships at work are characterized by a joint desire, as opposed to unwanted or harassing sexual activities.

2.13 CASE LAW DEVELOPED BY COURTS IN UNITES STATES (US)

Townsend (1998) concluded that there are two types of laws for the protection of both employer and employee in the event of a workplace romance i.e. Public and Private Sector law. However, in the public sector there are laws designed to deal with workplace romance. The public sector has not worked on specifications to address the issues and problems related to workplace romance in a formal manner. In the US Constitution, employees in the US are governed by their constitutional right to privacy from government interference. This means that the state may not restrict one's right to privacy and freedom of association, including in terms of a workplace relationship without justification. On the contrary, Townsend (1998) state that for the restriction on a workplace romance to be allowed, the state must prove that the restriction is justified by a compelling state interest. Furthermore, employee privacy is covered by the law, where employers may not monitor their telephone calls and other communication without a court order.

Townsend (1998) also looked at the private sector, where litigations concerning employer interference in employees' relationship, both in the workplace and outside relationships can be initiated under several laws. In the private sector, the laws are different. An employee can be discharged because of an involvement with the co-worker or an employee from a competitor company, and this may result in the breach of contract, breach of the covenant of good faith and fair dealing and also intentional imposition of emotional distress (Townsend, 1998). It is also argued that privacy rights are limited in the private sector. The employment relationship denies any right to an employee who is arbitrarily treated by his or her employer unless there is a union contract. However, even though private sector employers are not bound by constitutional constraints, the state may afford protection either by common law and or by statute (Townsend, 1998).

Courts in various states in America have developed case law/ common law which identify certain infringements of rights in connection with private sector invasion of privacy. For the employee to charge an employer with an intrusion of their privacy, the employee must show that (Townsend, 1998):

- The employer intentionally intruded into a private area.
- The employee was entitled to privacy in that area
- The intrusion would be objectionable to a person of reasonable sensitivity.
- The intrusion may have occurred in any number of ways.
- The employer verbally requested certain private information as a condition of employment.
- The employer required employees to provide information in other ways for example through polygraphs, drug tests or psychological tests.
- The employer requires employees to undergo an annual medical examination.

2.14 SUMMMARY

This chapter presents a discussion about romance in the workplace and its impact on perceptions and performance, as well as the pitfalls associated with this phenomenon. While there is scarce research on the topic, the available information sheds some light on how it affects the workplace in both a positive and negative way. It has shown how different people within an organization respond and react to workplace romance. Some writers suggest that organizations should introduce romance policies to control it, but it is essential to understand that it cannot be stopped. The next chapter discusses the methodology selected for this study and briefly describes how the data is analyzed.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the research methodology, standards and techniques applied and used to obtain the data for the study. Data was collected using questionnaires with Likert scale questions. These were sent electronically. The population is MBA students from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Graduate School. This chapter reviews the aim and the objectives of the study as they are the basis for selecting the methodology utilised. The tools used to compile and collect data are discussed, as well as ethics in research, goodness of measure, coding and data entry, editing and analysing data. There were twenty two questions in the questionnaire.

According to Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin (2010) business research covers a wide range of phenomena and the purpose of research is to provide knowledge regarding the organisation, the market, the economy and finally the area of uncertainty and concerns. It can also be looked at as the application of scientific methods in searching for the truth about business phenomena. Business research does not exist in isolation but is influenced by management and businesses and their need for research arising from pressing organisational problems and or opportunities (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

In this chapter, the research methodology employed and the constructions of the questionnaire are also discussed. A distinction is made between quantitative and qualitative research methods and the preferred method selected as a tool for collecting the data. In this chapter the reliability and accuracy of information collected through the research process is also addressed.

3.2 AIM OF THE STUDY

Organisations are faced with the dilemma of workplace romance. There has been no study conducted in South Africa but romance in the workplace can be a major problem. The impact on organisations in terms of productivity, staff performance and problems encountered by employees is examined. The research establishes the perception of employees on the subject. Workplace romance is a common problem in organisations: junior employees may use managers for personal gain and promotion, to get better results during performance appraisals and achieve more benefits. Workplace romance also affects productivity when the employees involved pay less attention to job requirements and specifications. Furthermore, it also has a negative impact on the organisation when the relationship dissolves, the subordinate employee claims harassment, and the superior is dismissed for misconduct.

The main objectives of this study are:

- To explore the extent to which workplace romance influences performance.
- To establish if differences in the perceptions of workplace romance vary according demographics, level of education and position held.
- To identify the problems associated with workplace romance.
- To explore the perceived influence in the relationship between superiors and subordinates.

3.3 SAMPLING

Page and Meyer (2000) state that sampling assists with the collection of data, instead of using the entire population for data collection, researchers use a sample of the population. Page and Meyer (2000) further state that by using a sample instead of the entire population, a reliable result remains likely. There are two types of sampling design, namely, probability and non-probability sampling (Page & Meyer, 2000). Probability sampling is a unit of the population which has an equal chance of inclusion in the sample, while in non-probability sampling; the element in the population does not have any chances attached to them being chosen as sample subject (Page & Meyer, 2000).

Under probability sampling, the sample can be unrestricted or restricted. In unrestricted probability sampling also known as simple random sampling, every element in the

population has a known and equal chance of being selected as a subject while restricted probability sampling design is therefore more commonly chosen for research. (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Sekaran and Bougie (2010) further argue that simple random sampling has the least bias and offers the most generalizability. The population of this study were currently registered MBA students, due to the small number it was decided to do a census. The nature of the study and the small population of 100 deemed acceptable to use census.

3.4 PRETESTING OF QUESTIONS

It is important to pre-test the instrument to ensure that questions are understood by the respondents and to ensure that there is no ambiguity in the questions. It is also used to ensure that there are no problems with the wording or the measurements. The questionnaire was submitted to the research supervisor to check whether the questions would provide the type of data that would answer the research questions. The supervisor also checked the wording to ensure that there were no leading questions and that there was no bias in the sequence of the questions.

Sekaran and Bougie (2010) suggest it is a good idea to assess the results of the pre-test and obtain additional information participants on their general views of the questionnaire and to establish how they felt about completing the instrument. A pre-test questionnaire was submitted to five MBA students. The purpose was to establish whether the questionnaire covered the research topic, to identify ambiguous questions, to ensure that the questions precisely tested the information required, to gauge the respondents' willingness to answer sensitive questions, and finally to ensure that there was no order bias in the sequence of questions. There were no problems noted during pre-testing. The five MBA students understood the questions and were able to give feedback.

3.5 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD

The quantitative research method was chosen for this study. It is aimed at identifying the factors influencing workplace romance amongst employees. A quantitative study according to Babbie and Mouton (2002) is consistent with the quantitative model. Furthermore it regarded as an inquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed

of variables, measured with numbers, and analyzes with statistical procedures in order to determine whether the predictive generalizations of the theory hold true.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010) data collection methods are the integral part of research design. Data can be collected in various ways and in different settings. This includes face to face interviews, questionnaires, telephone interviews, computer-assisted interviews and interviews through electronic media. Furthermore, Sekaran and Bougie, 2010 states that questionnaires may be personally administered, or sent through the mail, or electronically administered.

Sekaran and Bougie (2010) argue that interviewing, administering questionnaires, and observing people are the most commonly used methods of collecting data in the survey research. Computer assisted surveys according to Sekaran and Bougie, 2010 are readily available to assist with both the interview and questionnaire; this includes preparing and administering questionnaires electronically.

3.7 ETHICS IN DATA COLLECTION

According to Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2001) the aim of ethics in research is to ensure that no one is harmed or suffers any negative consequences from the research activities. Central to the concept of research is the safeguarding of the respondent's basic human rights. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010) several ethical issues should be considered and addressed while collecting data. The information obtained by the researcher must be respected and confidentiality of the data maintained. Ethics in data collection has been adhered to with the study. The respondents all gave their written consent and the results were coded. The researcher indicated that participation was not compulsory and respondents could discontinue at any time should they feel uncomfortable. It was also emphasised that respondents would be treated with respect.

3.8 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

There are two types of questionnaire, namely the personally administered questionnaire and the mail questionnaire. A questionnaire is a pre-composed sets of written questions to which the respondents record their answers. They are an efficient data collection mechanism when the researcher knows what is required and how to measure the variables of interest. For the purpose of this study, a questionnaire is used and administered by mailing these to respondents using an electronic distributor. The questionnaire was kept short to improve the response rate.

3.8.1 MAIL QUESTIONNAIRES

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), the advantage of the mail questionnaire is that a wide geographical area can be covered in the survey. The respondents are mailed, and they then complete the questionnaire at their leisure, in their homes, and at their own pace. The return rate of the mailed questionnaire is, however, low and any questions the respondents might have cannot be clarified. The respondent can only assume that their answers are accurate. Sekaran and Bougie (2010) further noted the disadvantage of the mail questionnaire produces low response rate, it is difficult to establish the representativeness of the sample because those responding to the survey may not be the representative of the population desired for the study. However, there are effective techniques that can be employed to improve the rates of response to mail questionnaires. This can be done by sending follow-up letters, by providing the respondent with self-addressed stamped envelopes and by keeping the questionnaire simple and brief (Sekaran & Bougie,2010).

3.8.2 CONSTRUCTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The nature of the topic and the objectives determine the types of questions asked in the questionnaire. Should the variable be of subjective nature, for example satisfaction and involvement, and where respondents' beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes are to be measured, then the questions should tap the dimensions and elements of the concept (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). But where the objective variables, for example age, educational levels of respondents, are tapped, a single question, preferably to be one that has an ordinal scaled set of categories is appropriate (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The questions compiled for the

questionnaire are in line with the study objectives. Questions are structured to address and answer all of the objectives of the study and the topic.

Each question should be carefully considered so that the variables are adequately measured and no superfluous questions are asked (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The level of language in the questionnaire should be accessible to the respondents. It is important to word the questions in a way that can be understood by the respondents. If the questions are not understood or are interpreted differently by the respondents, the researcher might obtain incorrect answers to the questions, and responses will then be biased (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010).

3.8.3 TYPES AND FORMS OF QUESTIONS

There are two main types of question i.e. open-ended and closed questions. Open-ended allows respondents to answer the questions in any way they choose while closed questions ask the respondent to make choices from a set of alternatives given by the researcher. Closed questions assist the respondents to make quick decisions about their answers. This also helps the researcher to code the information easily for subsequent analysis. Care was taken to ensure that the alternative answers in the questionnaire are mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive. In the study, both closed and open-ended questions were used. Open-ended questions were to enable respondents to produce further information if deemed appropriate. Sekaran and Bougie (2010) refers to different respondents interpreting ambiguous questions differently in a bias being introduced, resulting in incorrect response. To this end the researcher ensured that there were no ambiguous questions and that all questions are easily understood by respondents.

3.9 SCALE

A scale is a tool by which individuals are distinguished in terms of how they differ from one another on the variables of interest to the study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). There are four types of scale namely used in business research, nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio scale. The nominal scale highlights the differences by classifying objects or person into groups,

and provides the least amount of information on variables (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The ordinal scale provides some additional information by rank-ordering the category of the nominal scale (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The interval scale not only ranks, but also provides the information on the magnitude of the differences in the variables (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The ratio scale indicates not only the magnitude of the differences but their proportion (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). In this study the nominal and ordinal scale were used, where respondents were classified into different categories i.e. education, age.

3.10 VALIDITY

In this research there has been an attempt to ensure the face validity of the questionnaire. The study also ensured that findings represent meaningful measures from the data collected. Furthermore, the study ensured that the design of questionnaire is in line with the objectives so that our findings are valid and reliable.

3.11 ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data was analysed through the computer package SPSS. To get the data ready for analysis it is necessary to code, key it in and edit it where necessary. Each question was downloaded from SPSS and results were analysed.

3.12 CODING

Data collected from respondents was coded in line with SPSS format.

3.13 ANALYSES USED

3.13.1 REGRESSION AND CORRELATION ANALYSIS

The task of regression is to establish two values by establishing the exact nature of the linear relationship between them. Once the exact equation for the relationship is known, research is then able to predict values for the one variable, given the required values of the other variable. A simple linear regression generates an equation in which a single variable yields a prediction for the dependent variable. A multi-linear regression yields an equation in

which two or more variables are used to predict the dependent variable (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 278).

Most correlation theory is based on the assumption of the randomness of variables, whereas most regression theory is conditional upon the assumption that the dependent variable is stochastic. The task of regression is to establish the values of m and c and thereby establish the exact nature of the linear relationship. Once the exact equation for the relationship is known, the study is able to predict values for the one variable, given the required values of the other variable. When x is the independent variable and y is the dependent variable (y is caused by x) our regression for y on x and given the value of x we can predict the value of y (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/quantitiveresearch>).

3.13.2 CROSS-TABULATIONS

Cross-tabulation is a display of data that shows how many cases in each category of one variable is divided among the categories of one or more additional variables. In a cross-tab, a cell is a combination of two or more characteristics, one from each variable. If one variable has two categories and the second variable has four categories, for instance, the cross-tab will have six cells, each with a number specific to that category combination. In this study, cross tabulation was used to analyze data.

3.13.3 CRONBACH'S ALPHA

Cronbach's alpha is the most common form of internal consistency reliability coefficient for data analysis. Alpha equals zero when the true score is not measured at all and there is only an error component. Alpha equals 1.0 when all items measure only the true score and there is no error component. Cronbach's alpha can be interpreted as the % of variance the observed scale would explain in the hypothetical true scale composed of all possible items in the universe (www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/reliab). Alternatively, it can be interpreted as the correlation of the observed scale with all possible other scales measuring the same thing and using the same number of items (www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/reliab).

313.4 GRAPHS AND TABLES

Graphs and charts are widely used because they communicate information visually. For this reason, graphs are often used in newspapers, magazines and businesses around the world. This study will use graphs and charts for complicated information which is difficult to understand and which needs an illustration. Graphs or charts will help to convey the information quickly and visually (<http://nces.gov>). Graphs were used to present data analysis in presentation of results.

A histogram is a graphical method of displaying the shape of a distribution. It is useful when there are a large number of observations. The frequency table is created, the range of scores are broken down into intervals. Furthermore, the class frequencies are represented by bars, the height of each bar corresponds to its class frequency. In this study, histogram was used to analyze data.

3.14 SUMMARY

This chapter has discussed the methodology used in data collection. It has also shown that the methodology was designed to maximize reliability and validity, and thus the findings of the study can be accepted with a reasonable degree of confidence. By taking into account the processes in data collection, and compiling of questionnaire, will make it easier to understand the presentation of results. The discussion of the methodology also allows an easier understanding of the following chapter which will be the analysis of the data collected and the presentation of the results.

CHAPTER 4 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the analysis and the interpretations of the data generated through the questionnaires. All of the respondents are currently registered students from the Graduate School of Business (GSB) and few University of KwaZulu-Natal employees who are former GSB students. The results of the statistical analysis reported in this study were obtained using the software and graphs in the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 12. Appropriate figures have been inserted for clear illustration and explanation.

The analysis starts with a discussion of the demographic profile of the respondents, which gives the reader an insight into demographic trends. There are 69 respondents who completed the questionnaire with 19 non-responses. In Figure 4.1 the results are presented in percentages 79 percent response rate and 21 percent non-response rate.

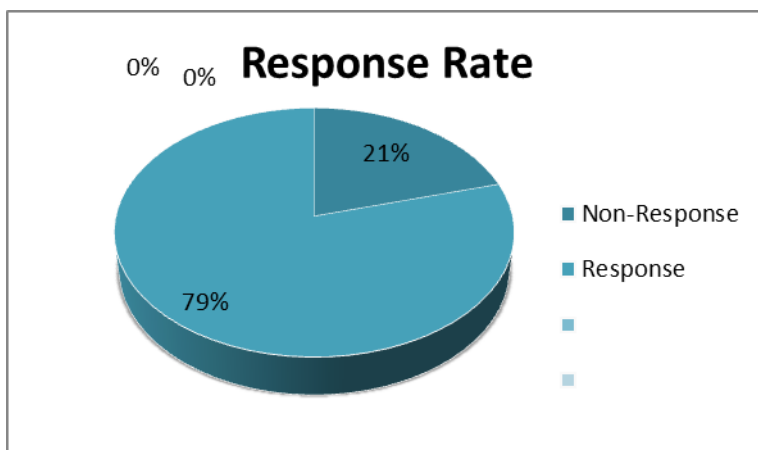


Figure 4.1 Surveys Overview

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

The results from this section are used to discuss responses to the other research questions. This section presents the demographic profile of the respondents. The demographics include gender, marital status, age category, educational qualifications. Perez and Liberman (2010) looked at social and demographic changes to explain why organisations are becoming more

conducive to romantic and sexual encounters in the workplace. The composition of the labour force has changed over the past few decades in the United States (US) in terms of the ratios between men and women. Perez and Liberman (2010) project that between 2006 and 2016 there will be an increase to 49 % of women in the workforce, and from this 39 % of the women would be in management and professional positions (Perez & Liberman, 2010).

4.2.1 GENDER

This section reflects the responses of males and females. It is important to note that more males responded to this study than females. It is noted that the total number of male respondents was 43 compared to 26 females (see Figure 4.2). It can be seen that 62,32% of the study respondents were males, and 37.68% were females.

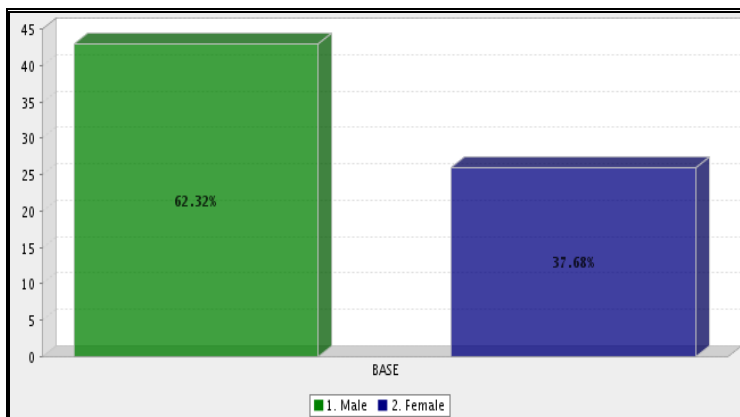


Figure 4.2 Genders of Respondents.

4.2.2 MARITAL STATUS

The marital status of respondents was important to this study. The results of the study show that 44 respondents were married, 19 were single, and there were five divorcees and one widow. Figure 4.3 presents the results in percentages, it shows that 63.77% of the study respondents were married, while 7.25% were divorced, 27.54% were single and one % was widow.

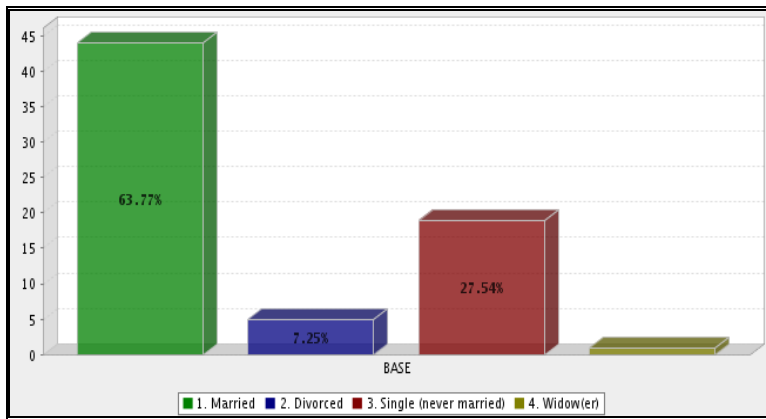


Figure 4.3 Marital Statuses of Respondents.

4.2.3 AGE CATEGORY

In this category, the age group of the respondents is presented. A total of 36 respondents were between the ages 30-39 and these were the majority. A further 23 were between the ages of 40 and 49, seven were between the ages of 21 and 29 and three were over 50. This is represented in percentages, it has been established that 52.94% of the respondents were between the ages of 30 and 39, 32.35% were aged between 40 and 49, and 7% between 20 and 29 while 3% were over 50 years. Figure 4. 4 show the representation on the age category.

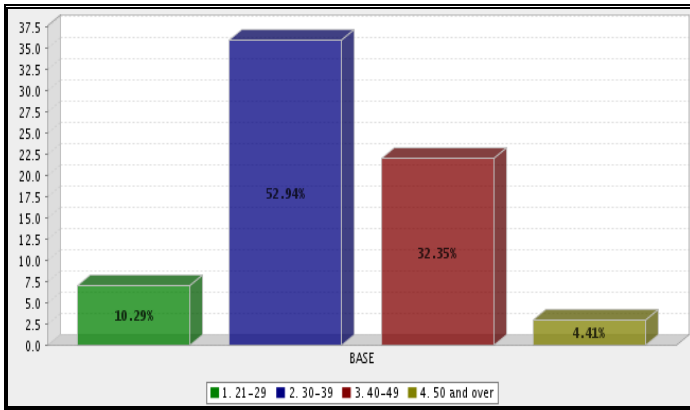


Figure 4.4 Age category of respondents.

4.2.4 EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION

In this study, it was important to ascertain the level of education of respondents. The educational level of the participants varied widely. From the results it is shown that 60 participants (86.96%) have degrees or diplomas, 1.45% have matric, 1.45% have high school education 10.14% have other educational qualifications. As much as all MBA students are expected to positions a degree and any formal qualification, it is noted that students are accepted in the course for the years of experienced obtained in industry and position held. It clearly shows that the majority of respondents have some form of post matric qualification. The Figure 4.5 below produces the results of this analysis in a graphic format.

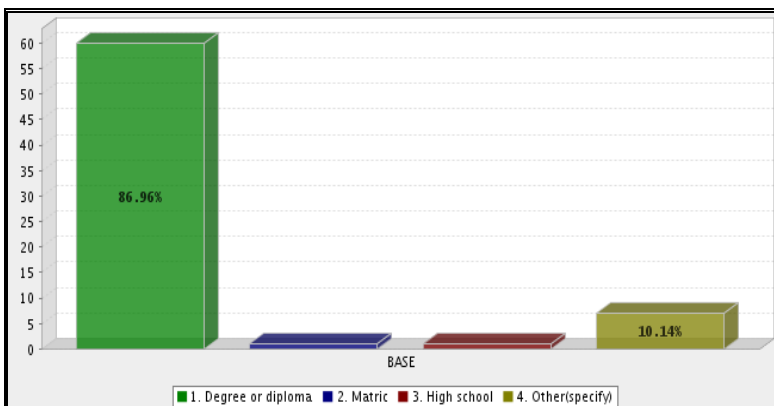


Figure 4.5 Educational qualifications of respondents.

4.3 ROMANCE IN THE WORKPLACE

In this section the responses on romance in the workplace are analyzed. Eighteen questions were included in the questionnaire which addressed the objectives of the study. In Chapter one it has been mentioned that the aim of the study is to explore the extent to which workplace romance influences performance, and to establish if differences in the perceptions of workplace romance vary according to demographics, level of education and positions. It is also hoped identify pitfalls associated with workplace romance and finally to explore the perceived influences surrounding relationships between superior and subordinates. The results of all these factors are discussed in this section.

4.3.1 IS WORKPLACE ROMANCE ACCEPTABLE?

The results shown in Figure 4.6 below illustrate that 20% (13 respondents) believed that workplace romance is acceptable. While 15% (10 respondents) were neutral, 37% (25 respondents) disagreed with the above statement and 25% (17 respondents) felt strongly that it is unacceptable to have relationship with your co-workers. Only 3% (two respondents) felt that romance in the workplace is acceptable.

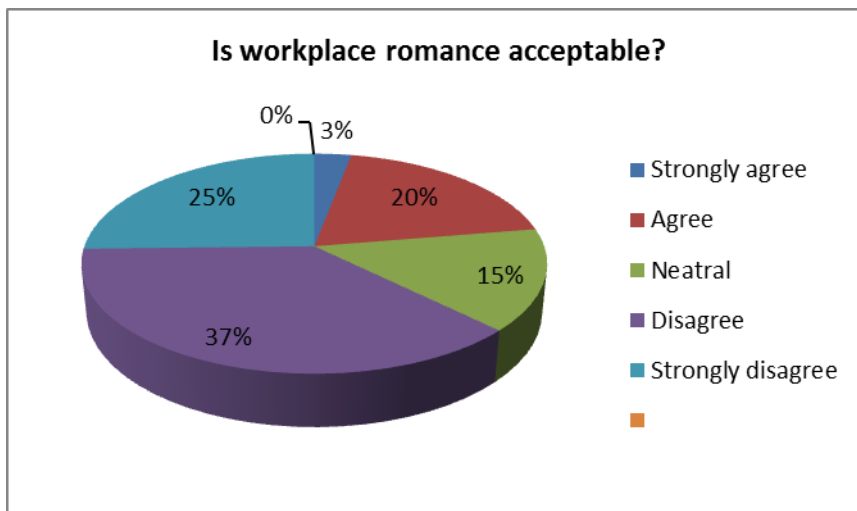


Figure 4.6 Is workplace romance acceptable?

4.3.2 I ENCOURAGE WORKPLACE ROMANCE

The results shown in Figure 4.7 below show those respondents disagreed with encouraging workplace romance. A total number of 45% or 31 respondents disagreed, while 33% or 23 respondents strongly disagreed with encouraging romance in the workplace, 12% or eight respondents were neutral, 6% or four respondents agreed and 4% or three respondents strongly agreed. The results are a clear indication that the majority of the population disagree with encouraging workplace romance.

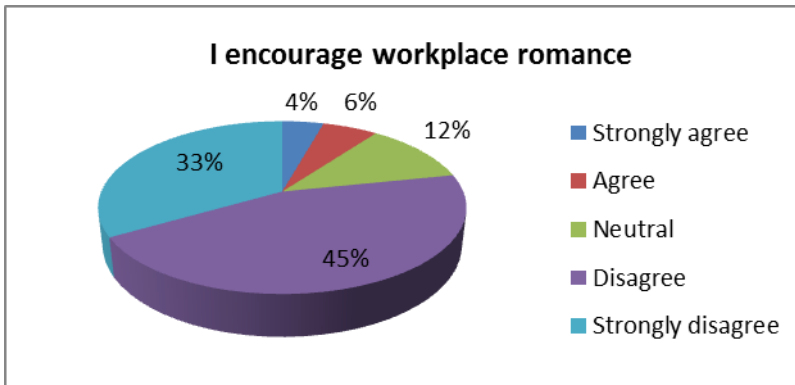


Figure 4.7 I encourage workplace romance.

4.3.3 I CONSIDER WORKPLACE ROMANCE AS AN ABUSE OF POWER BY SUPERIORS

The statistical analysis shows that 32% (22 respondents) agreed that it is an abuse of power from superior, while 14 % (10 respondents) strongly agreed, 26% (18 respondents) disagreed that it is abuse of power from superiors; while 16% (11 respondents) were neutral and 12% (eight respondents) strongly disagreed with the above statement.

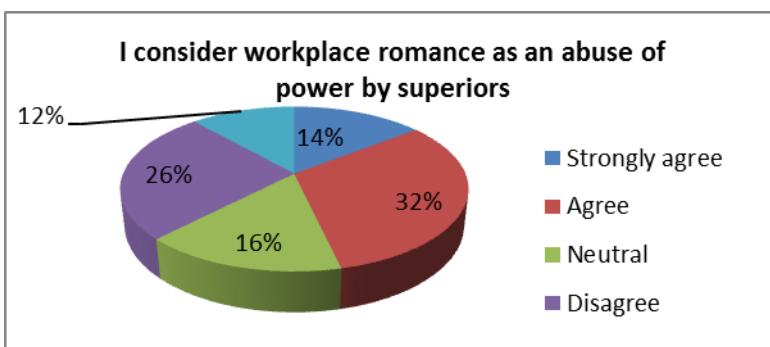


Figure 4.8 I consider workplace romance as an abuse of power by superiors.

4.3.4 OLDER MANAGERS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUNGER EMPLOYEES

The results from this study show that 26.00% or 18 respondents agreed, 26.00% or 18 respondents also disagreed with the above statement, 25% or 17 respondents were neutral. Only 16% or 11 respondents strongly agreed and 7 % or five respondents strongly disagreed that older managers take advantage of younger employees.

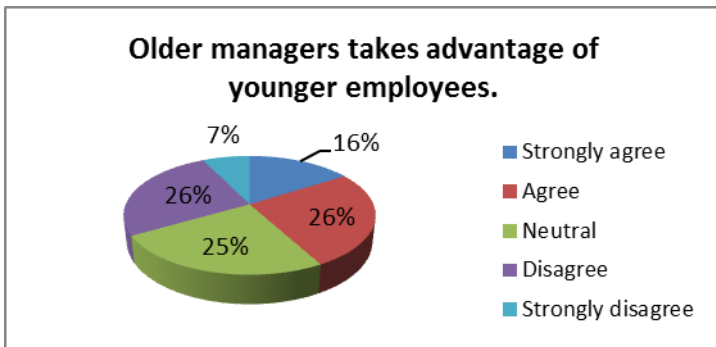


Figure 4.9 Older managers takes advantage of younger employees.

4.3.5 WORKPLACE ROMANCE MAKES THE ATMOSPHERE PLEASANT AT WORK

Figure 4.10 shows that 43% (29 respondents) disagreed that workplace romance makes the atmosphere pleasant in the working environment while 32% (22 respondents) strongly disagreed, 18% (13 respondents) were neutral, 4% (3 respondents) agreed and 3% (2 respondents) strongly agreed.

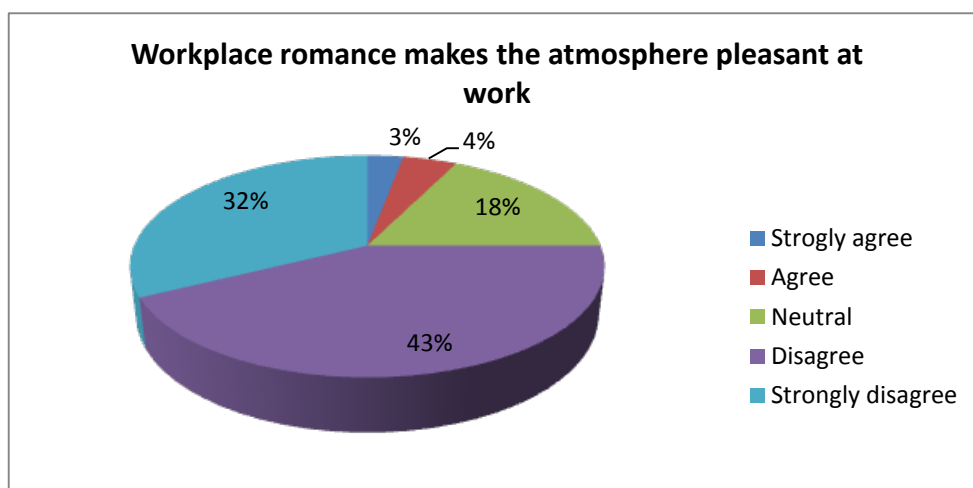


Figure 4.10 Workplace romance makes the atmosphere pleasant at work.

4.3.6 WORKPLACE ROMANCE ENCOURAGES BAD BEHAVIOUR

The results shown in Figure 4.11 confirm that 39.13% (27 respondents) agreed that it promotes bad behaviour, 21.74% (15 respondents) disagreed, while 18.84% (13 respondents) strongly agreed that it encourages bad behaviour. A further 13.04% (9 respondents) were neutral and 7% (5 respondents) strongly disagreed. Figure presents the results that more respondents agree that romance in the workplace may cause bad behaviour.

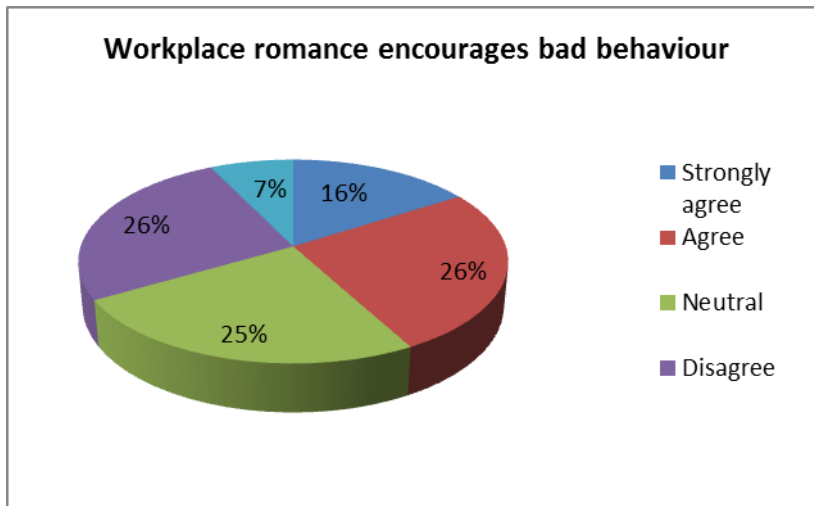


Figure 4.11 Workplace romance encourages bad behaviour.

4.3.7 WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES THE TIME EMPLOYEES SPEND SOCIALIZING

Figure 4.12 reveals that 38% (26 respondents) agreed with the above statement, 27% (18 respondents) strongly agreed, 18% (12 respondents) were neutral, 13% (9 respondents) disagreed and 4% (4 respondents) strongly disagreed that workplace romance increases the time spent by employees socializing.

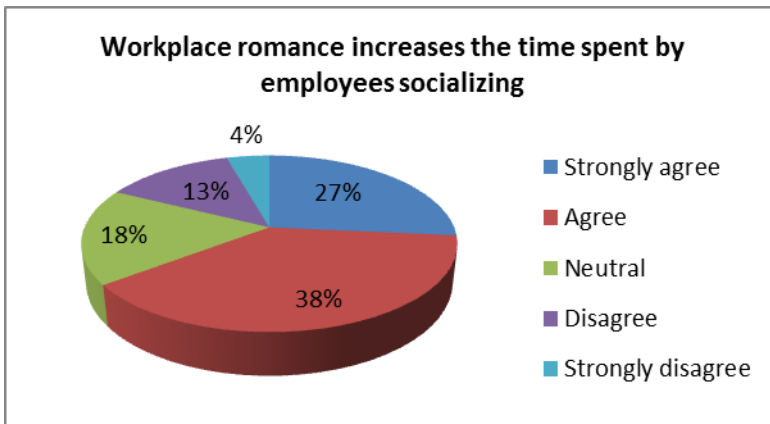


Figure 4.12 workplace romance increases the time spent by employees socializing.

4.3.8 WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES INEQUITIES AMONGST STAFF

Figure 4.13 shows that 45% (31 respondents) believed and agreed that workplace romance increases favouritism, nepotisms etc. A further 35% (24 respondents) strongly agreed that it is a problem, 9% (6 respondents) disagreed and 7% (5 respondents) were neutral. Only 4% (3 respondents) strongly disagreed with the above statement. Most of our respondents agreed that workplace romance increases inequities amongst employees.

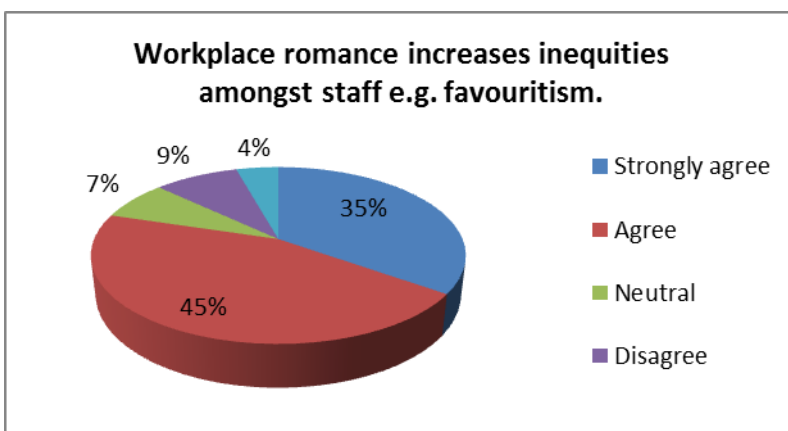


Figure 4.13 Workplace romance increases inequities amongst staff, e.g. favouritism.

4.3.9 WORKPLACE ROMANCE REDUCES COMPLIANCE WITH OFFICE ROUTINES BY THE EMPLOYEES INVOLVED

It has been established from the research that 49% or 34 respondents agreed that involved employees forget the office routine and concentrated on their relationship. Further 20% or 14 respondents strongly agreed with the above statement, 13% or nine respondents disagreed while 13% or nine respondents were neutral and 5% or three respondents strongly disagreed with the above statement (Figure 4.14).

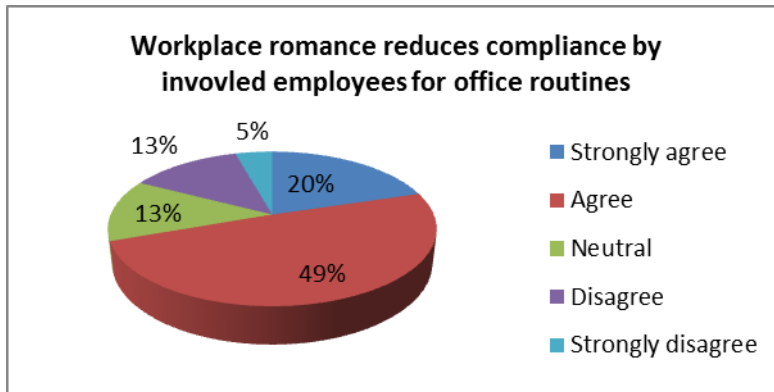


Figure 4.14 Workplace romance reduces compliance with office routines by involved employees.

4.3.10 WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES SECRETIVE BEHAVIOUR BY EMPLOYEES

According to the survey conducted, 63% (43 respondents) from the population felt that romance in the workplace increases secretive behaviour, 18% (12 respondents) strongly agreed with the statement, 10% (7 respondents) felt neutral, 5% (3 respondents) disagreed and a further 4% (4 respondents) strongly disagreed . This concludes that employees are uncomfortable when there is an element of romance within the working environment (Figure 4.15).

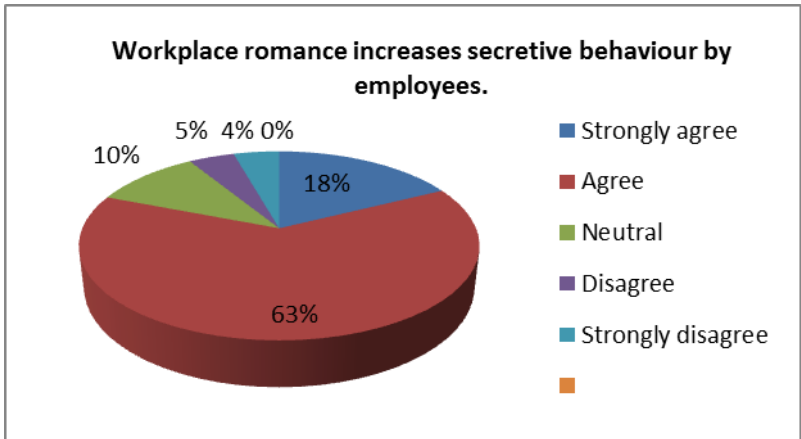


Figure 4.15 Workplace romances increases secretive behaviour by employees.

4.3.11 WORKPLACE ROMANCE DAMAGES THE REPUTATION OF THE LOWER LEVEL EMPLOYEES

Figure 4.16 below shows how the study population felt about the question. The majority: 34% or 25 respondents agreed with the statement, 28% or 16 respondents strongly agreed, 22% or 14 respondents were neutral and 12% or 10 respondents disagreed and 4% or 4 respondents strongly disagreed.

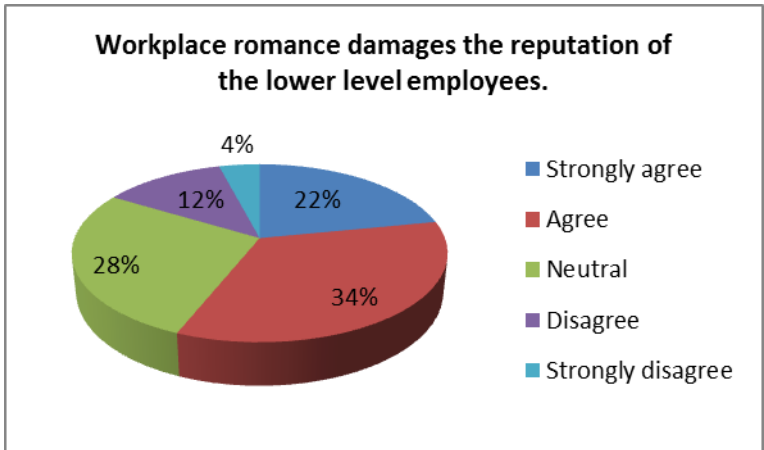


Figure 4.16 Workplace romance damages the reputation of the lower level employees.

4.3.12 WORKPLACE ROMANCE DAMAGES THE REPUTATION OF THE HIGHER LEVEL EMPLOYEES

Responses to the question revealed that 35% (24 respondents) strongly agreed that workplace romance will damage reputation of the higher level employees, 44% (30 of the population) agreed, 10% (7 respondents) were neutral about this, 7% (5 respondents) disagreed and finally 4% (3 respondents) strongly disagreed with the statement or question.

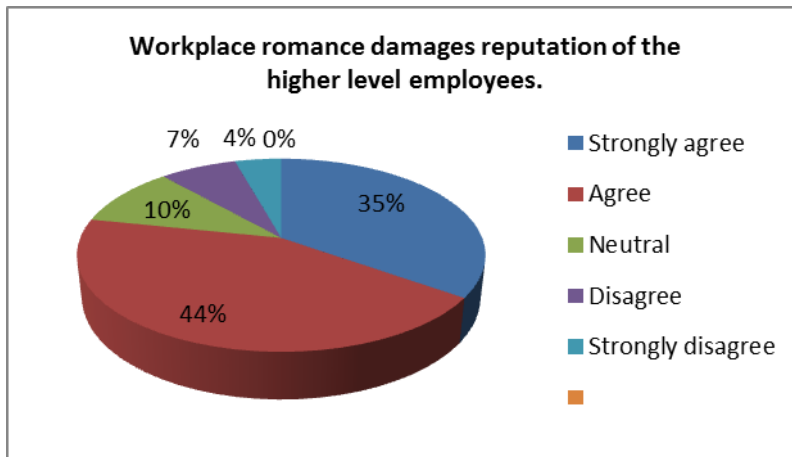


Figure 4.17 Workplace romance damages the reputation of the higher-level employees.

4.3.13 WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES PERFORMANCE OF THE INVOLVED EMPLOYEES

The findings have established that 3% (2 respondents) from the population strongly agreed that workplace romance increases performance, 12% (8 respondents) agreed with the statement, 20% (14 respondents) were neutral, 42% (29 respondents) disagreed and 23% (16 respondents) strongly disagreed. Overall, the respondents felt that romance did not increase performance as employees are more interested in the relationship than work performance (Figure 4.18).

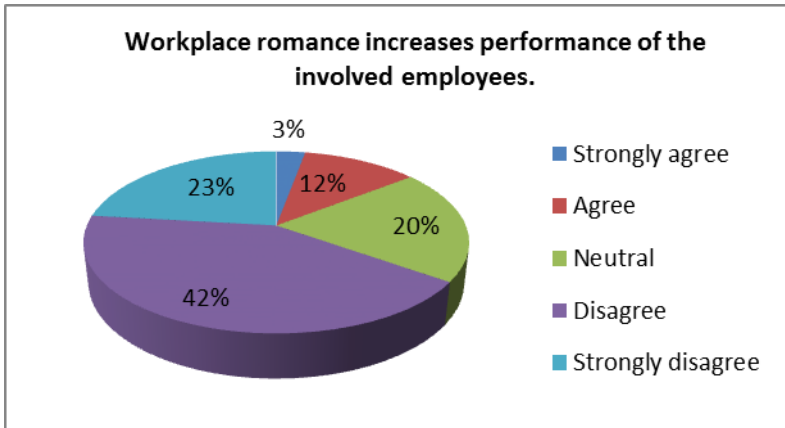


Figure 4.18 Workplace romance increases performance of the involved employees.

4.3.14 WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES THE PRODUCTIVITY LEVEL OF THOSE INVOLVED

A small number of 3 % of the study (2 respondents) strongly agreed, 9 % (6 respondents) agreed that workplace romance can increase productivity, 20 % or 14 respondents were neutral, 43% or 29 respondents disagreed that workplace romance may increase productivity while 25% or 18 respondents strongly disagreed with the statement (Figure 4.19).

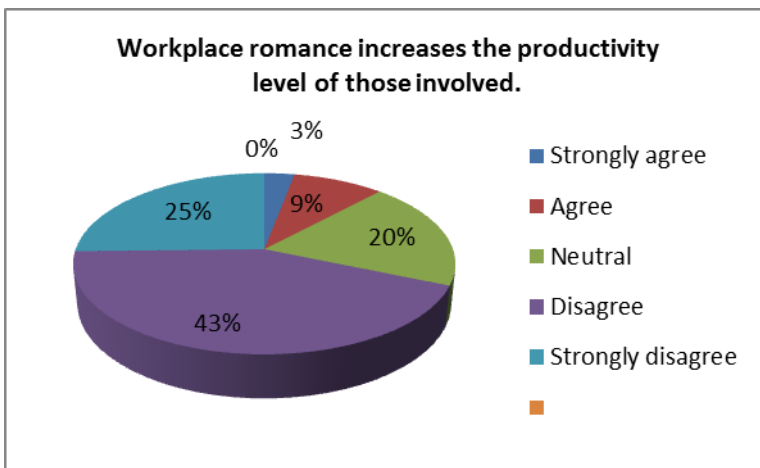


Figure 4.19 Workplace romance increases the productivity level of those involved.

4.3.15 EMPLOYEES INVOLVED IN WORKPLACE ROMANCE WITH A SUPERIOR SHOW LESS RESPECT FOR THEIR COLLEAGUES

The results from the survey as shown in Figure 4.20 show that 23% (16 respondents) strongly agreed with the statement while 36% (25 respondents) agreed that employees who are involved with their superiors shows less respect to other colleagues. The study further showed that 25% (17 of the population) is neutral, 12% (eight respondents) disagreed with the study and finally 4% (three respondents) strongly disagreed.

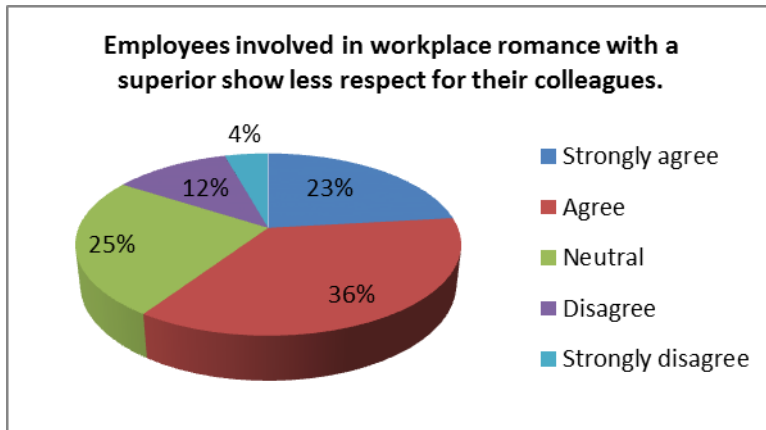


Figure 4.20 Employees involved in workplace romance with a superior show less respect for their colleagues.

4.3.16 STRESS FROM SUPERIORS INFLUENCES WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS

This study's research revealed that only 10% or 7 of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 24% or 16 respondents agreed, while 31% or 21 respondents were neutral on the subject. Further 29% or 20 respondents disagreed with the statement and 6% or five respondents strongly disagreed (Figure 4.21).

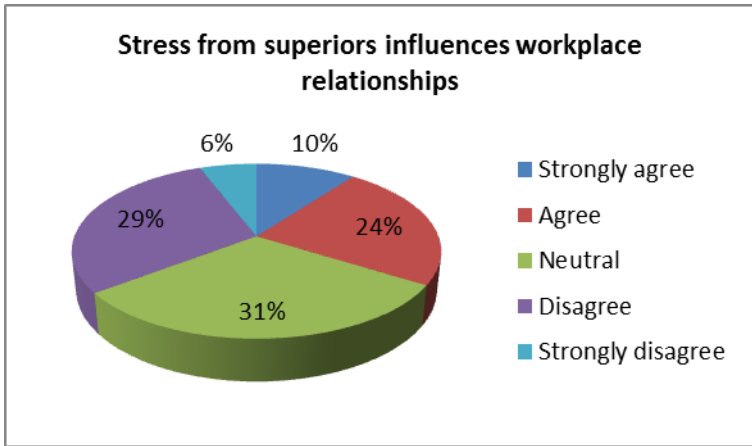


Figure 4.21 Stress from superiors influences workplace relationships.

4.3.17 SOME EMPLOYEES SEEK OUT ROMANCE TO ADVANCE THEIR POSITIONS

This survey shows that 31% or 22 of the respondents strongly agreed and believe that some employees seek out romance to advance their positions, while 53% or 36 respondents agreed with the statement. It has further revealed that 6% or four of the population was neutral towards the question. A further 6% or four respondents disagreed and only 4 % or three respondents disagreed with the study (Figure 4.22).

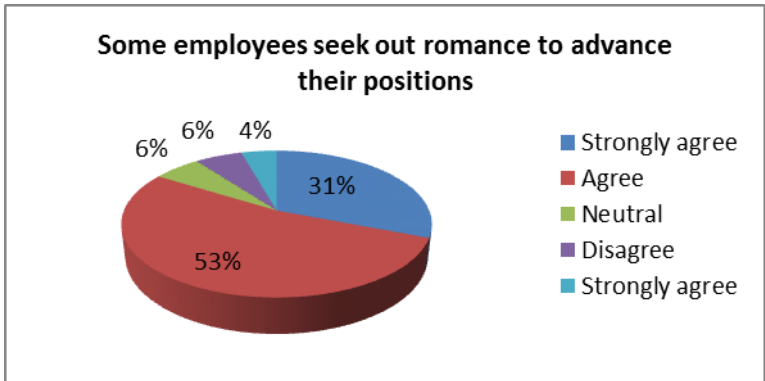


Figure 4.22 Some employees seek out romance to advance their positions.

4.3.18 SOME MANAGERS SEEK OUT ROMANCE TO MANIPULATE LOWER LEVEL EMPLOYEES

The Figure below shows that 20% or 14 of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 45% or 31 respondents agreed with the above statement. Further 15% or 10 respondents were neutral, 13% or nine respondents disagreed and 7% or five respondents strongly disagreed with the statement (Figure 4.23).

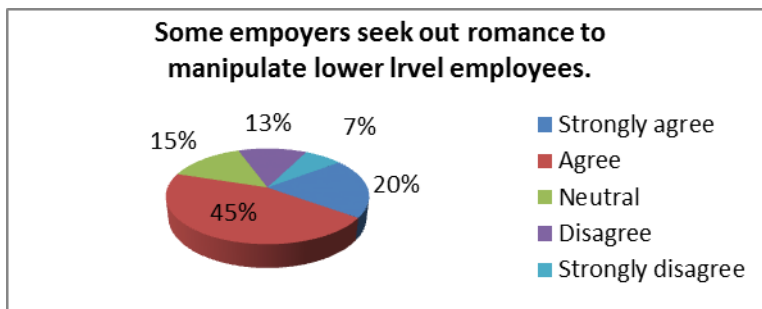


Figure 4.23 Some employers seek out romance to manipulate lower level employees.

4.3.19 EXPLAIN HOW YOU THINK WORKPLACE ROMANCE IMPACTS THE ATMOSPHERE IN THE WORKPLACE (EITHER POSITIVELY OR NEGATIVELY)

Two different views are expressed in this open-ended question. The responses could either be positive or negative. The study has shown that many respondents felt that workplace romance will have a negative impact in the organisation. Below is a summary of the comments from the respondents:

4.3.19.1 NEGATIVE IMPACT

- It creates tension amongst employees.
- It impacts negatively, as other employees are often faced with dealing with issues surrounding office romance and the resulting favouritism.
- It can lead to gossip and encourages absenteeism from the involved parties.
- The tensions in the relationship will negatively affect the work of both parties.
- It distorts objective decision making in the employee/employer relationship.

- It reduces the level of professionalism and increases instances of insubordination among staff involved in romantic relationships.
- It discourages other high performers when they receive no recognition for their hard work.
- The employee involved feels he/she has more perceived power than others.
- There is a lack of respect for a superior who engages in a relationship with employees. It also reduces the credibility of the superior at work.
- It impacts on productivity and social cohesion at work.
- People involved in the relationship do not deliver; they only socialize at the workplace.
- It shows a lack of integrity in behaviour.
- It portrays an abuse of power.
- It makes it difficult for the individuals to be trusted in a management position.
- For a junior employee it can be career limiting as other managers would be reluctant to appoint them and would not take the employee seriously.
- The superior may also not be able to be objective in decision making e.g. performance reviews, salary increases, reprimanding the junior.
- Intimacy occurring between the two may not be as discreet as it is supposed to be.

4.3.19.2 POSITIVE IMPACT

- Respondents feel that there is a positive impact on the subject.
- Those having the romance tend to work harder to reduce the focus upon them, so that no fingers can be pointed on the basis that the romance is influencing business.
- Constitutionally, nothing outlaws workplace romance, so there is no need to sulk against it or feel uncomfortable.
- I will be marrying a lady I work with. Two colleagues who met at work are recently married. Our COO and his wife work for the same company. Workplace romance has a positive impact on the atmosphere in the workplace as long as the relationships are public knowledge.
- It is okay as long as the involved parties are sensible and mature.
- It makes staff look forward to the next day if they have problems in their relationship they end up taking it to workplace.

- From my personal experience, my workplace romance has had no effect (neither positive nor negative) on my reputation or my partner's reputation.

4.4 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF ROMANCE IN THE WORKPLACE

In order to establish if differences in the perceptions of workplace romance vary according to demographics, a cumulative scale for measuring Acceptability of Romance in the Workplace was developed. Each of the eighteen acceptability questions were scored from 0 to 4, with 0 corresponding to the minimal acceptability response and 4 corresponding to the maximum acceptability response. Thus, for the question “I encourage workplace romance,” “Strongly agree” would be scored as 4 and “Strongly disagree” as 0.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

Whereas for the question “I consider workplace romance as an abuse of power by superiors,” “Strongly disagree” would be scored as 4 and “Strongly agree” as 0.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

By adding up the 18 individual question scores for each respondent an overall measure of their perceived acceptability of romance in the workplace was obtained, on a scale from 0 to 72. Internal reliability of the Acceptability of Romance in the Workplace scale was measured using Cronbach’s alpha. Since Cronbach’s alpha was estimated at 0.93, it was concluded that this scale displays a high level of internal reliability.

The Acceptability of Romance in the Workplace score was computed using this scale for the 69 respondents in the sample. Missing values were replaced with the median response for that particular individual.

4.4.1 A HISTOGRAM OF THE SCORES IS DISPLAYED.

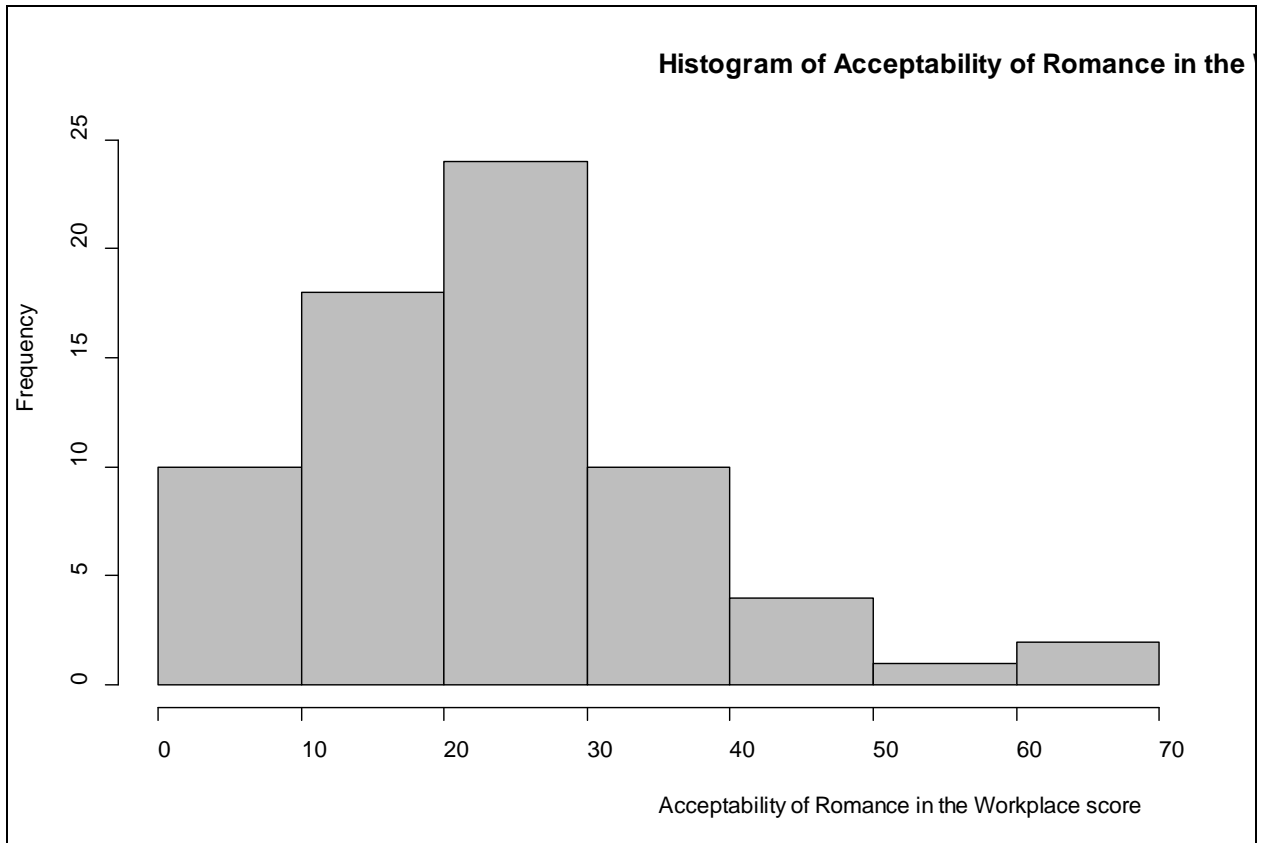


FIGURE 4.24 ACCEPTABILITY OF ROMANCE IN THE WORKPLACE

The number of respondents to the questionnaire was 69. The sample consisted of MBA students at UKZN Graduate School of Business and Leadership as well as some staff members. In order to establish if differences in the perceptions of workplace romance vary according to demographics, we first developed a cumulative scale for measuring Acceptability of Romance in the Workplace. We first score each of the eighteen acceptability questions from 0 to 4, with 0 corresponding to the minimal acceptability response and 4 corresponding to the maximal acceptability response. Thus, for the question “I encourage workplace romance,” “Strongly agree” would be scored as 4 and “Strongly disagree” as 0, whereas for the question “I consider workplace romance as an abuse of power by superiors,” “Strongly disagree” would be scored as 4 and “Strongly agree” as 0.

By adding up the 18 individual question scores for each respondent we obtain an overall measure of their perceived acceptability of romance in the workplace, on a scale from 0 to 72. Internal reliability of the Acceptability of Romance in the Workplace scale was

measured using Cronbach's alpha. Since Cronbach's alpha was estimated at 0.93, we conclude that this scale displays a high level of internal reliability.

The Acceptability of Romance in the Workplace scores was computed using this scale for the 69 respondents in the sample. Missing values were replaced with the median response for that particular individual. A histogram of the scores is displayed below.

4.4.2 NORMAL Q-Q PLOT

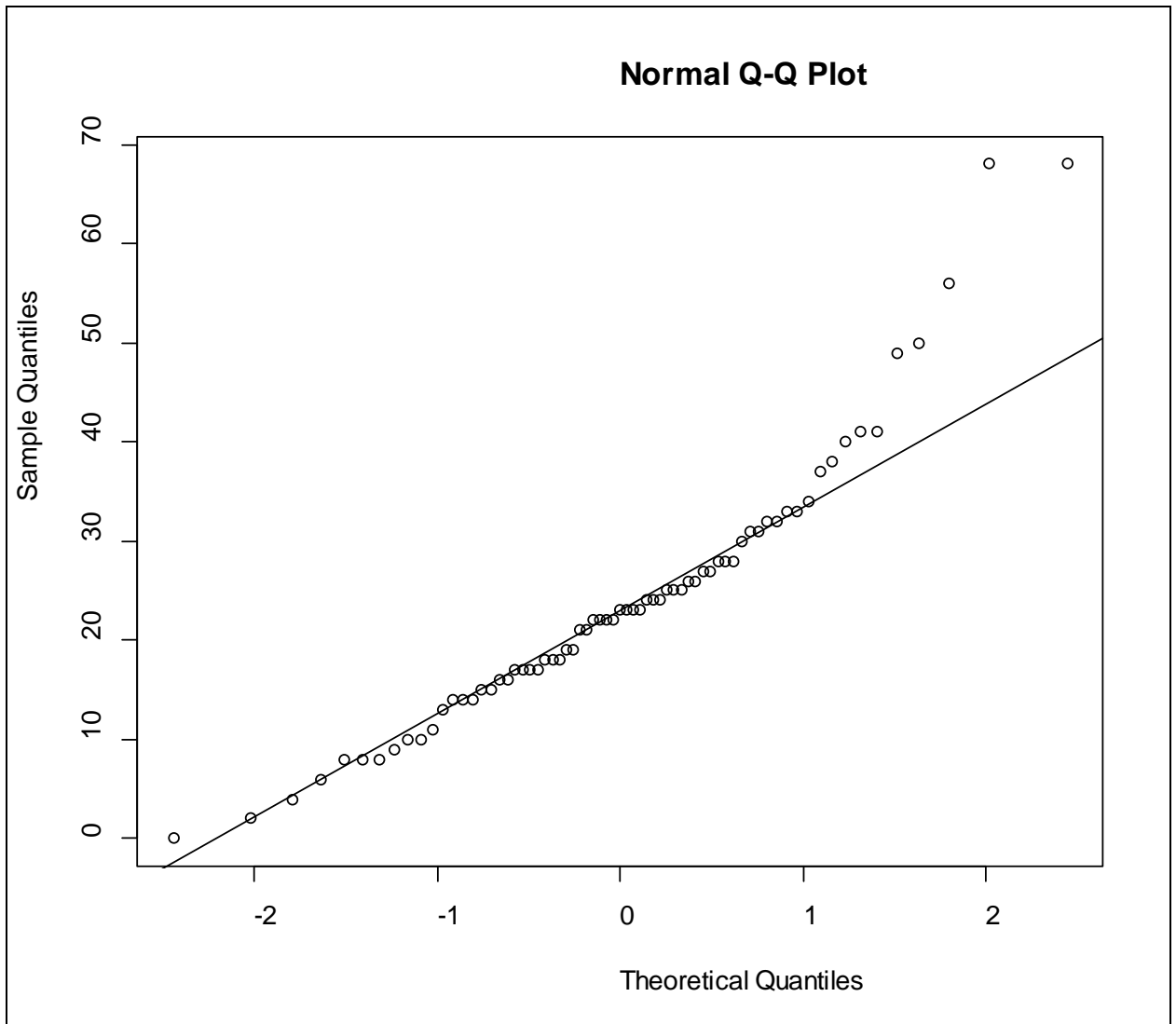


Figure 4.25 NORMAL Q-Q PLOT

The mean acceptability score was 24 and the median was 23. This average score can be interpreted as indicating moderate disapproval of romance in the workplace. The following quantile-quantile plot suggests that the data could reasonably be assumed to be normally distributed, although there are a surprising number of outliers toward the upper end of the distribution's range.

4.5 LINEAR REGRESSION MODEL

If we assume normality then we can use multiple linear regressions to analyze the relationship between the demographic variables in the questionnaire (gender, marital status, age, educational qualifications). Because there was little diversity in the marital status variable, and in order to make it ordinal rather than merely nominal, a transformation can be performed as follows: Married vs. Not Married. The “Educational Qualifications” variable was not included in the analysis because there was too little variability: 60 respondents with a degree or diploma, one each with matric and high school, and 7 in the other category which is difficult to generalize.

Least Squares estimation was used to generate a linear regression model. Coefficient estimates and associated statistics are given in the table below.

TABLE 4.5 LINEAR REGRESSIONS

	Estimate	Standard Error	t-statistic	p-value
(Intercept)	6.6790	11.2408	0.594	0.5545
Gender	-0.4687	3.5149	-0.133	0.8943
Marital Status	6.3308	3.6682	1.726	0.0892
Age Category	4.0199	2.4401	1.647	0.1044

The high p-value for gender indicates that there is no relationship between gender and perceived acceptability of romance in the workplace. The positive coefficient estimate for marital status provides some evidence that those who are married tend to be more against romance in the workplace than those who are not married. However, one should be cautious about drawing too much from this since the result is not statistically significant (p-value = 0.0892).

The positive coefficient estimate for age category provides some evidence that older people tend to be more in favour of romance in the workplace than younger people. However, this result is again not statistically significant (p-value = 0.1044).

The Multiple R-squared estimate for this linear regression model is 0.0487, which means that only about 5% of the variation in perceived acceptability of workplace romance can be explained by these independent variables (gender, marital status and age category).

4.6 CROSS-TABULATION

4.6.1 MARITAL STATUS AND WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES THE TIME EMPLOYEES SPEND SOCIALIZING

According to the cross-tabulation, it is clear that married respondents strongly agree with the statement that workplace romance increases the time spent by employees socializing. The reason we use marital status, it is because employees who single will be more interested in romance in the workplace. And will be spending more time socializing. The statement agrees with cross-tabulation married people believe that employees spend time socializing. This is one of the problems associated with workplace romance because 27.91% strongly agreed, 39.53% agreed, 11.63% were neutral, 16.28% disagreed and only 4.65% strongly disagreed. Table 4.6.1 below explains the cross-tabulation.

Table 4.6.1: Marital status and workplace romance increases the time spent by employees socializing

Cross Tabulation Frequency/%	12. [Q11] Workplace romance increases the time spent by employees socializing.						
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Row Totals
3. [Q2] Marital Status	Married	12	17	5	7	2	43
		27.91%	39.53%	11.63%	16.28%	4.65%	63.24%
	Divorced	0	3	1	0	1	5
		0%	60%	20%	0%	20%	7.35%
	Single (never married)	6	5	6	2	0	19
		31.58%	26.32%	31.58%	10.53%	0%	27.94%

	Widow(er)	0	1	0	0	0	1
		0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	1.47%
	Column Total	18	26	12	9	3	68
	Column %	26.47%	38.24%	17.65%	13.24%	4.41%	100%

4.6.2 GENDER AND WORKPLACE ROMANCE ENCOURAGES BAD BEHAVIOUR

Cross-tabulation summarizes the results of the independent variable and dependent variable. This shows that males agree that workplace romance encourages bad behaviour. Amongst the male respondents 41.86% agreed, 13.95% strongly agreed with the statement while 23.26% disagreed and 11.63% were neutral and 9.3% strongly disagreed.

Amongst the female respondents 34.62% agreed, 26.92% strongly agreed, 19, 23% disagreed, 15.38% were neutral and 3.85% strongly disagreed. This identified the problems associated with workplace romance. Table 4.6.2 below shows the cross-tabulation.

Table 4 6 2 Gender and workplace romance encourages bad behaviour

Cross Tabulation Frequency/%	11. [Q10] Workplace romance encourages bad behaviour.						
2. [Q1] Gender		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Row Totals
	Male	6	18	5	10	4	43
		13.95%	41.86%	11.63%	23.26%	9.3%	62.32%
	Female	7	9	4	5	1	26
		26.92%	34.62%	15.38%	19.23%	3.85%	37.68%
		Column Total	13	27	9	15	5

	Column %	18.84%	39.13%	13.04%	21.74%	7.25%	100%
--	-----------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	---------------	--------------	-------------

4.6.3 GENDER AND WORKPLACE ROMANCE REDUCE COMPLIANCE WITH OFFICE ROUTINES BY THE EMPLOYEES INVOLVED

One of the problems associated with romance in the workplace is compliance from involved employees. Office or company routines are important to ensure production and performance is adhered to at all times. According to cross-tabulation it is evident that males are in agreement with the statement. The results show that 46.51 % agree, while 20.93 % strongly disagree, 11.63 % are neutral, 16.28 % disagree and 4.65 % strongly disagree. Female respondents also felt that office routines are compromised when employees are involved. The statistics reveal that 19.23 % strongly agree, 53.85 % agree, 15.38 % are neutral, 7.69 % disagree and 3.85 % strongly disagree. The table 4.6.3 below represents the detailed analysis of the study.

Table 4.6.3 Gender and workplace romance reduces compliance by involved employees for the office routines

Cross Tabulation Frequency/%	14. [Q13] Workplace romance reduces compliance by involved employees for office routines, e.g. arriving late for work.						
2. [Q1] Gender		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Row Totals
	Male	9	20	5	7	2	43
		20.93%	46.51%	11.63%	16.28%	4.65%	62.32%
	Female	5	14	4	2	1	26
19.23%		53.85%	15.38%	7.69%	3.85%	37.68%	
	Column Total	14	34	9	9	3	69
	20.29%	49.28%	13.04%	13.04%	4.35%	100%	

4.6.4 AGE CATEGORY, EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND WORKPLACE ROMANCE INCREASES THE PRODUCTIVITY LEVEL OF THOSE INVOLVED

In this category, the study combined two independent variables with one dependent variable. The results are for age category and educational qualification in comparison with workplace romance increases the productivity levels of those involved. The age group between 21-29 very few who believe that workplace romance increases productivity levels 10.61 % strongly disagree, 42.86 % neutral, 14.29 % disagree and 28.57 % strongly disagree, while 30-39 age group have a fair rating, 8.82 % agree, 23.53 % neutral, 38.24 % disagree and 29.41 % strongly disagree, 40-49 age group have, 9.09 % agree, 9.09 % neutral, 59.09 % disagree and 22.73 % disagree strongly and 50 years and over, only 4.55 %.

The educational qualification also played a role when compared to workplace romance increases the productivity level of those involved. It is evident that respondents with degrees and diplomas have 3.45 % strongly agree (two respondents), 8.62 % agree, 18.97 % neutral, 43.10 % disagree and 25.86 % strongly disagree (total of 58 respondents) while respondents with Matric only was 1.49 %, high school have also 1.49 % and 10.45 % 14.29 %, 28.57 % , who are neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. This concludes that majority of the respondents do not believe that workplace romance increases productivity level and performance of those involved. Table 4.6.4 below indicates the cross-tabulation of the study.

Table 4.6.4 Age and educational qualifications and workplace romance increases the productivity level of those involved.

Cross Tabulation Frequency/%	19. [Q18] Workplace romance increases the productivity level of those involved.						
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Row Totals
4. [Q3] Age Category	21-29	1	0	3	1	2	7
		14.29%	0%	42.86%	14.29%	28.57%	10.61%
	30-39	0	3	8	13	10	34

		0%	8.82%	23.53%	38.24%	29.41%	51.52%
	40-49	0	2	2	13	5	22
		0%	9.09%	9.09%	59.09%	22.73%	33.33%
	50 and over	1	1	0	1	0	3
		33.33%	33.33%	0%	33.33%	0%	4.55%
	Column Total	2	6	13	28	17	66
	Column %	3.03%	9.09%	19.7%	42.42%	25.76%	100%
Cross Tabulation Frequency/%	19. [Q18] Workplace romance increases the productivity level of those involved.						
5. [Q4] Educational qualifications		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Row Totals
	Degree or diploma	2	5	11	25	15	58
		3.45%	8.62%	18.97%	43.1%	25.86%	86.57%
	Matric	0	0	0	1	0	1
		0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	1.49%
	High school	0	0	0	1	0	1
		0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	1.49%
	Other(specify)	0	1	2	2	2	7
		0%	14.29%	28.57%	28.57%	28.57%	10.45%
		Column Total	2	6	13	29	17
	Column	2.99%	8.96%	19.4%	43.28%	25.37%	100%

4.6.5 MARITAL STATUS, EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND WORKPLACE ROMANCE MAKES THE ATMOSPHERE PLEASANT AT WORK

The marital status and education of the respondents are an important factor in the study. The aim of the study was to explore the perceptions of relationships between superiors and subordinates. Furthermore, the study wants to establish the perceptions of different people in terms demographics, educational level and position held. To answer the objectives, we have compared marital status, educational qualification against the atmosphere caused by workplace romance. The atmosphere in the workplace is important and employees are relaxed when they have trust in management. The marital status versus workplace romance makes the atmosphere pleasant at work has the results as follows. The statistics shows that amongst married respondents 2.33% strongly agreed, 16.28% felt neutral, 46.51% disagreed and 34.88% strongly disagreed with the statement. It is also evident from the results that irrespective of education level of the respondents, there was the perception that the workplace romance does not make the workplace atmosphere pleasant.

The results reflect that amongst the respondents with diplomas and degrees 1.69% strongly agreed, 5.08% agreed 16.95% were neutral, 42.37% disagreed and 33.9% strongly disagreed, with the total of 86.76 %. At the Matric level there were only a few respondents, one respondent strongly agree with the statement. The high school level also had only one respondent who disagreed with the statement. For respondents with other qualifications, 28.57% were neutral, 42.86% disagreed and 28.57% strongly disagreed with the statement. This result indicates that whether you look at this from a marital status point of view or an educational qualification point of view, it is clear that it causes an unpleasant atmosphere to have relationship in the workplace. The results of clearly reflects unfavourable results.

Table 4.6.5 Marital status and educational qualifications and workplace romance makes the atmosphere pleasant at work.

Cross Tabulation Frequency/%	10. [Q9] Workplace romance makes the atmosphere pleasant at work.
---	---

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Row Totals	
3. [Q2] Marital Status	Married	1	0	7	20	15	43	
		2.33%	0%	16.28%	46.51%	34.88%	63.24%	
	Divorced	0	1	0	3	1	5	
		0%	20%	0%	60%	20%	7.35%	
	Single (never married)	1	2	5	5	6	19	
		5.26%	10.53%	26.32%	26.32%	31.58%	27.94%	
	Widow(er)	0	0	0	1	0	1	
		0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	1.47%	
		Column Total	2	3	12	29	22	68
		Column %	2.94%	4.41%	17.65%	42.65%	32.35%	100%
	Cross Tabulation Frequency/%	10. [Q9] Workplace romance makes the atmosphere pleasant at work.						
	5. [Q4] Educational qualifications	Degree or diploma	1	3	10	25	20	59
1.69%			5.08%	16.95%	42.37%	33.9%	86.76%	
Matric		1	0	0	0	0	1	
		100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1.47%	
High school		0	0	0	1	0	1	
		0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	1.47%	
Other(specify)		0	0	2	3	2	7	
		0%	0%	28.57%	42.86%	28.57%	10.29%	

	Column Total	2	3	12	29	22	68
	Column %	2.94%	4.41%	17.65%	42.65%	32.35%	100%

4.6 SUMMARY

This chapter presents the data obtained from the results of the questionnaire answered by MBA students. The results are presented in figures, graphs and tables. Questions are presented according to the relevant objective and displayed the percentages obtained from analysing the responses. The results from the data analyses assist the understanding of the responses and show resulting trends. Respondents answered the online questionnaire set up in QuestionPro and responses were analysed using the programme SPSS and the results are presented using percentage values.

Chapter five follows with a discussion of the findings from this chapter.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a discussion of the research findings on the study of romance in the workplace, perceptions, performance and pitfalls. It interprets and explains the findings in conjunction with literature review as well as the study objectives. No study has yet been conducted in South Africa so the literature used in the study was conducted in United States (US) and other European countries. In the literature we have found that romance in the workplace is common in countries like US and Europe.

Romance in the workplace is a sensitive subject in any organisation. All leaders are faced with the difficult problem of dealing with relationships in the workplace (Perez & Liberman, 2010). The survey revealed that employees are not comfortable with workplace relationships. They claim that they make the workplace unpleasant and may result in tension between employees and superiors. The respondents have shown that employees involved in such a relationship have less respect for other fellow colleagues and it must be discouraged within the workplace environment. Productivity and performance are compromised, which in turn affects the organisation's turnover. South Africa legislation recognizes the severity and danger of sexual harassment and prescribes serious civil sanctions for the harasser (Zalesne, 2002).

5.2 OBJECTIVES

The aims of the study were:

- To explore the extent to which workplace romance influences performance.
- To establish if differences in the perceptions of workplace romance vary according to demographics, level of education and position held.
- To identify pitfalls associated with workplace romance.
- To explore the perceived influence in the relationship between superior and subordinates.

5.2.1 TO EXPLORE THE EXTENT TO WHICH WORKPLACE ROMANCE INFLUENCES PERFORMANCE.

One of the objectives which need to be answered in this research is whether romance in the workplace increases productivity or performance. The study revealed that respondents disagree that workplace romance will increase productivity and performance.

The findings presented in chapter four shows that few respondents believe that workplace romance influences performance. Overall, respondents felt that romance in the workplace did not increase performance as employees are more interested in the relationship than work performance. Meyer (1998) argues that, if handled well, workplace romance can in fact improve the performance of the individuals involved. Romantic relationships add an enthusiasm and energy that is translated into enhanced morale, communication, creativity and even increased productivity due to improved morale.

Powell and Foley (1998) cited by Perez and Liberman, (2010) argued that workplace romance may increase productivity and the quality of work might improve. They argue that if handled well, workplace romance may enhance productivity and increase performance. They give as a reason for this, the thinking that when employees are happy, they tend to concentrate more on their performance. The same researchers Powell (1998) and Foley (1998) cited by Perez and Liberman, (2010) argue that management should not worry about workplace romance unless it has adverse impact on the productivity.

A workplace romance is unlike other work relationship, the sole purpose is to achieve productivity and meet organisational goals. The primary purpose of a romance, on the other hand, is to satisfy individual needs rather than organisational goals/needs. The question that an organisation faces is the cost of workplace romance when measured against its benefits (Powell & Foley (1998) cited by Perez & Liberman, 2010).

According to Appelbaum *et al.*, (2007), office romance has the potential to have both positive and negative effects on both the individuals involved and the organisation. In other words, it could result in either a pleasant or an unpleasant working environment. Therefore, according to Appelbaum *et al.* (2007), it is important to address the questions of what can be done by organisations to minimize the negative effects and encourage the positive effects.

Different perceptions have come up in this question. Most people felt that workplace romance makes the working environment unpleasant.

5.2.2 TO ESTABLISH IF DIFFERENCES IN THE PERCEPTIONS OF WORKPLACE ROMANCE VARY ACCORDING TO DEMOGRAPHICS, LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND POSITION HELD.

The perception of romance in the workplace differs from one respondent to the other. The study has established that the level of education is vital when it comes to workplace romance. The employees are vulnerable when it comes to the relationship with superiors. The superiors have proven to use their power to influence the workplace relationship. This also further underlies with the level of education of both superiors and employees. The lower the employee in the company ranks the vulnerable they become to romance in the workplace. The lack of understanding the employee's rights results in the employee being used for satisfaction of ego superiors.

According to Appelbaum *et.al.* (2007), office romance has the potential to have both positive and negative effects on both the individuals involved and the organisations. This will result in conflict between peers. It is argued that sexuality threatens organisational stability as it gives rise to a conflict of interest between organisational objectives and personal objectives, (Perez & Liberman, 2010).

According to Perez and Liberman, (2010), some managers have attempted to either reduce or totally eliminate sexuality in the workplace. Research shows that such a manager's attitude commonly reflects a converted image of sexuality, as an irrational, biological force that must be controlled and channelled in order for the organisation to profit and for individuals to succeed. One of the findings in open ended question, respondents argued that employees involved in a relationship will be shy to talk about their promotion, overtime and recommended performance appraisal.

5.2.3 TO IDENTIFY THE PITFALLS ASSOCIATED WITH WORKPLACE ROMANCE.

Results indicate that most respondents felt it is abuse of power from management. Perez and Liberman, (2010) argue that the concept of power is the main key variable to understanding the dynamics of workplace romance. It is important for organisations to ensure that workplace romance does not happen, as the majority of employees do not approve of them and they should be discouraged. Response from the open ended questions shows that respondents felt that this was abuse of power.

Pierce *et al.* (2000) conducted a survey with business executives in 1990s about their attitudes toward dating in the workplace. The study found that the main concerns of supervisors are favouritism and the potential breach of confidentiality. Employees spending time socializing during working hours is not acceptable in any organisations. These are the problems encountered when employees are in a relationship. It also affects productivity, which results in poor performance. A question on this issue was answered by our respondents, and their responses have shown that the above statement is true: people involved in a workplace romance are perceived to spend more time socializing instead of attending to daily duties and socialize after work or during their lunch time.

5.2.4 TO EXPLORE THE PERCEIVED INFLUENCES SURROUNDING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SUPERIORS AND SUBORDINATES.

Power is the key concept in terms of manipulating employees. This has been confirmed in number of discussions where authors have mentioned that superiors use their organisational positions to take advantage of lower level employees. Perez and Liberman (2010) found that power was the main key variable to understanding the dynamics of workplace romance. The questions expected to be answered by this research was to understand if romance in the workplace was the abuse of power from superiors.

Lower level employees are easily manipulated as they seek promotion, permanent positions and other benefits. Furthermore, Perez and Liberman (2010) argued that according to American writers workplace romance damages the reputation of the company, the lower level employees and the managers involved. . This question addresses the objective which explores the perceived influences of the relationship between superiors and subordinates. This would be in a case where a subordinate is involved in a relationship with a superior. This section looks at the vulnerability of employees, where they are looking for permanent positions, promotions and advancement in the organisations.

It has been noted that sometimes managers might use this opportunity to abuse their power by taking advantage of these vulnerable employees. Problems associated with the situation are, for example favouritism, influence in performance appraisals and the appointment of these employees in permanent positions. There is a balance in this section as superiors felt that junior employee's initiated the relationship because they were looking for promotion and security within the organisation. On the other hand, junior employees looked at this from a different approach; they felt that superiors used their power to recommend their romantic interest for promotion, better performance appraisals and better working conditions. Perez and Liberman, (2010) argue that employees refrain from engaging in a sexual relationship because of the organisational fears that productivity will decrease and that sexual harassment lawsuits may follow. Stress may cause a superior to use their power to tempt employees into a relationship with them.

Managers look at options to de-stress, they see their subordinates as a tool to satisfy the need. What happens when a manager recovers from the stress? This might cause the relationship to end which may affect productivity and claims of sexual harassment may arise. Pierce *et al.* (2000) compared peer-peer and hierarchical relationships, and found that hierarchical relationships are perceived with more negativity and inequities amongst employee. Peer-peer relationships are more acceptable amongst employees. The hierarchical relationship between a direct supervisor and his/her subordinate is viewed with more resentment than if the manager was from another division. The fear is that when business talk becomes pillow talk, professional ethics may be sacrificed and compromised. This

section answers the question about the perceived influence surrounding relationships between superior and subordinates.

5.3 SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

In South Africa, no study was sourced at the time of conducting this research that. The only study which touches on the topic is *Legal and workplace solutions to sexual harassment in South Africa* by Halfkenny (1995). Workplace romances have become more of a problem since more women have entered the workplace, not only in South Africa but also in the United States and Europe. Research is needed to look more intensively at the results of workplace romance, i.e. cost to company when the relationship dissolves and its effects in terms of production. A policy on the workplace romance in an organisation will avoid the repercussions when a relationship dissolves, making the costs of lawsuits a responsibility of the parties involved and not the company.

Employees involved in a relationship also show less respect for other employees. This affects the unity within the section/s and employee morale could also be jeopardized. Unity and respect is the main concern in any organisation, and once an employee loses respect for their superiors they tend to strike easily and pick on the mistakes all the time.

Comments from the open-ended questions revealed anger on the subject. The respondents further revealed that workplace romance may lead to unnecessary gossip, it may cause tension amongst them, and it distorts company objectives. The workplace romance often discourages high performing employees as they feel their efforts and time are not recognized. Employees feel that if their colleagues are in a relationship, then company objectives often tend to be ignored and those in the relationship rather spend time engaging in non-essential issues.

It is evident from the study that employees feel that managers and supervisors use their power to influence such behaviour. Junior employees are keen to reach the top and sometimes the only way to do so to engage with managers and superiors to pave the way. Out of desperation and because they are looking for better opportunities, employees sometimes become trapped in the situation. This study revealed that this is an abuse of power. The study also discovered that stress may cause managers to engage in workplace

relationships. The broken relationships are often the result of stress, and once the phase is over, then managers tend to behave differently, and the focus changes. This leaves the other party with emotional stress and gives other employees an opportunity to gossip. Once their rejection has been exposed, the rejected employees feel neglected and that is when a sexual harassment lawsuit seems like a good idea. The lawsuit not only affects the individuals involved, but the organisation as a whole. It leads to bad publicity, a high rate of absenteeism, staff resignations and reduced turnover.

It is also evident that some employees will seek out relationship to advance in their personal lives. If managers associate with staff on other matters other than work, they tend to be more vulnerable to employees. Management should keep a professional distance at all times. This will make it difficult for employees to identify their weakness and will increase the respect they earn from employees. It will also protect employees from being manipulated by managers. This suggests that further research is needed to discover other factors that drive people's perceptions about the acceptability of workplace romance. It would also be useful to sample a more diverse population since a sample of mostly MBA students is not likely to be representative of the whole population.

5.4 THE WORKPLACE IS A COMMON PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO MEET

Organisations are commonly known as a place where an employee spends eight hours of their time. It is the place where employees make friends and work with each other in harmony. The workplace romance may jeopardize the unity in the organisation or the division in which it occurs. It can bring out both the good and the bad in people working together. In the study, the researcher's aim was to establish whether workplace romance impacts on individuals when they work together. Furthermore, it is interesting to find out if there any personal feelings which individuals develop which may result in sexual relationships between employees. The research commented that employees should treat each other with value and dignity and should behave professionally at all times. This will reduce the sexual attraction amongst employees. A healthy workplace atmosphere is important for the good of the organisation.

5.5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ORGANISATION'S OBLIGATION TO STAKEHOLDERS

It must be emphasized that the purpose of any job is to satisfy the stakeholder's needs, wants and return on investments. It will be embarrassing for stakeholders when they discover that the organisation they have invested in is running at a loss because employees' spending more time in social networks and personal messages and the organisation has been dragged into costly sexual harassment lawsuits.

5.6 PERSONAL DISCOMFORT

Personal discomfort is another key issue highlighted in the open-ended question during the survey. When employees are involved with superiors, this may cause personal discomfort when dealing with the partner on operational issues, especially in the presence of other employees. This was noted as the most worrying element of workplace relationships. This results in low self-esteem for individuals when the relationship ends. It is important for employees to feel and work under safe working conditions, in a pleasant environment and being comfortable to perform their duties. It is important to ensure personal discomfort is not an issue in the workplace.

5.7 WORKPLACE POWER STRUGGLES

Findings have proved that abuse of power by superiors is one of the main problems when it comes to workplace romance. Managers sometimes take advantage of younger employees. To avoid this, it is important for organisations to set out behavioural rules and practical guidelines for superiors. Employees also need to feel secure that they can report any behaviour which makes them feel uncomfortable. The procedures should also indicate the consequences of not abiding by company policies. This will reduce the abuse of power when it comes to promotions, job security and taking advantage of younger employees. The concept of power is described by employees as abusive behaviour.

5.8 ETHICAL AND MORALE ISSUES

Ethics and employee morale is important in an organisation. Ethical behaviour must be part of organisational policy documents. Workplace romance may have negative effects, for

example superior-subordinate organisational morale may be adversely affected if other employees feel the supervisor is favouring the employees in the decision making process. Correcting problem behaviours by initiating procedures such as progressive discipline is the key to creating a healthy work climate. This is conducive to the formation of healthy relationships in the workplace. Employee morale is an important issue in the organisation. There must be guidelines to ensure that employee morale is not compromised in organisations.

5.9 PRODUCTIVITY

The study proved that workplace romance does not increase productivity. Production is important in any organisation and shareholders expect a good return on their investments. Employees and unions demand better working conditions, living wages and stability within the organisation. This can only be accomplished when both employer and employee work together to ensure that the production is enhanced and organisational employee targets are met. According to the study, reducing workplace relationships can achieve this.

5.10 PERFORMANCE

Performance has been raised as a concern in the findings during the survey. Employees are rated in organisations using the key performance area, which determines their salary increase and future promotions. According to the survey, employees do not feel secure when superiors and fellow employees are involved in romantic relationships. One objective of the study was to explore the extent to which workplace romance influences performance. The measure of Key Performance Areas (KPA'S) are performed by immediate supervisors in most organisations, so the need to include performance management in the work relationship policy document is vital to ensure that all employees are treated fairly and equally during process. By implementing policy and procedures around performance, this will ensure production is not jeopardized and compromised by involved employees.

5.11 STRESS

Employees and superiors are often stressed due to work pressure and higher expectations. In the study, stress has been identified as another common factor that causes and influences

workplace relationships. While it is important to de-stress with fellow workers, it is significant to use the proper tools available to destress. Some superiors use a workplace romance to destress and this may cause discomfort amongst employees. The study found that 23.53% of the respondents agreed that stress amongst superiors may influence workplace romance.

5.12 MOTIVATION

Employees are motivated through incentives, bonuses and salary increases. It has been noted during the survey that employees are keen to go the extra mile in a free and desired working environment. In the open-ended question, some respondents mentioned that employees are not recognized for their hard work and dedication in the organisation but rather credit is given to those who are romantically involved with superiors. Motivating employees will increase performance, productivity and increase organisational turnover.

5.13 SUMMARY

From the data collected, it is evident that workplace romance is not an acceptable behaviour and must be discouraged at all costs. The reasons for this attitude are that it affects productivity, poor performance, and organisational objectives are not met and employee morale is affected. Statistics revealed that productivity is raised as a concern when it comes to relationships within the organisations. Individuals involved in such relationships pay less attention to their jobs, and people use the organisation's time, equipment and tools (e.g. emails and cellphones) to satisfy their personal needs and wants. Perez and Liberman (2010) argue that organisational leaders face the complicated problem of dealing with sexual relationships in the workplace. Given the recent changes in the composition of the workforce, where more women are entering the workplace, there is a critical need for leaders to manage workplace relationships and to do so in a way that it acknowledges both individuals and organisational needs. Organisations need to set effective and realistic behaviour guidelines, so it is imperative that leaders gain a clearer understanding of the issues that surround sexuality in the workplace.

Significant findings of this study are that workplace romance should not be allowed in organisations as it makes other employees feel uncomfortable and there is a need for

organisations to develop policies to deal with the issue. Findings also proved that romance in the workplace has a negative impact on most of the respondents. It results in favouritism, nepotism and disrespect for other fellow colleagues. The following chapter is about recommending and conclusion.

CHAPTER 6 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with recommendations, and conclusions and suggestions for companies to implement to avoid romance in the workplace. This includes developing a specific policy document, making changes in the rules and outlining acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Recommendations based on the research findings in Chapter four will be presented. There will be no comparison between other South African studies as we have nothing to compare with. Studies conducted in South Africa are on sexual harassment, this is not the same as romance in the workplace.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations and suggestions will assist organisations to develop healthy working environments for their employees, middle management and top management. South African Labour Law does not cover the dissolved workplace romance apart from where there are allegations of sexual harassment. These recommendations suggest that all organisations should develop a policy on the workplace romance. This will protect not only employees, but also the organisation's reputation against publicity if there is a lawsuit.

6.2.1 DEVELOPMENT OF WORKPLACE ROMANCE POLICY

There is a need to develop workplace romance policy that will protect the organisation from negative publicity. According to Kruse and Kleiner (1999) organisations are beginning to see the value of developing a well-articulated workplace romance policy, especially when relationships occur between supervisors and subordinates. This will protect the image of the individuals involved when the relationship dissolves as well as the company reputation. From the research, the study established that organisations in other countries have seen the significance of developing the policy in relation to workplace romance. The policy will cover all aspects that might involve workplace romance. Wilson *et al.* (2003) recognize that it is the obligation of the organisation to draft rules and guidelines to maintain a workable office or workplace atmosphere, to ensure productivity, and to protect the firm from

potential legal proceedings. Possible problems that arise from workplace romance can be avoided before they even begin.

Lickey *et al.* (2009) agree in order to reduce negative outcomes of workplace romance; organisations need to establish a clear workplace romance policy. For organisations to set effective and realistic behavioural guidelines, it is imperative that leaders gain a clearer understanding of the issues that surround sexuality in the workplace (Perez & Liberman, 2010). It is important to include the workplace policy in the contract of employment or conditions of service for employees. In the event that the new applicant is hired or employed, the organisation must make the new applicants sign all contracts including that about workplace romance and work relationships. When developing policy on workplace romance it is important to ensure that employer and employee rights are protected at all times. Also note the importance of organisational reputation is also important.

The following must be included in the policy:

- It must be remembered that workplace is a common meeting place for people who eventually become romantically involved.
- Acknowledgement of organisation's obligation to stakeholders, respect needs and expectations of stakeholders.
- Identifying various types of possible workplace romance.
- Describe expected action to occur when workplace romance begins.
- Identify links to other policies.
- Emphasize the responsibility to maintain confidentiality and privacy.
- Define sexual behaviour in the workplace.
- Specify the consequences for failing to report workplace romance if this is required by the policy (Perez & Liberman, 2010).

6.2.2 STRESS MANAGEMENT

Organisation must have proper processes to assist members of staff and management who are suffering from stress. It is also noted from the research that certain superiors use junior employees to reduce their stress levels and inject some fun into their lives. This is unfair conduct from management's point and proper stress management processes must be introduced. Alternatively, the wrongdoers must be given leave to deal with stress.

6.2.3 ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Organisations are expected to set down guidelines on acceptable behaviour by employees and superiors. This will make the communication process clearer from employee to middle management and top management. This code of behaviour should be included in the organisational structures and procedures. From the research, respondents have shown that it is important to ensure acceptable behaviour in the organisations.

6.2.4 PERFORMANCES

Organisations are expected to set out performance standards and expectations to employees. This can be done by providing feedback and conducting performance appraisals that enable an individual to achieve the best results through managing employee. The implementation of performance standards may reduce the willingness of employees to engage in workplace romance.

6.2.5 PRODUCTIVITY

In the absence of workplace policy, companies may be affected by workplace relationships in terms of productivity and company profits may drop. Organisations need to adhere to policies developed in order for production to flow smoothly. As suggested previously, organisations need a policy on relationships which may affect productivity levels.

6.3 SUMMARY

Due to the sensitive nature of the subject, obtaining survey and case study data on workplace romances has not been easy task for this research. The research has been conducted on MBA students who might be biased and may therefore not give true reflection on their feelings which will affect the study's results. In South Africa, there was no other study that has been conducted on romance in the workplace, and how this affects employer/employee relationship and productivity. Rather, previous studies have focussed on sexual harassment as the core problem. In this study it has been established that the sexual harassment lawsuits are often a result of dissolved workplace relationships.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Amaral, H. 2006. Schmidt Labour Research Centre Seminar Research Series: *Workplace romance and fraternizations policies*. Available from:

http://www.uri.edu/research/lrc/research/papers/Amaral_Fraternization.pdf

(Accessed: 05/08/2011).

Anderson, C.J. & Fisher, C. 1991. Male-female relationships in the workplace: perceived motivations in office romance, *Sex Roles*, Vol 25: Nos 3-4 (163-180). Available from:

www.springerlink.com

(Accessed 05/8/2011).

Appelbaum, S. H., Klenin, J., Marinescu, A. & Bytautas, J. 2007. Fatal attraction: the (mis) management of workplace romance. *International Journal of Business Research*. 4: 1-8.

Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. 2002. *The Practice of social research*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Blumberg, B., Cooper, D. R. & Schindler, P. 2001. *Business research methods*. 10th Edition, New York: McGraw Hill.

Bryman A. & Bell E. 2007. *Business research methodology*, 2nd Edition, New York: University Press Inc.

Burn, N. & Grove, S.K. 2005, *The Practice of Nursing Research: Conduct, Critique and Utilization*, 5th Edition, St Louis: Elsevier Saunders.

Clore, G.L. & Byrne, D. 1974. *Reinforcement affect model of attraction: perspectives on interpersonal attraction*. (pp. 41-67), New York: Academic Press.

Cranny, C.J., Smith, P.C. & Stone, E.F. 1992. *Job satisfaction: how people feel about their jobs and how it affects their performance*, New York: Lexington Books.

Dillard, J.P. 1987. Close relationships at work: perceptions of the motives and performance of relational participants. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*. Vol 4:179-193.

Dillard, J.P. & Broetzmann, S.M. (1989). Romantic relationships at work: perceived changes in job-related behaviors as a function of participant's motive, partner's motive, and gender. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, Vol.19: 93-110.

Domenico, D.M. & Jones, K.H. 2006. Career aspirations of women in the 20th Century. *Journal of Career and Technical Education*, Vol 22(2).

Farrar, T. 2012. Statistical consultant: M.Math in Statistics, University of Waterloo (Canada).

Gurchiek, K, 2006. Most organizations lack policy on office romance. *Society for Human Resource Management*. Available from:

http://www.shrm.org/hrnews_published/archives/CMS_015775.

(Accessed 05/8/2011).

Halfkenny, P. 1995. Legal and workplace solutions to sexual harassment in South Africa: lessons from other countries, Part 1. *Industrial Law Journal*. Vol 16:

Hurley, E.A. & Fagenson-Eland, E. A. 1996. *Challenges in cross-gender mentoring relationships: psychological intimacy, myths, rumours, innuendoes and sexual harassment*. Leadership and organisation development, Journal 17/3 pp 4249: MCB University Press.

Kreitner, R. & Kinicki, A. 2008. *Organisational Behaviour*. 8th Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill International Edition.

Kruse, D.R. & Kleiner, B.H. 1999. Office romance in organisations. *Equal Opportunities International*. Vol 18, No 2- 4 pp. 30-32.

Leedy, P.D. & Ormrod, J.E. 2001. *Practical research, planning and design*. 7th Edition. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.

Lickey, N.C., Berry, G.R. & Whelan-Berry, K.S. 2009. Responding to workplace romance: a proactive and pragmatic approach. *The Journal of Business Inquiry*, Vol 8:1 Available from: [http://www.uvu.edu/woodbury/jbi/volume 8](http://www.uvu.edu/woodbury/jbi/volume%208). (Accessed 29 /06/ 2012).

Mainiero, L.A. 1995. Sexual attraction in the workplace in often counterproductive. In J. S. Petrikin (Ed) *Male/Female Roles: Opposing Viewpoints*, San Diego: Greenhaven Press.

Malhotra N. 1999. *Marketing research: an applied orientation*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.

Meyer, H.R. 1998. When Cupid aims at the workplace. *Nation's Business*, Vol 86 (7):57-59.

Naylor, N. & O'Sullivan, M. 2010. Sexual harassment and the amended code of good practice on the handling of sexual harassment in South Africa, *Women's Legal Centre, Australian Government, Printing Concept*.

Page, C. & Meyer, D. 2000. *Applied research design for business and management*. Sydney: McGraw-Hill.

Parks, M. 2006. (Survey Research Specialist). 2006 Workplace romance poll findings. *Society for Human Resource Management and Career Journal.com*. SHRM Research Department. Available from: www.shrm.org/research. (Accessed 29/6/2012).

Pierce, C.A., Aguinis, H. & Adams, S.K.R. 2000. Effects of dissolved workplace romance and rater characteristics on responses to a sexual harassment accusations. *The Academy of Management Journal*: pp. 869-880. Available from: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1556415>. (Accessed 29 /6/ 2012).

Pierce, C.A., Aguinis, H. & Adams, S.R.K. 2000. Effects of a dissolved workplace romance and rater characteristics on responses to a sexual harassment accusation. *The Academy of Management Journal*. Vol 43 No. 5 (Oct 2000). Available from: <http://www.jstor.org/sFigure/556415>. (Accessed 29 .06. 2012).

Pierce, C. A., Donn, B. & Herman, A., 1995. Attraction in organisations: a model of workplace romance, *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*. Vol 17, 5-32.

Perez, B. & Liberman A., 2010. Sexuality in the workplace: where does it stand? *The Health Care Manager*. April/June 2010. Vol 29(2): 98-116.

Powell, G.N. & Foley, S. 1998. Something to talk about: romantic relationships in organisational settings. *Journal of Management*, Vol 24: 421-448.

Powell, R.R. 1999. Recent trends in research: a methodological essay. *Library and Information Science*. Wayne State University. Vol 21(1):91-119.

Quinn, R.E. 1984 Attraction and harassment: *Dynamics of sexual politics in the workplace*, *Organisational Dynamics*. Elsevier Business Management. Vol 13(2): 35-46.

Schaefer, T. & Tudor, T.R. 2001. Managing workplace romance. *SAM Advanced Management Journal*. Vol 66(3):1-11.

Serakan, U. & Bougie, R. 2010. Research methods for business: a skills building approach. 5th Edition. Chichester: *Wiley and Sonstd Publication*.

South African Chamber of Business (SACOB). 1999. *The review of regulatory obstacles to developing the small business sector*. Johannesburg: SACOB.

Steingold, F.S., 2007. The employer's legal handbook. *Bureau of National Affairs*. 1988, 8th Edition, Delta Printing Solutions, INC.

Stephenson, M.B. & Burger, P.L. 1997. Eliciting women's voices: Vocational choice and educational climate for women in non-traditional occupational programs. *Journal of Vocational Education Research*. Vol 22: 153-171.

Sternberg, R.J. 1986. A triangular theory of love. *Psychological Review*. Vol 93(2), Apr 1986: 119-135.

Stoner, R., Freeman E., Gilbert (Jr), D.R. & James, A.F. 2001. Management. 6th Edition. New York, *Prentice Hall International Edition*.

Tinklin, T., Croxford, L., Ducklin, A. & Frame, B. 2005. Gender attitudes to work and family roles: The views of young people at the millennium. *Gender and Education*. Vol 17: 129-142.

Townsend, P. 1998, Sex in the workplace (management), organisational behaviour (management). *Review of Business Publishers: St John's University College of Business Administration*. Vol 19 (2): 874-888.

US Merit Systems Protection Board. 1981. *Sexual harassment in the deferral workplace: is it a problem?* Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.US Department of Labour (Accessed 06/05/2011).

Valdez, R.L. & Gutek, B.A. 1987. Family roles: a help or hindrance for working women? In B.A. Gutek and L Larwood (Eds.) *Women's career development* (pp. 157-169). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Wilson, R.J., Filosa C. & Fennel, A. 2003. Romantic relationships at work: does privacy trump the dating police? *Defense Counsel Journal*, Vol. 70, Iss.1: 78-88.

Zalesne, D. 2002. Sexual harassment law in the United States and South Africa: facilitating the transition from legal standards to social norms: *Havard Journal of Law and Gender*. Vol 25:143.

Zikmund, W.G., Babin, B.J., Carr, J.C. & Griffin, M. 2010. Business research methods. 8th Edition. City of Publication: *Nelson Education Ltd*.

Internet

Website:

<http://umdrive.memphis.edu/capierce/public/Pierce%20et%20al.%20JOB%201996.PDF>
(Accessed 06/05/2011).

Website:

http://www.uri.edu/research/lrc/research/papers/Amaral_Fraternization.pdf
(Accessed 05/08/2011).

Website:

<http://umdrive.memphis.edu/capierce/public/Pierce%20et%20al.%20JOB%201996.PDF>
(Accessed: 05/08/2011).

Website: <http://www.utexas.edu/its/rc/tutorials/stat/spss/spss1> (accessed on 29/06/2012).

Website: <http://www.spss.com/spss/> (Accessed 29/06/ 2012).

Website: http://study.itee.uq.edu.au/postgraduate/ethical_clearance.htm (Accessed on 01/07/2012).

Website: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/quantitiveresearch> (Accessed on 01/07/2012).

Website: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/statement> (Accessed on 04/07/2012).

Website: <http://www.nedlac.org.za> National Economic Development and Labour Council-NEDLAC (Accessed on 10/07/ 2012).

Website: study.itee.uq.edu.au (Accessed on 4/07/ 2012)

Website: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/statement> (Accessed on 4/07/ 2012).

Website: [http:// www.xmarks.com/site/www.okstate.edu/artsci/botany/ordinate](http://www.xmarks.com/site/www.okstate.edu/artsci/botany/ordinate). (Accessed on 4/07/ 2012).

Website: <http://nces.gov> (Accessed on 4/07/ 2012).

Website: [http://\(http://www.okstate](http://http://www.okstate). (Accessed on 4/07/ 2012).

Website: [http:// www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/reliab](http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/reliab). (Accessed on 4/07/ 2012).

Website: <http://www.sociology.about.com> (About.com.Sociology), Ashley Crossman (Accessed on 30 /09/ 2012).

Website:<http://www.passiontounderstand.blogspot.com/.../this-day-in-history-9>. (Accessed on 4/07/ 2012)

Questionnaire

1. Is workplace romance acceptable?
2. I encourage workplace romance.
3. I consider workplace romance as an abuse of power by superiors.
4. Older managers take advantage of younger employees.
5. Workplace romance makes the atmosphere pleasant at work.
6. Workplace romance encourages bad behaviour.
7. Workplace romance increases the time employees spend socializing.
8. Workplace romance increases inequities amongst staff.
9. Workplace romance reduces compliance with office routines by the employees involved.
10. Workplace romance increases secretive behaviour by employees.
11. Workplace romance damages the reputation of the lower level employees.
12. Workplace romance damages the reputation of the higher level employees.
13. Workplace romance increases performance of the involved employees.
14. Workplace romance increases the productivity level of those involved.
15. Employees involved in workplace romance with a superior show less respect for their colleagues.
16. Stress from superiors influences workplace relationships.
17. Some employees seek out romance to advance their positions.
18. Some managers seek out romance to manipulate lower level employees.
19. Explain how you think workplace romance impacts the atmosphere in the workplace (either positively or negatively).

TURNITIN REPORT

[Document Viewer](#)

Turnitin Originality Report

- Processed on: 29-Nov-2012 2:28 PM CAT
- ID: 288565757
- Word Count: 21760
- Submitted: 1

nd By Ntokoza Dlamini

Similarity Index

3%

Similarity by Source

Internet Sources: 3%
Publications: 5%
Student Papers: 0%

2% match (Internet from 4/28/12)

<http://www.appelbaumconsultants.com/articles/2007-08/FatalAttraction.pdf>

2% match (Internet from 3/9/12)

<http://www.uvu.edu/woodbury/jbi/volume8/journals/RespondingtoWorkplaceRomance.pdf>

TABLE OF CONTENTS CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION 5 1.1
INTRODUCTION 5 1.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT 5 1.3
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT-USA 6 1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY 7 1.5
THE VALUE OF THE STUDY 7 1.6 PROBLEM STATEMENT 8 1.7
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 9 1.8 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH 9 1.9
RESEARCH OBJECTIVES 10 1.10 RESEARCH QUESTIONS 10 1.11
ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS 11 1.12 REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLING 11
1.13 DATA ANALYSIS 11 1.14 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY 12 1.15
SUMMARY 12 CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW 12 2.1
INTRODUCTION 12 2.2 ROMANCE IN THE WORKPLACE 13 2.3 THE
DISTINCTION BETWEEN ROMANCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT 14
2.4 WHAT DRIVES SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS IN THE WORKPLACE? 14 2.
5 SEXUALITY AND THE ORGANISATION: INSEPARABLE LINK 15 2. 6
SEXUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE: AN ASSET OR LIABILITY? 16 2.7
FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION IN THE
WORKPLACE 17 2.8 THE EFFECT OF WORKPLACE ROMANCE 18 2.9
MINIMIZING THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF WORKPLACE ROMANCE



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

Research Office, Govan Mbeki Centre
Westville Campus
Private Bag x54001
DURBAN, 4000
Tel No: +27 31 260 8350
Fax No: +27 31 260 4609
snymanm@ukzn.ac.za

16 November 2011

Ms NE Dlamini (204519660)
Graduate School of Business

Dear Ms Dlamini

PROTOCOL REFERENCE NUMBER: HSS/1188/011M
PROJECT TITLE: Romance in the Workplace: Perceptions, Performance and Pitfalls

In response to your application dated 20 October 2011, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.
PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully



.....
Professor Steven Collings (Chair)
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

cc. Supervisor – Ms G Manlon
cc. Ms C Haddon

 1910 - 2010 
100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville