UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

ICT and Service Delivery Integration at the Thusong Centres

by

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Research Abstract

Service delivery integration, quality and satisfaction are key concepts that need not only be understood by companies, but by government too. For customers or consumers to stay loyal to a brand or company, they need to be satisfied with the product or service. Similarly to most citizens in any country their party loyalty is derived from the services rendered by the ruling party at that time. The performance of the government is continuously assessed by citizens and dissatisfaction leads to unintended strikes. South Africa is a constitutional state with rules, laws, checks and balances. Every year government spends billions of rand on providing a better life for our people. In the 2009/10 fiscal year, the budget for government spending was R773 billion. It therefore becomes very important for government to know how to measure the quality of the services they offer and assess the impact of the investment, especially infrastructure investment such as ICT. For government to stay relevant and continue to surpass the needs of its customers or citizens, it will require a framework that will reduce duplication of services, support integration of services, and improve the performance of the public service and ICT plays a vital role in achieving. The main purpose of this research is to find out how ICT can better be deployed to ensure service delivery integration; the focus of it being at the Thusong Centres. The research does not seek to assess the quality of service offered, but aims to assess whether government can achieve service delivery integration through ICT.

Key words – ICT, Integration; Collaboration, Thusong Centres, SERVPAL, SERVQUAL

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DFID – Department for International Development

DoC – Department of Communications

GP – Gauteng Province

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

IT - Information Technology

MPCC – Multi-purpose community centre

NW – North West

NC – Northern Cape Provinces

SAPO – South African Post Office

SERVQUAL – Service Quality Framework

SERVPAL – Service Personal Values

SOE - State Owned Entities

SSA – Social State Administration

UNDP - United Nations Development Programme

R & D – Research and Development

TSCs - Thusong Service Centres

1. Chapter 1: Background and Introduction to the Study

1.1. Background

In May 2004, Mbeki, announced in his State of the Nation Address that by 2014, every municipality would have a multi-purpose community centre (MPCC). In 2006, a business plan for the Thusong Service Centres was approved by the Cabinet. The emphasis of these centres was on providing certain government services, such as identity documents, birth certificates and social grants. It was envisioned that other services, such as vocational training, skills development, literacy and computer classes, and community gardens could also be provided at, or from, such centres, with the details thereof being included in the second-generation business plan (Western Cape, 2009).

The business plan for the first-generation MPCCs stated that the goal was to "provide every South African citizen with access to information and services within five minutes of their place of residence within 10 years". The above was part of a drive, following the recommendations made by the Comtask Committee, to provide "development communication and information to the public to ensure that they become active participants in changing their lives for the better". The first-generation business plan describes the aim of an MPCC as follows: "to empower the poor and disadvantaged by means of access to information, services and resources from both governmental and nongovernmental sources, which can be used for their own development". It describes the benefits of MPCCs as follows: "communities with MPCCs will benefit materially by receiving a wide range of services that were previously difficult and/or expensive to obtain . . . a familiar feature of accessing information and services in South Africa involves the frustration of being referred from place to place and office to office when trying to access government services. This leads to an understandable despondency and a lack of confidence in the government's ability to deliver quality services. This phenomenon is exacerbated in rural areas where distances are vast and the cost of travelling to urban centres to access services is high. This places a great strain on the incomes of those citizens who can least afford it." ((Western Cape, 2009).

The main rationale for the first-generation MPCCs, therefore, appears to have been to use access to information in order to drive development. As mentioned above, an additional emphasis on providing certain government services was introduced in the second-generation business plan. The plan states that the central aim of the programme was to "bring government services closer to people (and especially the poor and marginalised)". This is elaborated as follows: "The Thusong Service Centre programme was initiated to . . . extend services of the Government, in an integrated manner, closer to outlying areas where people live. Primarily, the focus was on rural and under-serviced communities" (Western Cape, 2009).

1.2. Introduction

Thusong Service Centres (TSCs) were targeted by the government to serve as a conduit between the government and the communities by providing a two-way communication flow, which would help to ensure government–to–citizen interaction. Information technology becomes of particular importance in ensuring a two way communication flow, especially when information needs to be gathered, processed and assessed (Kennedy and Davis, 2006). However, the importance of information sharing is not the main issue; it is how the TSCs achieve information sharing.

The Thusong Centres had an enormous task to tackle, considering that the "government's vision for the Thusong Centres is to provide every citizen with access to information and services within their place of residence and in each local municipality by 2014 with the purpose of improving the quality of their lives through integrated service delivery" (GCIS). What adds to the enormity of the task is the fact that these centres have to create a platform that will ensure a derivation of the benefits from new opportunities afforded by IT in a country where there is a digital divide amongst the rural and urban communities.

In such an environment, coordinating government services across targeted functional departments to achieve economies of scale, in terms of learning, communicating, sharing information and expertise, and collaboratively working together to meet the demands of the dynamic and complex environment the communities live under, is crucial for survival and success.

This study was, therefore, aimed at assessing the impact of ICT on achieving service delivery integration, which is a key component that influences the interactions and practices within the public sector by means of attaining cross-functional collaboration across government departments.

1.3. Problem in context

Spending on citizen or government services continue to outperform government revenue and the economic growth. Addressing the 26th annual labour law conference, the reserve bank governor, Ms Gill Marcus, said that South Africa's economy was expected to grow by 2% in 2013, as compared with 2.5% in 2012 (Maswanganyi, 2013). The present day environment, which is marked by turmoil and turbulence, has resulted in communities and citizens becoming increasingly impatient with the government's slow progress in service delivery. Lack of, or the perception of lack of, service delivery in democratic South Africa has been characterised by mass protests, demonstrations and petitions. Many of the service delivery turn-around strategies that have been put in place are yet to produce results (Sebugwawo, 2011).

Over the years, service integration has been advocated as a feasible strategy for improving the delivery of government services and the Thusong Centres is one of the innovative solutions that government has adopted in bringing services closer to communities in an integrated manner. Globally, as per the latest available data, we find ourselves ranked as a country with one of the most unequal societies in the world (Business Monitor International, 2013). What needs to be appreciated is that although South Africa has experienced sustained positive economic growth since 1994, this has not achieved a desirable impact on poverty and service delivery.

It is generally the communities with below average income or no source of income that are the major consumers of the services offered at the Thusong Centres. For example, in addition to the issuance of birth certificates, parents need to register their children for social grants benefits and other health and social services. Although the Thusong Centres have brought these services closer to needy community members, these centres mostly operate autonomously and customers will only receive help for a single process at any one time. This requires them to continuously

return to these centres to access other services that could have been offered in a more integrated way. Offering a comprehensive service would not only benefit customers, but would also have better outcomes. There are various ways of achieving integration of services, such as ICT, continuous improvement of process, etc.

One of the key areas identified as an impediment to achieving integration, however, is the lack or poor communication between the community and the structures put in place to target service delivery, such as the Thusong Centres and local government. Poor communication of outcomes has resulted in communities becoming increasingly less tolerant of government, which has resulted in an eruption of protests in several provinces across the country. If we are to consider the far reaching social and economic implications of these mass protests, it seems that government should give greater attention to responding to people's needs and achieving service delivery integration.

The implementation of service delivery integration faces certain challenges, such as resources not being shared by different government departments, refusal to transform the status quo through implementing new ways of doing things, unnecessary debate and regular conflict, resulting in delays, budget overruns and other challenges. The potential benefits of collaboration are significant (Hansen, 2009), such as "reduced errors, defects, and waste; improved responsiveness and cycle time performance; and improved productivity and effectiveness in the use of resources" (Emery, 2009:95).

The complex challenge of delivering minimal services to ordinary citizens has resulted in the South African government urging state-owned entities to assist in creating an enabling environment that will empower the poor through enabling them to access information and services. Such access is required within their place of residence, with the main aim of ensuring improvement in their quality of integrated service delivery.

At the same time, these state owned entities are perceived to be continuously in a period of astonishing change, with a high degree of contextual uncertainty and ever-increasing competition (Henry, 2009; Mayle and Henry, 2007). When dealing with

such increasingly complex business challenges, organisational departments cannot continue to adopt the status quo by operating in silos, or by applying reductionist theories. To survive and gain citizen confidence, there is a need for organisations to adopt a systems thinking approach to achieving service delivery integration and cross-departmental collaboration, which entails the sharing of knowledge, skills, information and ideas and collaborative decision-making between various organisational departments.

For the TSCs to stay competitive and meet their mandate, they will need to access the possible benefits of effective cross-departmental collaboration, such as the development of innovative and improved cross-departmental and functional solutions to service delivery integration and the unemployment challenge; the ability to continuously anticipate and to respond swiftly to the citizens' changing needs; and the efficient and effective use of their resources. Most of the TSCs have adopted a compartmentalised structure by grouping services offered according to the service providers, for instance, the Department of Home Affairs services, the South African Police Services, the Social Development services, telecentres, and so forth. Structural mechanisms include the ways in which employees interact and interface in conducting their work; the flow of information throughout the organisation; and the coordination and control of important activities and practices (Boojihawon, 2010).

According to Burke (2009), the most fundamental aspect of organisational life is the shape of an organisation. This is because the shape of an organisation and its structure has a significant impact on the members of the organisation, on their productivity, and on the culture and the management of the organisation concerned. In addition, the manner in which an organisation is formed impacts on its capacity to compete in the industry and dictates its flexibility in times of change, as well as its ability to adapt quickly to the implementation of new technology (Burke, 2009). The above had to be considered, especially in the light of such statements as, "[i]n the era of systemic innovation, it is more important for an organisation to be cross-functionally excellent than functionally excellent". (The real power of cross-functional teams, 2011:1),

1.4. Problem review

On reflection of the problem, a number of themes emerge which may contribute towards improving cross-departmental collaboration in the Thusong Service Centres. These themes listed below are informed by the SERVQUAL model.

i.   Optimisation of the physical facilities. This theme focuses on Information Communication and Technology (ICT) and looks at how the TSCs can move beyond technology systems that are fragmented towards integrated service delivery models.

ii. Reliability. This theme looks into the ability to align service delivery models and resources with the community needs and also perform the promised service dependably and accurately through the efficient use of ICT.

iii. Responsiveness and Empathy. This theme focuses on willingness to help customers and provide prompt service. It also addresses the possibility of the TSCs using data insights to understand their customers better.

The Thusong Centres operate in a dynamic environment in which rural-dwelling people, who form South Africa's largest unemployed group, have complex and changing needs. This dynamism has resulted in demands and expectations from the ordinary citizens necessitating government, political and private organisations to look into ways of addressing such needs in an innovative, integrated, effective and *efficient* manner. Innovation without proper investment is near impossible. However, it has been observed that the majority of the Thusong Centres have a scantily scattered bundle of both tangible and intangible assets in the form of infrastructure, expertise, knowledge and skills residing in the various departments housed at the centres. Operating under such dynamic conditions, with organisations striving to achieve economies of scale and learning, collaboration is crucial for the organisations to succeed and to become responsive.

A key consideration is the operating model adopted by the Thusong Centres. The impact of the operating model cannot be overlooked because it dictates the way in which information flows between the various stakeholders who interact in the Thusong Centres, as well as the ways in which employees work together to achieve organisational goals (Boojihawon, 2010). This basically means that the model has an

impact on who liaises with whom, how and how often such liaisons take place, the nature of the interactions and the flow of information concerned.

The significant influence of ICT on integrated service delivery means that it will also have an impact on organisational leadership and culture, which Ogbonna and Harris (2002) in Boojihawon (2010:57) define as "a dynamic set of assumptions, values and artefacts whose meanings are collectively shared in a given social unit at a particular point in time".

1.5. Problem statement

The discussion relating to the problem of the context and the problem review have expressed the benefits and the importance for attaining an integrated and cross-departmental relationship within Thusong Centres because of the complex and dynamic environment in which they operate. As explained by Arlbjorn and Haug (2010:210) "there is a need for individual departments to have a more holistic perspective on the organisation, to be part of a large organisation rather than their specific department."

The strengths of the compartmentalised operating model that the Thusong Centres have adopted lie in the fact that, by grouping services according to their service providers, in-depth expertise development can be promoted and the economics of scale can be improved "by concentrating specialists in groups in a common location and sharing facilities" (Daft, Murphy and Willmott, 2010:107).

However, for effective service delivery integration to take place, there is a need for all divisions to share their knowledge and expertise, to engage in collective and coordinated efforts, and to be interdependent on one another. The negative consequences of not breaking down barriers between departments is the development of a silo mind-set, in which there is a focus on departmentalised goals rather than on the common, government-wide goal of satisfying the customer, and on the development of dominant divisional subcultures rather than on a common organisational culture. In addition, by not adequately sharing knowledge and expertise, the various divisions miss the opportunity to collectively develop innovative solutions in response to the dynamic and complex environment.

The identified problem is:

The ICT infrastructure deployed and maintained across Thusong Centres operating model is not facilitating service delivery integration nor organisational collaboration.

1.6. Research objectives

While the main objective of the study is to assess whether ICT can help in achieving service delivery integration in the Thusong Centres, further objectives have been identified as follows.

   i.   to review the current state of cross-functional collaboration within the Thusong Centres and the willingness of employees in assisting customers;

   ii.   to assess the impact of ICT on the Thusong Centres' functional structure on cross-functional collaboration;

   iii.   to assess whether ICT that is being deployed within the Thusong Centres structure promotes cross-functional collaboration and service delivery integration; and lastly

   iv.   to assess the alignment of service delivery models and resources with the community needs.

Reviewing the impact that ICT has on service delivery enhancement could motivate the government to upgrade ICT capabilities so that it could become more efficient and effective. It would also enable Thusong Centres to continuously evaluate their actions and procedures and to look for ways in which the organisation can holistically be more adaptable, cost-efficient, innovative, productive and customer- oriented.

This research will, furthermore, add to the existing body of knowledge on how the Thusong Centres can build dynamic ICT capabilities. In particular, the research will to add to the existing knowledge regarding how to achieve collaboration effectively through ICT.

1.7. Questions to be answered in the research

The researcher intends to address service delivery integration and customer satisfaction in the Thusong Centres by using the SERVQUAL model. The researcher would therefore like to answer the following questions:

i. Objective 1: Are there conflicting networks that compromise service delivery through ICT or is there an emphasis on cross-functional collaboration within the various departments resulting in a culture of information sharing?

ii. Objective 2: How can the Thusong Centres, through the ICT system, assist the government to bridge the 'digital divide' and achieve service delivery integration?

iii. Objective 3: Can the ICT which, on the one hand, enables the honing of areas of expertise, also, on the other hand, enable collaboration across various departments embodied in this organ?

iv. Objective 4: Considering the swiftness, efficiency and effectiveness with which the centres have to continuously respond to their dynamic environment, how accessible is the expertise, knowledge and skills residing in the various departments?

1.8. Delimitations of the study

With a total of 171 Thusong Centres in the country, budget constraints and limited time in which to conduct the research, it would have been impractical to conduct a census by analysing and investigating every Thusong Centre with the population of such centres spread across the country. The researcher therefore worked on the assumption that most of these centres offer similar services and therefore limited the study to only one Thusong Centre based in the North West Province. The researcher used a stratified random sample, which enabled her to include subgroup characteristics of the population in the sample (Du Plooy, 2002). Due to the time constraints imposed on the study, non-experimental research design methods of data collection (consisting of self-administered questionnaires and individual semi-structured interviews) were used to further narrow down the scope of the research.

In terms of external validity, even though it is thought highly likely that the same results would apply to similar Thusong Centres, the researcher can only confidently state the findings in relation to the identified population, which is the Bokamoso Thusong Centre in the North West Province.

Another limitation of the study was that the small sample used for the individual semi-structured interviews might have compromised the generalisation of the qualitative findings to the entire population. However, considering the aforesaid limited time constraints, the researcher opted for using a small sample for qualitative research, because doing so enabled her to conduct a rigorous exploration of the environment through soft systems methodology.

The study might have been affected by response bias during the semi-structured individual interviews. Such bias can occur when a participant chooses not to reveal an aspect that has direct bearing on the topic that the researcher wishes "*to explore because this would lead to probing questions that would intrude on sensitive information*" that they do not wish to discuss (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007:318).

The respondents might also have felt obliged to provide socially acceptable, rather than accurate, answers, which might have compromised the reliability of the study (Charlesworth et al., 2002). Such a limitation was addressed through the application of stakeholder maps and rich picture diagrams.

1.9. Disposition of the thesis

In Chapter 1, the study demonstrates the background of the research problem. The chapter sets out the situation in the form of the background of the Thusong Centres and the problems faced. It also depicts the current usage and setup of the centres, and how this can be enhanced to achieve service delivery integration. The problem of the study has been meticulously reviewed, resulting in the formulation of the problem statement, followed by the research questions. The research objectives that guide the exploratory approach are also articulated in this chapter.

Chapter 2 provides an analysis of the research problem using theoretical perspectives and management models that are relevant to the practical problem of technology and innovation.

The formulation of the research problem is followed by the literature review, which is undertaken in Chapter 3.

In Chapter 4, the research process followed is outlined. It illustrates the research methodology that was followed in diagnosing the problem and in unearthing the underlying trends and patterns in the real situation. Such trends and patterns were determined utilising data that was collected through interviews with all key stakeholders identified.

Chapter 5 provides the results of the research analyses relating to the research objectives to test whether the research results showed that the research objectives had been met, and also to assess whether the research questions had been answered.

The last chapter, Chapter 6, captures the conclusions, followed by recommendations for further research.

1.10. Importance of the study

The changing and unpredictable pressures that the Thusong Centres face from the environment make it necessary for the various service providers to collaborate and to develop dynamic cross-functional capabilities to achieve service delivery integration.

It is believed that reviewing the impact of ICT on service delivery integration would assist the government to reduce the monopoly of expertise regarding ICT resources, but would increase reliance on the plurality of interdependent institutions drawn both from within and beyond the government (Bekkers et al., 2006). The government, as the sponsor of the Thusong Centres, would also be able to continuously evaluate its actions and procedures and look for ways to make the organisation more holistic, adaptable, cost-efficient, innovative, productive and customer-oriented.

Furthermore, because other developing countries that have adopted the concept of the Thusong Centres are operating in similar environments and thus face similar problems, the research can add to the body of knowledge on how the countries concerned can better build dynamic ICT capabilities. In particular, the research will contribute knowledge on how developing countries that face increased pressure to deliver and to tackle service delivery integration can meet the expectations of their stakeholders through ICT.

2. Chapter 2: Theoretical Considerations

2.1. Introduction

This chapter is a critical reflection on the theoretical issues underlying the research problem. It presents a discussion around issues on service delivery, integration, ICT and customer satisfaction. It also aims to define concepts of relevance to the topic and aims to provide answers to the research question.

2.2. Choice of Theories

The topic is focused mainly on the impact ICT has on service integration and customer satisfaction. The research questions relate to how compartmentalisation does not contribute to achieving service delivery integration, but in fact hampers service delivery. There are many frameworks that address issues of service integration and service delivery, but the researcher has chosen to apply some of the elements of the SERVQUAL model, which is a service quality measuring tool that was developed in 1985 by the marketing research team of Parasuraman, Zeithamel, and Berry. The model measures the service gap between the customer expectations and customer experience. This is based on the assumption that customers normally compare the service experienced with the service expected and failure to meet their expectations arises in a gap. This tool has been used in a wide range of studies including fields such as health care, banking, appliance repair and many other professions.

A study undertaken by Willie Nel and Eric Haycock, (2006), cited in Van der Waldt, van Niekerk, Doyle, Knipe, and du Toit (2002), points out that the ultimate aim of any modern government is to create conditions for every stakeholder to enjoy a good quality of life. They continue further to assert that for government to be able to achieve this aim, it has to identify priorities in relationship to formulated objectives, targets, services and strategies (Nel and Haycock, 2006). The word 'service' can mean different things to different people and as a result, people become confused as to what they should expect. This is purported by Johns (1998), who argues that a service could mean a performance, an output, offering or a process. Such ambiguities can cause a misalignment between government and citizens, hence a

need for government to regularly conduct an impact assessment of services offered to communities.

Although the general environment is very dynamic and constantly changing, the way in which many government departments operate is often very static and predictable, thus making them unable to respond to any uncertainties that they encounter. This is supported by the mass protests and strikes erupting in communities, all in the name of lack of service delivery. Farnham and Horton (1996) suggest that governments should move away from the traditional form of public administration towards a new approach of "public management". This would be similar to private sector management which places more focus on business management. This view of a modernization of public management is also shared by Van der Waldt, Van Niekerk, Doyle, Knipe and Du Toit (2002), who stated that the industrial era governments are characterised by high degrees of centralization and large, rule driven administrations which cannot meet the needs and challenges of globalisation and the new information driven society.

The SERVQUAL model recommends an analysis of both the tangible and intangible components be conducted to unravel the complexity of the environment studied. Assessing a service as an output for the Thusong Centres will require one to zoom into both the tangible and intangible components deployed and used by these centres, such as physical infrastructure, ICT equipment, as well as financial and human resources. Conducting such an analysis will assist the researcher to better understand the service activities. This approach is supported by Gummeson (1994), who asserts that when conducting a service delivery assessment, the process must consider elements such as customers, technology, goods consumed, staff and the physical environment. Thus, it becomes important for government to consider physical elements of quality, such as ICT, for them to offer high quality service in an integrated manner.

Understanding and unravelling the complexity of such environments can be very challenging. However, the researcher opted to unravel the environment by depicting a rich picture of the environment. Upon completion of this picture, the researcher shared it with the community members to assess its relevance. Through the application of such tools as the rich picture by Peter Checkland, one can explore a

complex situation using soft systems analysis. Depicted in Annexure A, the use of such an analysis allows for investigating the operating environment surrounding the TSCs. Unlike the traditional management models, the rich picture model enabled the analysis of the interrelated nature of the environment explored in this thesis.

2.3.   Analysis of service integration

Service integration enables organisations to manage their services in a consistent, aligned and efficient manner. Achieving service integration improves the efficiency and quality of service offered by organisations. Service integration ensures that performance across the organisation is improved and meets the customer demands. However, service integration cannot be assessed in isolation, as it impacts on the quality of the service provided. The concept of quality has aroused considerable interest and debate in the research literature because of the difficulties in defining and measuring it. Hardie and Walsh (1994) Cited in Juran (1985:5), define quality as a "*product performance which results in customer satisfaction freedom from product deficiencies, which avoids customer dissatisfaction*", whilst Gitlow and Oppenheim, (1989) define quality as *"the extent to which the customers or users believe the product or service surpasses their needs and expectations".* The focus of this research is on service integration, not on measuring the service quality. However, it should be noted that the two terms are interrelated, which warrants a brief discussion on service quality in relation to service integration.

In order to understand the behaviours of individuals, one needs to assess their personal values as an important variable. This paper developed a scale derived from the Service Personal Values (SERVPAL) model to measure the personal values of individual community members who are associated with using the TSCs service. The researcher opted for the SERVPAL model as its three dimensions are associated service value and customer satisfaction. The three dimensions are: a) a peaceful life (SVPL); b) social recognition (SVSR); and c) social integration (SVSI).

2.4.   Analysis of service expectations

A definition that bodes well with the research is that of Lewis and Mitchell, (1990), who defines a service as "*the difference between customer expectations of service*

and perceived service. If expectations are greater than performance then perceived quality is less than satisfactory and hence customer dissatisfaction occurs".

The marketing research team of Parasuraman, Zeithamel, and Berry created a tool for measuring service quality in 1988. This tool has been used in a wide range of studies including fields such as health care, banking, appliance repair, and many other professions.

SERVQUAL is not a measurement to compare and rank separate companies, but provides a measure for managers to determine actions needed in their own services. Applying this model on the Thusong Centred helped the researcher to identify the gap between the desired levels and the actual levels of performance. The researcher understands gaps as indicators of corrective action and improvement. In government it could be the difference between desired and existing output. For example, a citizen might be expecting a two bedroomed house, but government has offered a one bedroomed house. Measuring the service offered by the Thusong Centres will allow a comparison of the before and after service and for the establishment of clear standards for service delivery. The five key dimensions of the SERVQUAL framework were used to measure the service quality offered by the Thusong Centres.
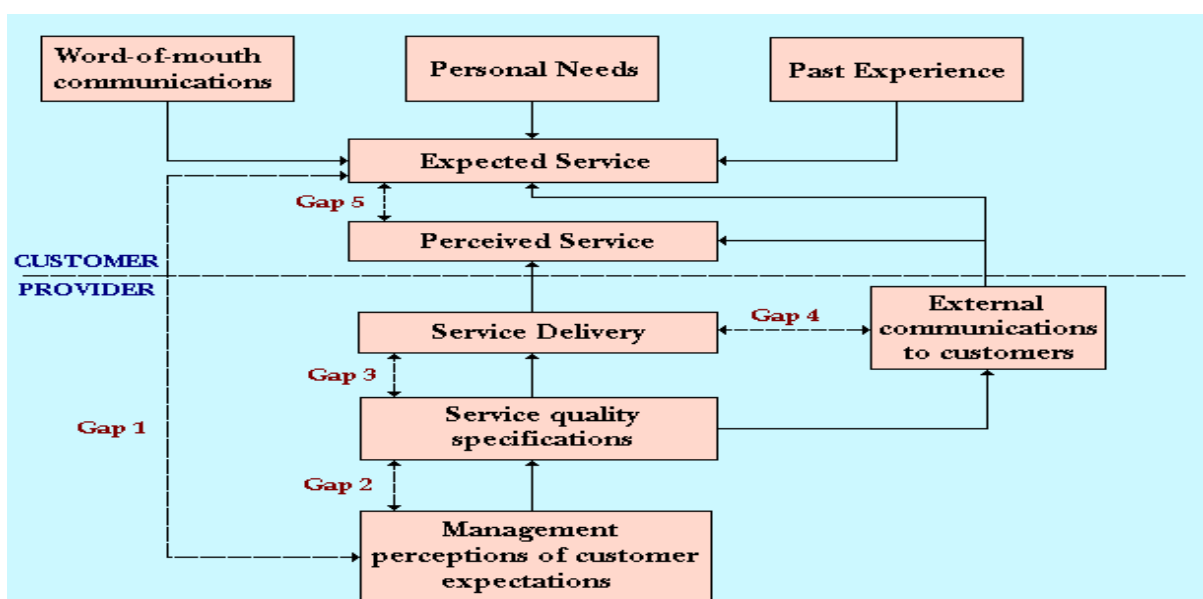
Figure.1: SERVQUAL Model (Parasuraman, Zeithamel, and Berry)

Personal Needs of the Community	
Easily and accessible services	Access to basic services
Interactive government	Access to social services

Expected Service	
A centre facilitating most government services	Consultation on key decisions

Perceived Service	
Public Participation in decision	Continous monitoring of service standards

Service Delivery	
SASSA	Identity document

Management perception	
A responsive goverment	ICT
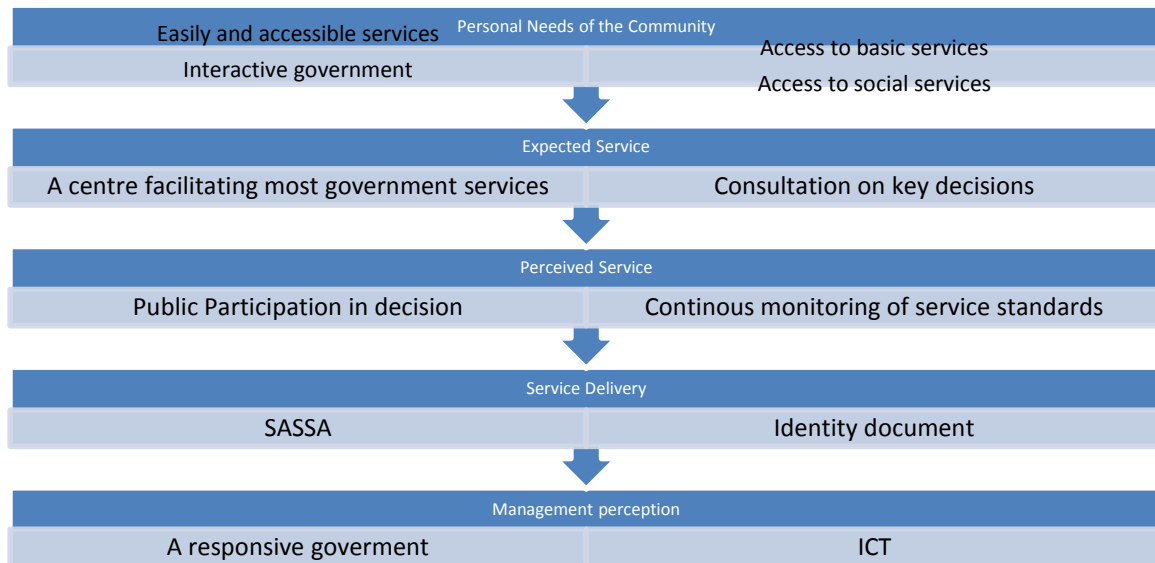
Figure 2: Model of service quality gaps (Parasuraman, Zeithamel, and Berry)

The five SERVQUAL generic dimensions have been the predominant methods used to measure consumers' perceptions of service quality. The generic dimensions as identified by Parasuraman, Zeithamel, and Berry are:-

- Tangibles, which refer to the physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel.
- Reliability, which is the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
- Responsiveness, which is willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.
- Assurance (including competence, courtesy, credibility and security), which relates to the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence.
- Empathy (including access, communication, understanding the customer), which relates to caring and individualized attention that the firm provides to its customers.

The complex and dynamic factors affecting the Thusong Centres might mean that compartmentalised capabilities are not enough to ensure responsiveness to the opportunities and threats in the internal and external environment. To accelerate the delivery of innovative, efficient and effective services in response to the current

environment, to anticipate changes in the environment, and to be flexible enough to respond to unexpected changes, there is a need to fully exploit the organisation's capabilities, skills and knowledge in the different operating clusters by forming cross-functional capabilities through complexity systems theory.

In measuring assurance and knowledge sharing, the research analysed the adopted compartmentalised setup. The roots of the compartmentalised structure adopted by the Thusong Centres can be traced back to Frederick W. Taylor's scientific management view that specialisation and the division of labour increase the quality and quantity of production. However, compartmentalised functional structures have weaknesses in that they are not effective and participative structures in terms of innovative projects and agility (Ainamo, 2007), and that they tend to have slow reactions to environmental changes that require coordination across departments (Campbell, 2009). Van Dam (2010) states that functions still dominate today's corporate structures, but that there is an increasing need to integrate across functions, because a functional structure does not fit with tomorrow's requirements of an integrated and broader view that taps hidden potentials in order to respond to a complex and dynamic environment. The open system theory also disagrees with Taylor's views and focuses on the idea of an organisation as a system that comprises differentiated interdependent parts that mobilise resources towards responding to the dynamic and complex environment (Theodoraki, 2007).

The open systems theory is supported by Cilliers (2000), who asserts that complex systems are open systems that exchange energy or information with their environment and which operate at conditions far from equilibrium. In his argument, Cilliers recognises that the identified systems are a subset of complex elements that are distributed throughout the environment in which they operate or within the system that they find themselves in, and are in themselves simple and not located at a precise place

The challenge of the current structure adopted by the Thusong Centres is that it inhibits information sharing and operates more like a closed system and, as a result, the company loses out on achieving economies of learning. A closed system structure, such as a functional structure, has limitations, such as not being adaptive

to change, interacting in a very linear way, and being unable to exchange energy with its environment.

2.5. Analysis of the organisational culture

The culture embraced by any organisation is key to measuring empathy (including access, communication and understanding the customer). Organisational culture analysis has assisted the researcher to assess the caring and individualized attention that the centres provide to their customers. Research has emphasised the importance of having an organisational culture that embraces the organisational collaboration that is required to respond to a dynamic and complex environment. Fawcett, Magnan and Fawcett (2010) indicated that a high-level collaboration capability goes beyond managing transactions for efficiency to managing relationships for creativity and continuous improvement. Thusong Centres are still fairly new and as a result, lack the rich history that is important to the behaviour of a system.

The concept of a collaborative organisational culture that breeds openness across the organisation has similarities with the theory of complexity and complex adaptive systems, which indicates that interactions amongst the inhabitants of an environment who share common values are connected through a series of networks. Such networks can, therefore, become a form of capital that enables people to work together to achieve certain goals that could not be achieved individually, or which are, at least, more difficult to achieve individually (Field, 2008). According to De Clercq, Thongpapanl and Dimov (2010), the three key dimensions of complexity theory that enhance the quality of knowledge transfer across functional departments are structural, relational and cognitive. The structural dimension refers to social ties between organisational members and internal network formations; the relational dimension takes into cognisance the relationships that are developed among individuals through their interactions, and includes such traits as trust and identification; and the cognitive dimension relates to the shared representations and interpretations, for instance shared goals, language, and meanings (De Clercq et al., 2010).

A complex system is seen and considered to be a functional whole that recognises that the parts that partake in it need to have a fixed relationship or a predetermined set of ideas. Therefore, Thusong Centres need to recognise that they are a functional whole that is made up of interdependent elements and that they can be classified as a complex system due to the independent variables that function in the environment as a system.

The ideology of complexity theory holds with the idea that organisations or operating systems are regarded as wholes and, as a result, need to be studied as such. This ideology rejects the traditional view that emphasises such techniques as reductionist theories and simplification as being inadequate in trying to understand the systems concerned. The theory strives to create a link between closed and open systems by combining the internal constraints with the creative evolution involved. This viewpoint regards a system as co-evolving together with its environment. Systems that are co-evolutionary are extremely proficient at providing functionality, as they move the design process from inside the system under consideration to the outside. Hence, it becomes possible to design the environment in terms of the constraints experienced by the customers rather than in terms of the system design itself. This allows the system to evolve a solution to suit its own needs, without an attempt at imposing one. The theory concerned would assist the researcher in predicting emergent solutions from differing configurations and constraints.

2.6. Analysis of the leadership

Achieving service delivery integration is a challenge that is mired in uncertainty and unpredictability and therefore requires dyadic leadership. The study of leadership today focuses not only on the leader, but also on the followers, the context and the culture involved. The above also includes a wider audience of participants along the entire continuum of diversity. Yukl et al. (2006) suggest that leadership can no longer be described as a characteristic that is possessed by an individual, but rather that it is a complex, shared and dyadic social dynamic,

The leadership model that is embraced by most companies has implications for how they respond to external pressures and how they survive. Naturally, this also has direct implications for the Thusong Centres and for their efforts to address the

service delivery challenges that beset a rural community. The TSCs have to consider how they can achieve service delivery integration within the growing ICT sector, which has changed how communities interact with the government. Furthermore, Mintzberg (1999), cited in Segal-Horn (2004), points out that the government structure is designed in such a manner that cross-collaboration problem-solving is inhibited, as a result of which "*knowledge-based, boundary-crossing structures [are required] to complement formal agency and program structures*" (cited in Snyder and Wenger, 2003). The researchers involved further argue that the tools that have come to be embraced in organisations, such as multi-year plans, multi-expenditure frameworks (MTEF), and others, are not easily adaptable to complex and turbulent environments. Michaels (2002) and Cilliers (2005) argue that, for any company to adapt and to operate in complex environments, the following elements should be embraced: diversity, interaction, and exchange. They conclude by saying that organisations should be viewed as units or entities within larger, complex societal systems that are able to interact amongst themselves.

2.7.　Analysis of the functional structure

The required structure with a dominant pull to collaborate corresponds closest to Mintzberg's adhocracy structural type depicted in figure 3 below (Segal-Horn, 2004). Segal-Horn (2004) explained that an adhocracy is found in a complex and dynamic environment which necessitates that experts from different specialities are blended into smoothly functioning creative teams in order to be responsive to the environment. An adhocracy enables collaboration through its many liaison devices throughout the organisation, thus distributing power throughout the organisation.

What has been established from an analysis of the Thusong Centres' leadership is that the dynamic context in which they operate necessitates cross-functional collaboration. Since an organisation depends on its structure to co-ordinate its activities, the implication of having cross-functional collaboration is that there is a need for a structure that enables flexibility and promotes the transfer of learning, knowledge, open communication and participative decision-making across the various functional units. Such a structure would assist in developing cross-functional innovative, effective and efficient organisational solutions.

Based on the discussed features of an adhocracy which support cross-functional collaboration the following questions which are all critical in assessing the Thusong Centres' structure's impact on cross-functional collaboration were generated. Does the functional structure enhance innovation and creativity in turbulent contexts by creating an environment where the experts are encouraged to interact and ideas flow freely? Are there enough liaison devices between the functional units? Are the various functional groups flexible enough to combine their knowledge and skills to excel under complex and changing conditions? Is there a need to change or adapt the existing structure in order to meet the requirements in the external environment?
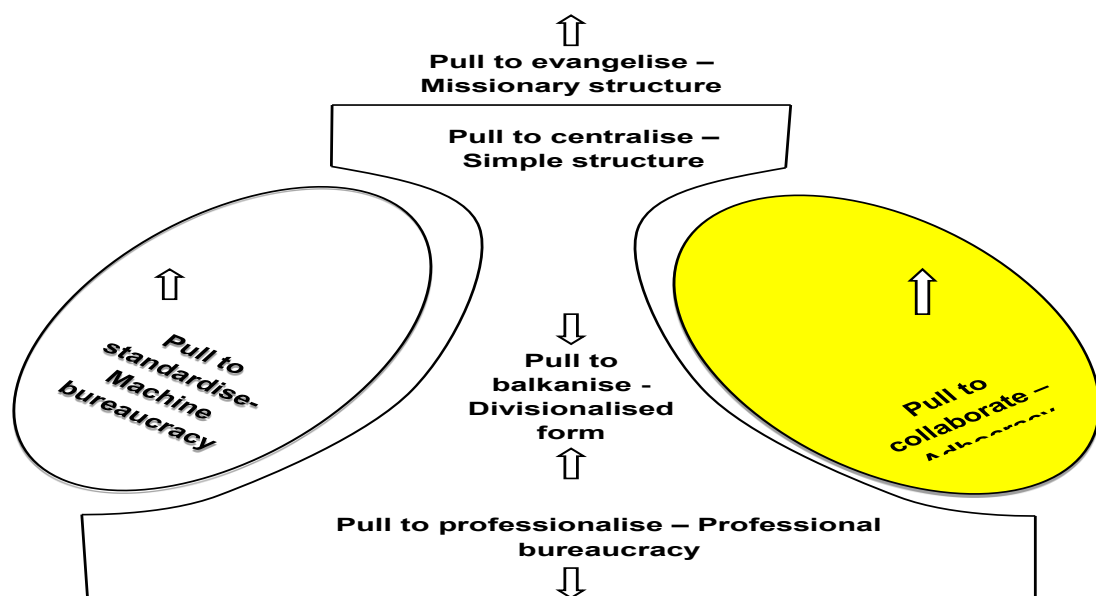
Figure.3: Six pulls on the organisation by Mintzberg's six structural types (Segal-Horn, 2004:262)

2.8. Impact assessment of organisational culture on the structure

The structure adopted by an organisation determines the employees' roles and responsibilities, their relationships and their channels of communication, thereby having an impact on the organisational culture that develops. The impact of the structure on the culture can be clearly explained by using Johnson's (1987) cultural web (cited in Segal-Horn, 2004), which is depicted in figure 4 below At the centre of the cultural web is the paradigm, which is described as a set of unconscious assumptions and beliefs that are shared by the members of an organisation. According to Segal-Horn (2004), the often confusing signals that an organisation

faces are made sense of, and are filtered through this paradigm, which also provides a range of actions and responses for the interpretation of signals (Segal-Horn, 2004).

In Johnson's (1987) model, the organisational structure is one of the six elements of the cultural web that contributes towards shaping an organisation's paradigm.

Stories

Stories told by TSC employees to one another, to outsiders, and to new recruits that highlight events and personalities who have deviated from the norm and that basically communicate what matters

Symbols

Symbolic elements, such as logos, office layout, job titles and dress codes of TSC employees

Power structures

Managerial groupings that strongly support TSC's existing core assumptions and beliefs

Routines and rituals

Established ways in which TSC employees behave towards one another, for instance how people address one another and social interactions between employees

The paradigm

A set of unconscious assumptions and beliefs that is shared by members of an organisation

Control systems

Measurements and reward systems that monitor and align activities with the organisational objectives

Organisational structure

TSC's functional structure

Figure 4: The cultural web (Johnson, 1987) of TSCs (Segal-Horn, 2004:283)

2.9. Summary

The importance of using cross-functional collaboration to develop innovative, efficient and effective programmes and services in response to the complex and dynamic factors evident in the Thusong Centres was discussed. Looking at an adhocracy, which is an organisational structure with a pull to collaborate, assisted with generating questions about whether the functional structure facilitates cross-functional collaboration. In addition, the researcher used Johnson's (1987) cultural web (cited in Segal-Horn, 2004) to describe the impact that the organisational structure has on the culture that develops. The next chapter reviews the literature that is relevant to the study.

3. Chapter 3: Literature Review

3.1. Introduction

The literature review will develop the academic case by critically reflecting on the diverse views published around the five (5) key SERVQUAL themes identified in the problem review. These themes are:

i. Optimisation of the physical facilities, with the focus on ICT equipment facilitating service delivery integration.
ii. Reliability, which focusses on the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
iii. Responsiveness, which focusses on willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.
iv. Assurance, which focusses on knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence.
v. Empathy, which focusses on caring and individualized attention that the firm provides to its customers

3.2. ICT and development

In the year 2000, the G8 leaders adopted the charter of the Global Information Society and established a public–private partnership, the Digital Opportunity Task (DOT) Force, to champion ICT globally. The above resulted in a report that put ICT at the heart of development. ICT was thus recognised as an enabler of development which could be evaluated in the context of broader development goals, rather than the traditional conception of ICT initiatives being standalone infrastructure projects. ICTs were also underlined as a major contributor to fighting poverty and to achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals. With such a high level of attention, the pursuit of ICT4D and E-government became imperative for national legitimacy in the international arena (Mansell and Wehn, 1998;). Mansell and Wehn's focus is on how ICT can be better harnessed for purposes of meeting developmental goals. They warn, however, that developing countries should guard against implementing investment strategies that are designed for the west as they may be too foreign to the nature of the countries involved and therefore result in frustration. In addition to

the above, the said researchers warn that the investments might be of little benefit to the beneficiaries, due to the absence of skills in the targeted population. They further suggest that it is vital and beneficial for poor countries to develop models for 'access' and 'information content', because the capacity to generate and share information about local resources is as important as accessing distant digital information.

Taylor (2001) claims that informatisation will, moreover, enable the renewal, at a paradigmatic level, of the theory of public administration. The new paradigm will, in coming decades, be founded upon the insights that derive from research that is centred on information and on the technologies and systems that enable collection management and communication. Snellen (1998) argues that ICTs do not cause development in public administration, but that the technological developments change the production functions within public administration. The possibilities of technology function as attractors for aspirations that are already existent in public administration, or which are aroused by them. ICT also contributes to such developments as privatisation, outsourcing, the creation of independent agencies, and the networking of policy domains. Through ICT, public administration can improve and, indeed, does try to do so, by means of controlling and steering all kinds of autonomous agencies fulfilling public tasks on a contractual basis. Autonomy can be granted because ICT assures the continuity of informational bonds. Proenza, (2002:6), cited in Adeya (2002), asserts that *"what is clear is that economy wide returns to ICTs are high; that unless the issue of poverty takes centre stage, new rich enclaves will arise and leave poverty largely untouched, and that State action can help determine the extent to which ICT benefits are broadly shared"*. Through ICT, the government can afford to provide low-cost access to governmental services, such as local investment opportunities, business ventures, community development networks and job vacancies

3.3. Dimension 1 of SERVQUAL - ICT in response to service delivery integration

Throughout the dissertation, the researcher will use the terms IT and ICT interchangeably in a relatively broad sense to refer to the use of computers. The government needs to come to terms with the fact that the information knowledge era is here to stay and to survive and, that in order to meet the demands of its citzenry, it

must embrace and stay abreast with technological challenges. There has been a continuous need for government to operate more like a business and the permanent flaws in the functioning of public administration have led to the establishment of the term 'new public management' (Bekkers et al., 2006:7). New public management incorporates some of the following key elements:

  i. a shift in value priorities away from universalism, equity, security and resilience, towards efficiency and individualism;

  ii. a shift in the focus of management systems from inputs and processes towards results and outputs;

  iii. a shift towards measurement and quantification, especially through the development of performance indicators and benchmark systems;

  iv. a preference for more specialised, lean, flat, and autonomous organisational structures;

  v. a substitution of formal, hierarchical relationships between, or within, organisations by means of contracts or contract-like relationships; and

  vi. an emphasis on service quality and on consumer orientation (Bekkers et al., 2006:7–8).

One can further deduce that it is basically true that public administration theory neglects the meaning of ICT. A broad scholarly conspiracy seems to exist that mainstream public administration theory will not be affected by the increasing dissemination of ICT in public administration, nor will public administration itself be changed, let alone transformed, by ICT (Snellen, Schilizzi, Miley, Bremer, Rottgering and van Langevelde, 1998). According to these authors, the core administration of the Thusong Centres is information acquisition, information handling, diffusion and communication. As a result, ICT should become its core technology and should become directly related to all aspects of its functioning (Snellen, 1998). Large investment into ICT becomes justified in increased potential for control in huge-scale databases; data mining; identity cards and numbers; smart cards; and the proliferation of computer matching. Through ICT, the implementation of policies and regulations can be controlled.

The telephone has, until recently, been the most popular channel of communication, but this form of technology has proven problematic, with low satisfaction rates due to

busy lines, lengthy waiting times and problems with automated systems (Papadopoulos, 2012). An ICT system, on the other hand, not only gives access to the internet, a vast source of information, but also makes it possible many other services to be accomplished through one or more of its channels. It is a fast an efficient means of communication. Evidence of the above is provided by the Service Canada operational model. According to Kanellis et al. (2012), Service Canada has been in existence for almost five years and has grown to currently include 22,000 employees at over 600 points of service throughout the country. Its 1-800-O-Canada call centre takes 55 million calls and the website receives 22 million visits annually. By streamlining their activities through the use of IT, the service achieved savings of $300 million in its first year. The saving was realised due to the consolidation of 23 call centres and due to a reduction in benefit payments that were erroneously made due to fraud (Kanellis et al., 2012). Such savings were not solely achieved by the implantation of the ITC system, but through partnerships and putting in place performance standards and league tables for all its service centres and call centres. One of the partnerships entered into was with Service Ontario, in terms of which parents registering a new-born could receive both a provincial birth certificate and a federal Social Insurance Number within two weeks of the child's birth (Kernaghan, 2008).

As much as Service Canada has made such strides in improving service delivery, challenges have still been experienced with enhancements of the online service delivery facilities involved. The Harper government's concern is that such types of services require large investments in IT systems, and the investments concerned carry the risk of cost overruns and delays, which are failures that can be embarrassing to the government involved, as well as to the ruling party and the minister responsible for provision of the service (Papadopoulos, 2012:11).

3.4. Dimension 2 of SERVQUAL - Service reliability through the organisational culture

With regard to the research that has been undertaken into the importance of having an organisational culture that will embrace the cross-departmental collaboration required to achieve service delivery integration, Fawcett, Magnan and Fawcett (2010) indicate that a high-level collaboration capability goes beyond managing

transactions for efficiency, to managing relationships for creativity and continuous improvement. According to Loveday (2009), a central factor influencing cross-departmental collaboration is having an environment of support that respects differing viewpoints, provides opportunities for collaborative activities to occur and contributes to having an open and encouraging atmosphere. Joshi and Roh (2008) and Engelen, Brettel and Wiest (2011) highlighted the need for the cultural values of collectivism and feminism that emphasise participative norms, as opposed to individualism and masculinity, which emphasise competitiveness. Employees, therefore, require a climate in which they feel psychologically safe to admit mistakes and to request assistance from fellow colleagues, thus making it easier for them to collaborate and to share what they know (Caruso and Woolley, 2008).

Cheng and Sanchez-Burks (2008) have a different view, in terms of which they encourage the development of an organisational culture that supports collaboration, and in which retaining functional identities is still key. They suggest that when functional identities are subsumed or downplayed, the unique functional expertise that each member brings to the team might become less accessible, thus defeating the original purpose of creating a cross-functional team (Cheng and Sanchez-Burks, 2008).

The concept of nurturing a collaborative organisational culture that breeds openness across the organisation has similarities with the theory of social capital. The theory of social capital indicates that people connect through a series of networks and that they tend to share common values with other members of the networks concerned. The networks involved can, therefore, become a form of capital that enables people to work together to achieve goals that could not be achieved individually, or which would be more difficult to achieve individually (Field, 2008:1). According to De Clercq, Thongpapanl and Dimov (2010), the three key dimensions of social capital that serve to enhance the quality of knowledge transfer across functional departments are structural, relational and cognitive. The structural dimension refers to social ties between organisational members and internal network formations; the relational dimension refers to personal relationships that are developed among individuals through a history of interactions, including trust, norm obligations, and identification; and the cognitive dimension is the shared representations and

interpretations, for instance shared goals, language, and meanings (De Clercq et al., 2010).

With regard to the link between organisational structure and culture, the research shows that a factor that impacts on an organisation's culture and social capital is the organisational structure. Caruso and Woolley (2008) found that the structural features in a work environment can facilitate the development of emergent interdependence, which is a culture of voluntarily wanting to share information and to work with employees across the organisation. In any organisational structure, whether it is functional, product or regional, patterns of thinking and behaviour develop and, depending on how the employees concerned are grouped, the patterns might undermine collaboration if there is minimal interaction with employees from other functional units (Glen, 2011).

Culture plays a very important role in the adoption of ICT. According to Hasan and Ditsa (1999), each and every country must have IT reforms or IT policies that recognise the culture of the country, and must ensure that the adoption of IT does not destroy the cultural heritage concerned. They claim that problems arise when there is a difference between the culture of an IT product and the culture of its users. In the public sector, IT services cover delivering citizen services, as well as services to business, industry, e-communication and document processing, in addition to empowering citizens through allowing them access to information. In South Africa, services are made available online through the Thusong Centres, or through portals that are hosted by the South African Post Office, via their public internet terminals (PITs). In such countries as Canada, services are made available through mobiles that are termed M-Government (Cilingir and Kushchu, 2004).

In developing countries, such as South Africa, public sector reforms have revolved around the drive towards better governance, which is measured in terms of efficiency, transparency and accountability (Papadopoulos and Kanellis, 2012).

3.5. Dimension 3 of SERVQUAL – Responsiveness of ICT to poverty reduction

'The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is of the view that poverty is "*not merely in the impoverished state in which the person actually lives, but also is*

the lack of real opportunity – due to social constraints as well as personal circumstances – to lead valuable and valued lives" (UNDP, 1997:15). Much research into poverty alleviation focuses on insufficient nutrition, basic needs, inadequate shelter and so on, but little has been conducted into how the lack of access to ICT can contribute to poverty and it's only recently that some researchers have started to argue that lack of access to ICTs is an element of poverty. The research that has been conducted recognises that ICT can play a pivotal role in alleviating poverty, and that such alleviation can be achieved, provided that the government can develop policies that might help in overcoming the so-called 'digital divide'. The meaning of said term has been extensively debated by the international community, along with the role of ICTs in combating poverty and in fostering sustainable development. The Oxford dictionary defines the digital divide as "*the gulf between those who have ready access to computers and the Internet, and those who do not*". Since organisational structure is closely tied to the organisational culture (Troy, Hirunyawipada and Paswan, 2008), the impact of the organisational structure on the type of culture that develops will also be analysed. The researcher's aim in analysing the organisation is to measure the responsiveness of the organisations to the community needs and also to assess the empathy level shown towards beneficiaries of the service.

3.6. Dimension 3 and 4 of SERVQUAL - Functional structure in relation to cross-functional collaboration

The importance of having an organisational structure that promotes cross-functional collaboration in today's dynamic and complex environment is emphasised by various researchers. Among these are Ramsey and Barkhuizen (2011), who indicate that to be sustainable in today's environment, an organisational design must allow an organisation to recognise, create, transform and distribute knowledge. Novakowski (2008) states that the complexities of current and future business environments call for organisational structures that provide greater flexibility, responsiveness and access to human resources that represent the multiple disciplines.

Extensive research has also been undertaken into specific features of the type of organisational structure that can facilitate cross-functional collaboration. Hirunyawipada, Beyerlein and Blankson (2009) explain that the transfer of a person's

experiences, practices, perceptions, and learning, which are jointly known as 'tacit knowledge', to a group's collective knowledge, is more likely to occur when the members concerned possess high network centrality, than with members possessing low network centrality. The former members not only have access to, and interact with, members within their functional units, but also have various interactions and relationships across functional units (Hirunyawipada et al., 2009).

Caruso and Woolley (2008) state that in order to promote and to access the benefits of collaboration, the necessary work should be designed to enable the following two types of structural interdependence: task interdependence and outcome interdependence. Task interdependence refers to *"features of the task that require multiple individuals to work together to achieve performance success"*, such as resource allocations, role definitions and task requirements (Caruso and Woolley, 2008:253). Outcome interdependence refers to *"the degree to which significant consequences of work are both shared by team members and contingent on collective performance of the tasks"* (Caruso and Woolley, 2008:253). Caruso and Woolley's (2008) findings revealed that tasks with high task and outcome interdependence facilitate collaborative patterns of work, and that any attempt to do independent work will fail because the successful completion of the task is dependent on the diverse members working together. Agreeing with Caruso and Woolley's findings, Nishii and Goncalo (2008) state that as the outcomes for one individual are influenced by the actions of others, so is information and ideas exchange likely to increase among the different subgroups.

In terms of a functional structure as a choice of organisational structure, the structure's roots can be traced back to Frederick W. Taylor's scientific management view, which considers that specialisation and the division of labour increases the quality and quantity of production (Stanford, 2007). Functional structures are not as effective as participative structures with regard to innovative projects as they tend to have slow reactions to environmental changes that require coordination across departments (Ainamo, 2007; Campbell, 2009). Van Dam (2010) states further that functions still dominate today's corporate structures, but that there is an increasing need to integrate across functions, because a functional structure does not fit with tomorrow's requirements of an integrated and broader view which taps hidden

potentials in order to respond to the complex and dynamic environment. The open system theory also disagrees with Taylor's views and focuses on the idea of an organisation as a system that is comprised of differentiated, interdependent parts that mobilise resources towards responding to the dynamic and complex environment (Theodoraki, 2007).

In addressing issues of knowledge fragmentation that result from a functional structure, Van der Spek, Kruizinga and Kleijsen (2009) identified a four-stepped approach that organisations can use. The steps allow the organisation to ask such questions as the following:

- Which knowledge is difficult to access in the current organisational structure, and is subject to inadequate development?

- What action(s) should be taken to facilitate the effective sharing of the required knowledge across the organisation?

- What action(s) should be taken to provide handbooks, standards and guidelines that are known to, and employed by, all organisational units, where appropriate?

The last step would then be the implementation of a knowledge infrastructure, addressed at identifying weak connections in the organisation (Van der Spek et al., 2009). Giancola (2007), however, disagrees with views that hold with the demise of the functional structure by indicating that not all experts in organisational design support the idea of the functional structure. According to Giancola, (2007), J.R Galbraith, an internationally recognised expert on organisational design, was not in agreement with the view that the functional form has become synonymous with outdated, traditional or hierarchical organisations and should be completely replaced by flat and fluid organisations. This author explained that some organisational design experts still believe that functional organisation can play an important role as the primary organisational form, or as the foundation or parent in a dual-structure company, within whose bounds it provides stability, overall strategy, specialised expertise and a needed counter-balance to the task force structure. In addition, a functional structure also serves as the home base for employees who work on task

forces, to ensure that they retain their professional roots and are able to refresh their specialised knowledge and skills (Giancola, 2007).

The next section consists of a review of the literature covering the role and impact of an organisational structure, specifically a functional structure, in creating conditions and in facilitating the sharing and communication of ideas and expertise across functional units.

3.7. Dimension 4 and 5 - ICT and cross-functional collaboration in response to the current environment

One of the most cited authors on collaboration is Barbara Gray, who describes collaboration as "*a process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible*" (Gray, 1989:5). Collaboration, therefore, makes organisations look at the process by which they arrive at their decisions, and it brings together diverse people who share a purpose and direction in addressing problems and in overcoming their limited perspectives on what can be achieved.

The need for a change in management practice towards cross-functional collaboration, because of such environmental driving forces as demanding customers, greater competitor intensity, compressed technology cycles, increased financial pressures, and the existence of an information revolution, is widely supported (Fawcett, Magnan and McCarter, 2008), Numerous researchers agree that, in today's environment, value in an organisation increasingly resides more in knowledge, innovation, ideas, and intellectual capability (Mayle and Henry, 2007), and in networking and connectivity across functional units (Botterill and Harpe, 2010). Among the supporters of the above ideas are Caruso and Woolley (2008), who indicate that in today's environment of layered uncertainties and an increasingly interconnected and complex world, the integration of knowledge from a wide range of perspectives has become essential to the solution of many social and organisational problems. These authors also highlight the value that comes from bringing in experts with different perspectives, by indicating that across industries,

societies, and nations, progress demands effective collaboration between people with diverse task-relevant experiences, viewpoints and knowledge.

Within the public sector context, Gaffoor and Cloete (2010) used the Stellenbosch Municipality as a case study to demonstrate that the current information age and knowledge economy creates an opportunity for public sector organisations to effectively implement knowledge management practices as strategic tools, which are used to achieve service delivery and operational goals. According to Gaffoor and Cloete (2010), the successful implementation of knowledge management initiatives has to be achieved so that different organisational processes and departments can collaborate, thus eliminating functional silos.

However, Nishii and Goncalo (2008) argue that many scholars oversimplify the link between diverse groups that have access to different backgrounds, perspectives and opinions, and their ability to engage in creative and innovative decision-making in today's environment. Nishii and Goncalo (2008:2) explain that, without conditions that facilitate the sharing and communication of ideas, the diverse perspectives present in the group would not have the chance to surface and to stimulate creative decision-making. Instead, then, increased diversity would lead to the slowing down and the disintegration of implementation processes.

3.8   Summary

Existing research contributes to understanding the need for cross-functional collaboration in today's environment, the importance and the type of an organisational structure and culture that supports service delivery integration, and cross-functional collaboration through ICT. Current literature also covers the strengths and weaknesses of a functional structure for cross-functional collaboration and the impact of an organisational structure on organisational culture and achieving service delivery integration.

There is, however, little information on the impact of a functional structure on the cross-functional collaboration and service delivery integration of a public sector organisation in a South African context where it faces unique challenges of high levels of unemployment and increased pressure to deliver and meet the expectations of its various stakeholders. This research aims to add knowledge in this area.

4. Chapter 4: Research Design and Methodology

4.1. Introduction

Collis and Hussey (2003) define research as a process of systematic inquiry that is designed to collect, analyse, interpret and use data to understand, describe, predict, or control an educational or psychological phenomenon, or to empower individuals in such contexts.

Chapter 4 describes the research design and methodology of the study. The researcher investigated the problem statement, which was identified in Chapter 1, in order to come to reliable and valid conclusions. In this respect, the choices that the researcher made were, therefore, based on the problem statement and on the research objectives that the researcher set out to achieve. Factors that are covered in the chapter include the sources from which the researcher collected data, the methods that were used to gather and analyse the data and the constraints that arose, in addition to the ethical considerations.

Collis and Hussey (2003) argue that it is quite usual to apply a mixture of approaches when conducting business research. According to these researchers, "[*t*]*he use of different research approaches, methods and techniques in the same study is known as triangulation and can overcome the potential bias and sterility of a single-method approach*". The main advantage of triangulation is the greater validity and reliability that the use of such a procedure leads to in the research results (Denzin, 1978).

4.2. Research design

A research design, which is the structure of the research, is where the overall approach of how a study will be conducted is named and discussed (Coldwell and Herbst, 2004). The design forms the structure of the research and, as a result, it demonstrates how the different elements work together to address the research questions and objectives holistically. The above-mentioned authors suggest that the design must be experimental in nature, which assists with the acceptance and the validity of the findings.

4.3. Research approach

In order to gain an understanding of the impact of the TSCs' compartmentalised structure on cross-departmental collaboration, the researcher chose to follow an exploratory research approach. The above procedure formed the preliminary stage of the investigation, during which the researcher investigated the interests of all affected stakeholders and sought to obtain a perspective that was related to the problem investigated. An effort was made to gain an understanding of how the Thusong Centres worked, how they assessed themselves, and how they appeared to function from an external perspective through the application of **rich pictures,** a method developed by Peter Checkland to explore complex situations, whereby drawings or pictures are used as a means of inspiring creative thinking.

The researcher visited three Thusong Centres in three provinces with an aim to assess their structural layout. No interviews were conducted in these provinces. The rich picture depicted was based on the researcher's observation of the structural layout of all the Thusong Centres visited. As the environment of the Thusong Centres is quite complex, the researcher used the above-mentioned tool to gain the richest possible picture of the problem situation in order to unravel such complexity (Checkland, 1981). Using this tool helped to identify the important actors and their relationships, the relationships between problems, influences on the situation and, lastly, elements of structure and process. The key actors identified by the researcher are the employees of the Thusong Centres and the communities accessing the services from these centres. The need for the above identification is supported by Mooi and Sarstedt (2011), who assert that exploratory research can help organisations to formulate their problem exactly. According to Bell and Morse (2003), rich pictures have been used in group work primarily as a means by which a group can express its preliminary vision concerning a matter of common concern.

In research, there are two methods of data collection: quantitative and qualitative (Charlesworth et al., 2001). A quantitative approach is appropriate for counting and/or measuring variables, with its objectives being to predict, to describe and to explain quantities, degrees and relationships, as well as to generalise from a sample to the population through numerical data collection (Du Plooy, 2002). In contrast, a qualitative approach is suitable for examining the properties, values, needs or

features that differentiate individuals, groups, communities, organisations, events, settings or messages (Du Plooy, 2002). The objectives of the qualitative approach are, therefore, to explore areas where there is limited or no information, and/or to describe behaviours, themes, trends, attitudes, needs or relations that are relevant to the units analysed (Du Plooy, 2002).

Despite the debate over qualitative versus quantitative research having continued over the years, no single best approach has yet been found, because each approach has its own advantages and disadvantages. For instance, with respect to qualitative research, asking the same closed-ended questions of respondents makes it relatively easy to analyse responses and to draw comparisons (Saunders et al., 2007). However, the inflexible nature of the closed-ended questions means that the researcher is not able to ask probing questions and the respondents cannot provide more details in response to the questions asked. In contrast, asking open-ended questions enable the respondents to respond in detail to the questions asked, using their own words, and the researcher has an opportunity to ask follow-up questions immediately. The disadvantage of the latter form of research, though, is that the diverse and complex responses that are provided by the participants are much more difficult to analyse than the straightforward answers that are asked with the other form.

What, therefore, guides the choice of the research design are such factors as research objectives, the extent of existing knowledge, the amount of time required, the other resources that are available, and the researcher's own philosophical underpinnings (Saunders et al., 2007). In the current study, the researcher decided to use self-administered questionnaires, individual semi-structured interviews and stakeholder participation; the key stakeholders being the employees and the community members accessing the service. The use of multiple methods of data collection is known as methodological triangulation (Du Plooy, 2002). It was anticipated that methodological triangulation would produce better results in the present study than would the use of another method, because, by involving the stakeholders in deliberations that had a direct impact upon their lives, and by listening to their voices within the process of change, the change could be facilitated (Chambers, 1997). Also, through exploring the quantitative findings of the self-

administered questionnaires further through the individual semi-structured interviews, the researcher would be able to acquire more detailed information and observe the respondents' non-verbal communication. In addition, using methodological triangulation enabled the researcher to assess whether there were inconsistencies in the manner in which the participants responded in the rich picture analysis and individual semi-structured interviews. Saunders et al. (2007) support the use of methodological triangulation by indicating that it makes sense to use different methods to cancel out the weaknesses of the qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques, so that greater confidence can be placed in the conclusions of a study than might otherwise have been possible.

Using stakeholder participation assumes that, if people feel that they are involved as change agents, the change comes from inside out, rather than being imposed from outside in. The result is that the participants then develop a sense of ownership of the process involved (Cook, 1995).

The survey findings were explored through individual semi-structured interviews. A survey research design is most commonly used to answer who, what, where and how much regarding a specific issue or topic (Saunders et al., 2007). The asking of questions was highly relevant in the current study, with the purpose of the research being exploratory. The advantage of using a survey to collect data as opposed to collecting data from the whole population is that it is possible to generate findings that are representative of the entire population at a lower cost and over a shorter period of time than would otherwise be possible (Saunders et al., 2007).

4.4.   Population and sample

Coldwell and Herbst (2004) explained that a population is the group of people, items or units that are being studied. It is not always practical to collect information from each member of the population, known as a census; therefore a sample is often drawn from the population (Du Plooy, 2001).

In order to generalise the findings to the entire population, the sample must be representative of the population by ensuring that the characteristics of the sample are more or less the same as those of the population (Arens, Elder & Beasley, 2006). According to these authors, a manner of ensuring that the sample reflects the

unique features of the population, referred to as population parameters, is by using a probability sample. A probability sample ensures that every unit in the population has an equal and therefore probable chance of being selected as part of the sample (Coldwell and Herbst, 2004). In terms of the sample size, there are various issues to consider such as making allowance for non-response and participants dropping out of the study (Breakwell, Hammond, Fife-Schaw & Smith, 2006). Charlesworth, et al., (2001) indicated that in applied management research, 30 should be the minimum sample size.

The population in this case are the employees of the Bokamoso Thusong Centre in the North West Province. With more than 300 staff members it would be impractical to conduct a census, so the researcher drew a sample. For this research, drawing a representative sample was particularly important because the research is about inter-functional collaboration so each division had to be represented in the sample so that the researcher could get the opinions of employees in various divisions. A stratified random sample is the probability sample that enabled the researcher to include subgroups characteristics of the population in the sample; in this case, the subgroups are members of the various divisions (Du Plooy, 2001).

The self-administered questionnaires were therefore distributed to a total of 40 people who were randomly selected from each division. From those who completed the questionnaires the researcher then randomly selected five respondents from different functional units to enable in-depth exploration through semi-structured individual interviews.

By distributing to 40 people, instead of the minimum sample size of 30, the researcher made allowance for non-response and dropouts.

With regards to the community, a group of 154 individuals were made available by the Centre to the researcher for the purposes of her study. The questionnaires were workshopped with the community members in two sessions. The members were then given time to fill in the questionnaires on their own under the supervision of the researcher.

4.5. Research instruments

Self-administered questionnaires and individual semi-structured interviews were the chosen research instruments that were used to collect the primary data that were sought in the current study. Primary data are data collected by the researcher, so they result from first-hand experience and observation (Guffey, 2007).

4.5.1 The self-administered questionnaire

Since a badly structured questionnaire compromises the measurement reliability and validity of a study, it is imperative to pay attention to the design of a questionnaire. A reliable measurement instrument is one that produces the same results with the same individual each time that he/she is measured on it. In contrast, measurement validity refers to the degree to which the measurement used actually measures what the researcher claims to have measured (Du Plooy, 2002). Saunders et al. (2007) indicate that when Foddy (1994:17) explains reliability and validity, he emphasises that "*the question must be understood by the respondent in the way intended by the researcher and the answers given by the respondent must be understood by the researcher in the way intended by the respondent*".

An example of the self-administered questionnaire is included in Appendix A of the current study. The questionnaire starts with a covering letter, which identifies the researcher, explains the aim of the research, and requests the individual respondents to complete and return the questionnaire by a specified date. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, one focussing on internal employees and the other focussing on beneficiaries of the services, the community members. The covering letter assured participants of their anonymity in the study, indicating that the information provided would be treated with the strictest confidence and used purely for academic purposes. A brief explanation was also provided of how participants were selected for the study.

Although the researcher was present all the time to supervise the community members, she was not present when the employees filled in their self-administered questionnaires. She was therefore not available to clarify any questions that the respondents might have wanted to ask. In order to avoid any confusion, the researcher paid attention to the wording of the questionnaire, avoided using jargon

and used the funnel pattern, in which general questions function as warm-up questions for more detailed ones, and questions on similar topics are grouped together (Du Plooy, 2001). The questionnaire for the community members was distributed and filled in at the centre's facilities. Data collection was conducted over a period of two days, with the community members divided into two groups. The contents of the questionnaire for the community members were grouped according to demographics, social status and behavioural change, while the contents of the questionnaire for the employees were aligned with the research objectives and grouped according to the following headings: cross-functional collaboration, structure and culture. Doing so, therefore, accentuated the measurement validity.

The grouping of the questions into categories not only made it easier for the respondents to answer the questions asked, but also facilitated the analysis of the data once they had been obtained (Hofstee, 2006). To encourage the respondents to complete and return the questionnaire, the researcher tried to make the layout of the self-administered questionnaires attractive by ensuring that the wording was widely enough spaced on the page, that the font was large enough, and that the questionnaire was of a reasonable length to facilitate answering (Saunders et al., 2007).

The self-administered questionnaire had closed-ended questions, which assisted in avoiding differences in interpretation and the difficulty of documenting and analysing open-ended questions. The standardised nature of the questionnaire, therefore, enabled the researcher to make use of a larger sample than might otherwise have been possible, due to the relative ease in conducting the analysis and making comparisons (Saunders et al., 2007).

By asking respondents to rate a particular statement by selecting one of the options provided, the researcher used a Likert scale as a measurement scale. A Likert scale produces what is referred to as ordinal data by ranking information, but unlike interval data, the researcher cannot be sure that the interval between each of the options is equivalent (Coldwell and Herbst, 2004). The researcher wanted to ensure that there were sufficient data to analyse so neither the neutral response of agree nor disagree were excluded, because allowing for such responses was believed to make it too easy for the respondents to give a glib answer (Hofstee, 2006).

To assist with analysis, the self-administered questionnaire was pre-coded, so that each item on the Likert scale was represented by a specific number. The numbers were entered onto a grid that was used for calculating such values as the degree to which the respondents agreed on the ranking of a set of items, and also allowed for exploring whether the data conveyed any relationships (Du Plooy, 2001). To further improve the validity and reliability of the self-administered questionnaire, the researcher acquired the approval of the research supervisor, Mr Stanley Hardman, who was informed about the design of the questionnaire. In addition, a small-scale pilot survey was conducted with three respondents, which enabled the researcher to obtain feedback regarding the clarity of the instructions and to find out whether the questions were clear, before proceeding with the full-scale study. The size of the sample and the proximity of the respondents enabled the researcher to deliver the questionnaires, create follow-up reminders for the participants, encourage them to complete the questionnaires and collect the questionnaires personally, thus ensuring that a good response rate was obtained.

4.5.2 Semi-structured individual interviews

From the total number of respondents who completed the self-administered questionnaires, five respondents were randomly selected in order to explore the self-administered questionnaire's quantitative findings by means of the semi-structured individual interviews. The researcher ensured that the five respondents were from different functional units, in keeping with the objectives of the study. During the semi-structured individual interviews, the five respondents were asked to describe their attitudes, behaviours and opinions.

Conducting the semi-structured individual interviews assisted in improving the measurement reliability of the study, because the researcher was able to assess whether there were inconsistencies in the manner in which the five participants responded to the self-administered questionnaires and in the individual semi-structured interviews.

The interview schedule containing open-ended questions that encouraged the participants to explain their answers in detail is included in Appendix B. The standardised questions of the semi-structured interviews provided some structure to

them, which helped to prevent unnecessary digression and which also facilitated analysis. In addition, sufficient time was also allowed in which to ask follow-up questions and to probe further (Du Plooy, 2001). The researcher decided to conduct individual rather than group interviews in order to encourage the participants to speak freely, without fear of being criticised.

Just like with the self-administered questionnaires, the manner and order in which the questions are asked and structured during the interviews impacted on the reliability and validity of the study. Careful attention was, therefore, taken to ensure that the questions were formulated in a manner that answered the research objectives, with the researcher starting with non-threatening warm-up questions. In addition, the questions were neutral and set so as neither to intimidate nor offend the respondents, so that they could be open in their answers.

All questionnaires were distributed and filled at the Bokamoso Thusong Centre. In order to create a relaxed atmosphere without any interruptions or any form of unwanted noise, the researcher used a quiet meeting room within the centre and conveyed friendly and calm non-verbal communication to put the respondents at ease. Using a meeting room within the centre was also convenient for the respondents. An audio tape was used to record the interviews, and only the key points of the interviews were written down so that the researcher did not miss out on important non-verbal communication. Important themes were identified when the researcher worked through the recorded interviews afterwards.

What increased the measurement validity of the semi-structured interviews was that the researcher could ensure that the participants understood the questions, as well as probe and verify the meaning derived from the participants' responses. In addition, the set topics could be covered from different angles.

However, in terms of measurement reliability, attempting to ensure that the qualitative semi-structured findings were replicated by another researcher seemed to be unwarranted for the following reasons. The comments, tone and non-verbal communications of a different interviewer, known as interview bias, might influence the responses received to the questions asked. A different interviewer's beliefs and frame of reference might influence the manner in which the responses were

interpreted. In addition, the complex and dynamic nature of the topic, and, hence, the need to explore it, suggested that circumstances might change over time. The study was cross-sectional, being conducted once and revealing only a snapshot of one point in time (Coldwell and Herbst, 2004).

4.6.   Data analysis

Once the data had been collected, the next step was to generate meaning from the raw data obtained (Coldwell and Herbst, 2004:92).

To make the raw quantitative data collected through the self-administered questionnaires easier to interpret, the researcher collated them into bar charts and summarised them according to the mode, which was the most frequent response for each question concerned (Charlesworth et al., 2002). The mode is one of the descriptive statistics that enables researchers to describe and to compare variables numerically (Saunders et al., 2007). The horizontal axis of the bar chart was, therefore, comprised of the Likert scale options (strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree), with the vertical axis representing the frequency of the responses obtained.

The raw qualitative data collected through the semi-structured individual interviews was analysed using the following general analytical procedure for qualitative data of Hussey and Hussey (1997), which is explained in the study by Charlesworth et al. (2002). The following steps were followed:

- The rough notes made during interviews were converted into a written record that included details of the researcher's thoughts and reflections. A distinction was made between the researcher's interpretations and speculations, and the factual notes.
- The notes collected during the interviews were properly referenced, indicating such factors as the date, the time, the context, and the possible implications of the research.
- The data was categorised by coding it into categories that were guided by the research objectives and information that became apparent as the data was reviewed.

- The researcher started a rigorous process of grouping the coded data into emerging themes.

- Summarising the findings at various stages assisted in the further analysis and highlighting of the key issues concerned.

- The researcher used summaries to commence the process of making generalisations.

- The thorough development of generalisations from the summaries was continued until the researcher was satisfied that the generalisations were sufficiently developed.

4.7. Ethical considerations

Ethical limitations were put in place to ensure that no harm would be caused by the collection of data, the publication of the study, or by any work connected with the study (Hofstee, 2006).

To ensure that ethical standards were met in the research, the researcher did the following. The covering letter of the self-administered questionnaires in Appendix A and the interview schedule in Appendix B show that the researcher was open with the respondents regarding why she was collecting the information from them. She also offered to share the results of the study with them. While the researcher encouraged respondents to take part in the study, she explained that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time without having to give any reasons for doing so. In addition, the respondents were assured that they would not be identified by name, that the information provided would be treated with the strictest confidence and that it would be used purely for academic purposes.

4.8. Summary

The current chapter outlined how exploratory research was conducted to gain an understanding of the impact of the TSC functional structure on cross-functional collaboration. The researcher explained in detail how and why she decided to collect and to analyse the quantitative data by means of self-administered questionnaires, and qualitative data by means of semi-structured individual interviews. To increase

the validity and reliability of the study, its constraints were also considered. The researcher also considered ethical issues relating to the study to ensure that it caused no harm. The research findings are presented and analysed in Chapter 5.

5. Chapter 5: Results and Discussions

5.1. Introduction

The current chapter outlines the results and findings of the study. These findings are derived from questionnaires and interviews with the employees of the centre. The researcher also interacted with community members in the form of workshops to establish the background and needs of those accessing the centre. It should be noted that the final conclusions for the study will be drawn from the comprehensive data analysis which was conducted. The findings of the study will also be supported by, as well as integrated with, the literature search described in Chapter 3. The responses to the questions in each section of the study were grouped to facilitate the discussion and to assist with the linking of the results to the research objectives, which were stated as:

i.   to review the current state of cross-functional collaboration and service integration within the Thusong Centres;

ii.   to assess the impact of ICT on the Thusong Centres' functional structure on cross-functional collaboration and service integration;

iii. to assess whether ICT that is being deployed within the Thusong Centres structure promotes cross-functional integration and service integration; and lastly,

iv. to assess the alignment of service delivery models and resources with the community needs.

The chosen research instruments were, therefore, specifically designed to collect data that would meet the objectives set for the study. The current chapter analyses and discusses the research data that was collected. The researcher firstly presents the results of the data collected from the beneficiaries of the TSCs, which is then followed by the results of data collected from the employees of the TSC.

5.2. Self-administered questionnaires – Community Members

The current study was conducted at the Bokamoso Thusong Centre in the North West Province and as a result it cannot be generalised across other centres irregardless of its similarities. The physical infrastructure of this centre was compared with other centres in the Northern Cape and Gauteng. The researcher followed a process whereby workshops were arranged with community members to explain the purpose of the research and go through the questionnaires with them. They were given time to reflect and then completed the questionnaires and returned them to the researcher (see fig 5 below). Because of the large number of community members involved, they were divided into two groups, and two separate workshops were arranged to assess the relevance of the rich picture analysis that had been conducted by the researcher. The workshops employed a soft systems analysis approach, which encouraged the participants to arrive at a shared understanding of what was being done, and what could be done, in any context. The process undertaken was mapped as follows:
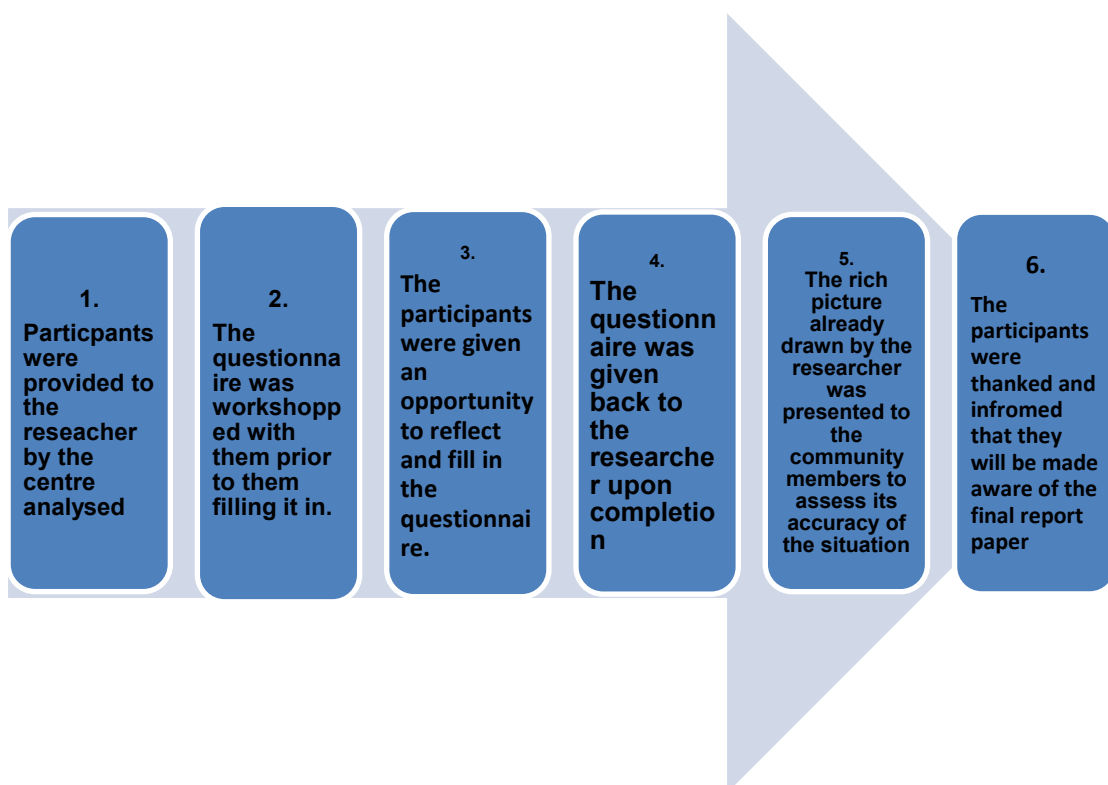
Figure 5: Workshop participation process

5.3. Demographics of the community

The questionnaire included a number of questions regarding the demographics of the respondents, including age, gender, marital status and the number of dependents in the households. Figure 6 below shows a breakdown of gender.
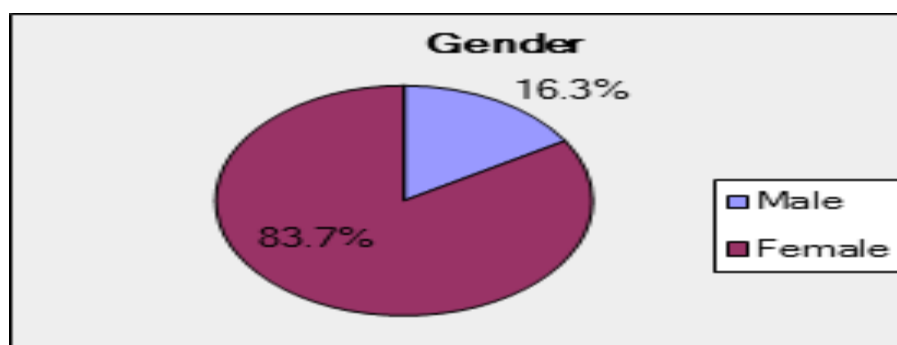
Figure 6: Gender Breakdown

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
15-19	0.0%	0
20-35	35.2%	51
36-50	43.4%	63
51-65	20.7%	30
>65	0.7%	1
	answered question	145
	skipped question	9

Table 1: Age of participants

The findings showed that 83.7% of the participants were female and 16.3% male. The majority were between the ages of 36-50 (43.4%) followed by 20-35 (35.2%). From these results, one is able to deduce that majority of community members utilising the services of the Thusong Centre are adult females between the ages of 20-50, with males in the minority. Although there may be varying reasons why the majority of community members at the centre are young females, this might be attributable to their dependency on child social grants.
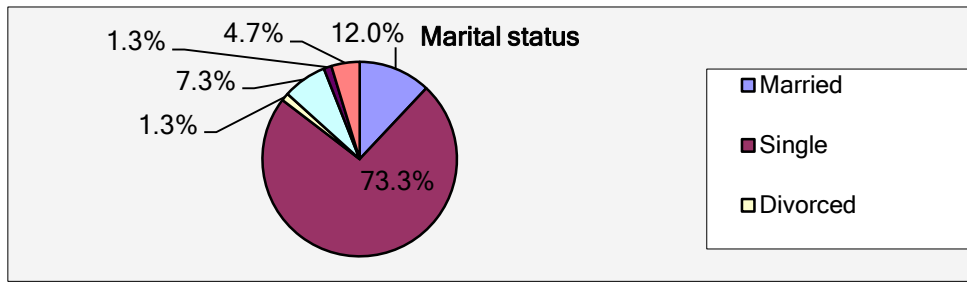
Figure 7: **Marital Status**

Of note also is that 73.3% of the participants are single, implying that their main source of income is augmented by social grants or other means of government incentive programmes. The majority of participants had attended secondary school, 12% had only attended primary school and 8% had never been to school and were totally illiterate.

Education level		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Never went to school	10.8%	16
Primary School	16.3%	24
Secondary/High School	70.1%	103
Tertiary	2.7%	4
	answered question	147
	skipped question	7

Table 2: Education Level

In analysing these demographics, one might conclude that the majority of people utilising these centres are single women aged between 20-50, who have a secondary school level of education, but who are unemployed. The question that arises from these results is whether unemployment in South Africa is exacerbated by the slow growing economy or the level of skills and education. Overall, 89.1% of the participants have a secondary school level of education.

Mean	3.441176471
Standard Error	0.170404711
Median	3
Mode	4
Standard Deviation	1.721003215

Sample Variance	2.961852068
Kurtosis	-0.735161175
Skewness	0.083828431
Range	7
Minimum	0
Maximum	7
Sum	351
Count	102
Largest(1)	7

Table 3: **Number of children per household**

The table above depicts the number of children per households as per the respondents' answers. The majority of households have four children, whilst on average, each household has three children. The maximum number of children in a household was recorded as seven, whilst only three of the households were without children. This could also elucidate the reason why the majority of those accessing the TSCs are women as they would be coming to register their children for the social grants.

Number of Adults per households	
Response Text	Total
0	12
1	46
2	10
3	7
4	2
Grand Total	77

Count of Response Text	
Response Text	Total
0	3
1	12
2	16
3	22
4	24
5	7
6	16
7	2
Grand Total	102

Table 4 The number of adults per household

The majority of participants indicated that there was only one adult in their households, followed by those without adults. This is consistent with the earlier analysis of many of the beneficiaries being unmarried. However, in some cases, there were three to four adults in the same household. The researcher therefore assumed that such households could include pensioners and dependence on the old age grant may be the reason for utilising the centre.

Number of household members employed temporarily and type of employment		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Male	46.6%	61
Female	94.7%	124
answered question		**131**
skipped question		**23**

Table 5: Number of household members who have employment
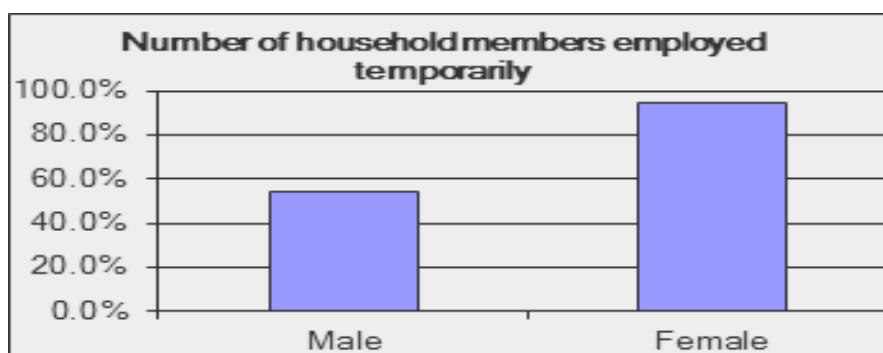
Figure 8: Number of household members who have employment

This question aimed at understanding if people who are employed also make use of the Thusong Centres or whether it is only utilised by those participating in the social grant programmes. In addition, this question also attempted to determine whether those participating in the social grant programmes had other adults in the family who were permanently or temporarily employed. Although not all of the participants answered this question, those who responded indicated that 94% of the female adults in their households had temporary employment and 54% of the males were employed. It should be noted that some household have more than 1 adult working in their households

Number of Social grant beneficiaries in the household		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Old age grant	29.5%	39
Child Support Grant	93.2%	123
Disability Grant	10.6%	14
Other	6.8%	9
answered question		**132**
skipped question		**22**

Table 6: **Social grant beneficiaries per household**
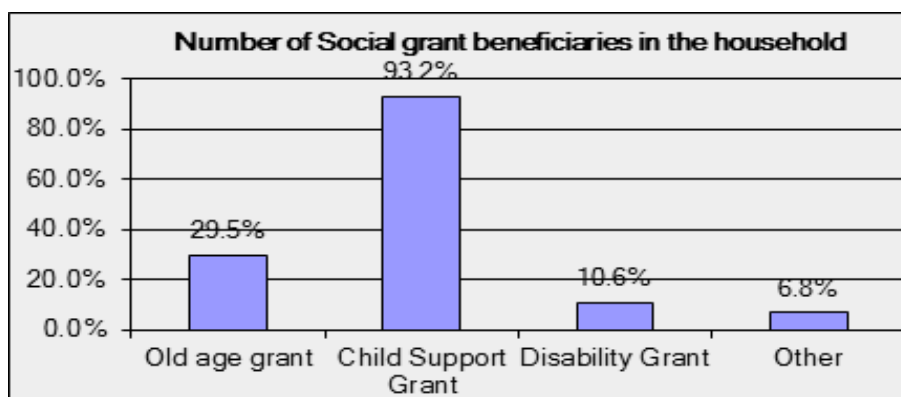
Figure 9: Number of social grant beneficiaries per household

Count of Old age grant	
Old age grant per family	Total
0	12
1	21
2	5
3	1
(blank)	
Grand Total	39

Table 7: Social grant count

Count of Child Support Grant	
Number of Children in child Support Grant	Total
0	7
1	52
2	28
3	22
4	12
5	2
(blank)	
Grand Total	123

The graph and tables above illustrate the number of social grant beneficiaries in a household. The results indicated that some households were claiming three different grants. The majority of participants (93.2%) were claiming child support grants and 29.5% were claiming old age grants, thus supporting the evidence previously mentioned that these are the main users of these centres. Although the majority of families have one child on child support grant, in some instances there were more than four children are on child support grant from a single family

The results showed that most of the children of the participants were attending primary school, followed by those attending secondary school. This question was asked to determine the beneficiaries' level of responsibility. From the table above, there seems to be a positive relationship between the number of children in primary school, the number of child support grants as well as the age of the women

accessing the TSCs. Although that relationship has not been statistically determined, one might make the assumption that the majority of children whose mothers are frequent users of the centres are in primary school and receiving child support grants. The table depicts in details the total children a respondent has and their level of schooling. Some respondents have more than three children in different levels of schooling, hence the response percentage that doesn't add up to a hundred.

Number of household members attending school		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Nursery/Pre School	35.0%	48
Primary School	76.6%	105
Secondary/High School	67.2%	92
Tertiary	9.5%	13
	answered question	137
	skipped question	17

Table 8: **Number of household members attending school**

5.4.   Assessing behavioural change brought by these centres

In addition to establishing an understanding of the community's demographics, the researcher designed various questions that were aimed at establishing whether the Thusong Centres had made a significant difference in the lives of the participants.

Was it difficult to access government services prior the Thusong Centres		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	46.7%	49
No	53.3%	56
	answered question	152
	skipped question	2 *

Table 9: Access of government services prior to the Thusong Centres
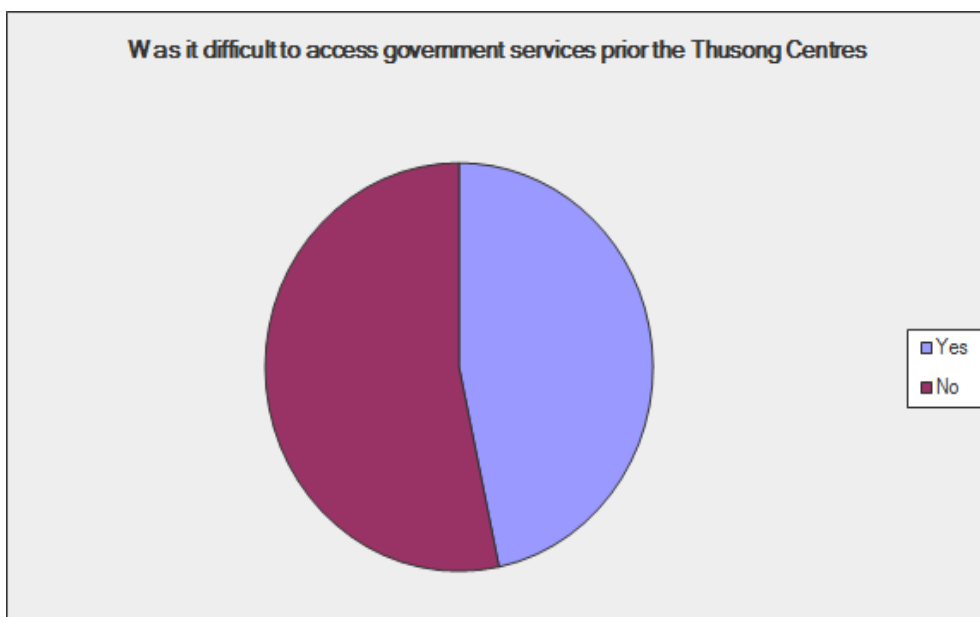
Figure 10: Measuring the accessibility of government services prior to the Thusong Centres

Just over half (53.3%) of the respondents indicated that they had had no difficulty in accessing government services prior to the Thusong Centres, while 46.7% stated otherwise. One can deduce from these results that government services had been out of reach to approximately 50% of the population prior to the TSCs.

The Thusong Centres are easily accesible and the service is faster than that which is obtainable elsewhere.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	14.6%	15
No	85.4%	88
answered question		103
skipped question		4

Table 10: Service performance of the TSCs
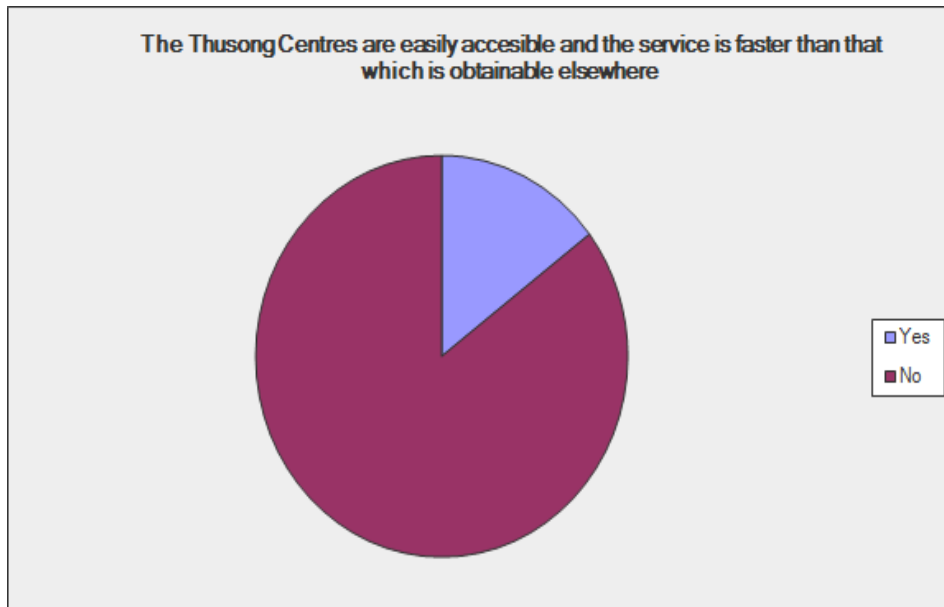
Figure 11: Measuring service performance of the TSCs

From the responses obtained above, it is observed that the majority of the respondents were not in agreement that the government services offered at the Thusong Centres were better than those offered at the traditional government departments.

The Thusong Centres are easily accessible and the service is faster than that which is obtainable elsewhere		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	41.6%	42
No	58.4%	59
answered question		148
skipped question		6

Table 11: Accessibility of government services through the TSC's
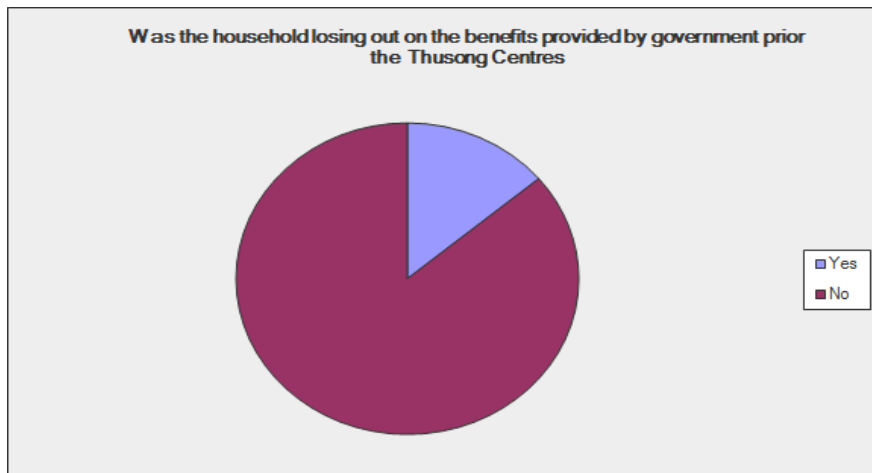
Figure 12: Benefits of the TSCs

From the responses above, one can deduce that there is no significant improvement in the benefits brought by the Thusong Centres in comparison to what had been received prior their inception.

How much money did your family spend on trying to access government services ?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
R0	1.0%	1
R1-R300	29.5%	31
R301-R600	20.0%	21
R601-R900	11.4%	12
R900+	13.3%	14
Cannot Specify	24.8%	26
	answered question	105
	skipped question	2

Table 12: Money spent on accessing government services prior to TSCs
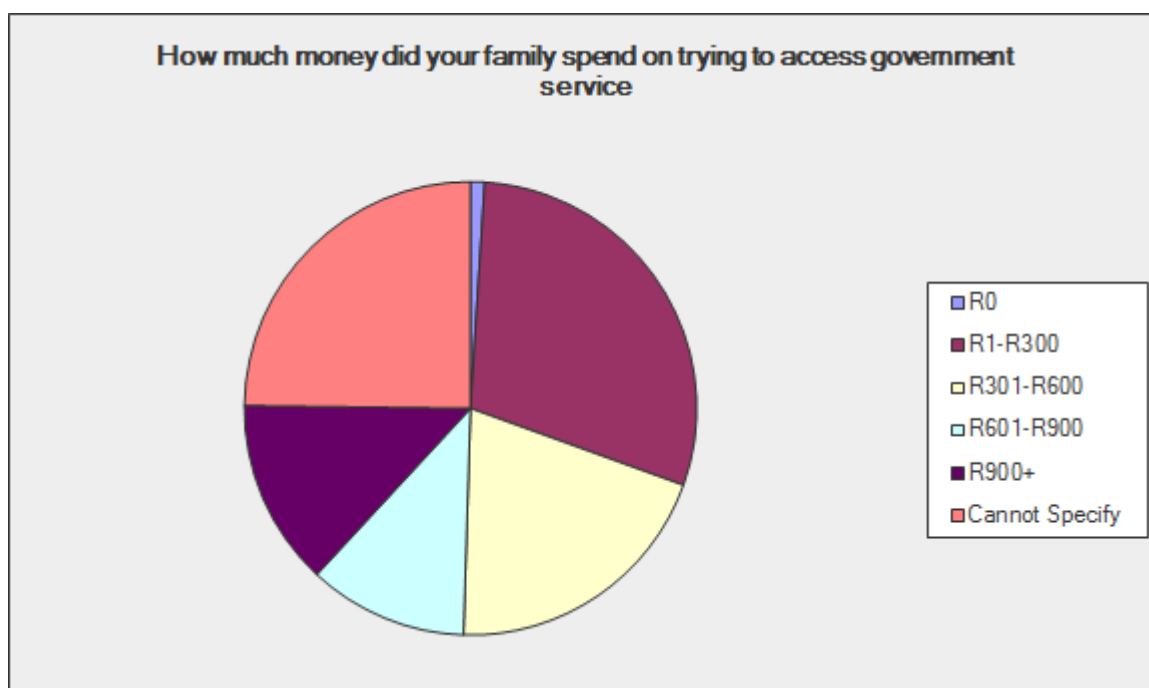
Figure 13: Money spent on accessing government services

Findings established that 31.6% of the participants had spent between R1 and R300 on accessing government services prior the Thusong Centres, meaning they were channelling much of their living income to accessing government services. One of the millennium development goals in eradicating poverty is to ensure that families have at least $1 dollar a day in order survive. It is a worrying factor if a large portion of that is spent on accessing services that should be easily accessible.

Do you believe that the Centres are a value for money?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	83.5%	86
No	16.5%	17
answered question		103
skipped question		4

Table 13: Value for money
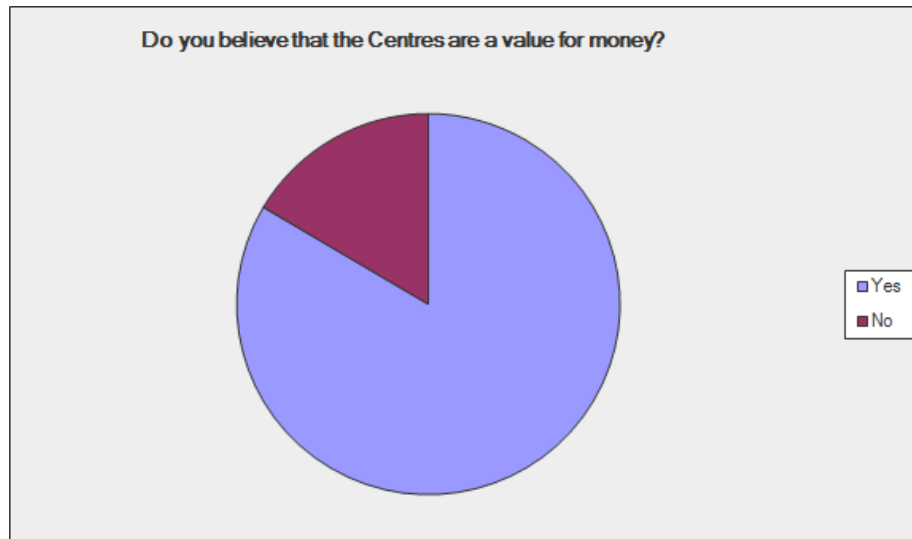
Figure 14: Value for money

The results showed that 81.5% of beneficiaries are satisfied with the overall performance of the programme. Although 18.5% of respondents are dissatisfied with the programme, this is diluted by overall response.

5.5. Self-administered questionnaires employees of the TSCs

Out of the 40 self-administered questionnaires that were distributed, 31 were successfully returned to the researcher, representing a response rate of 77%. The response rate is acceptable considering that Charlesworth et al. (2001) indicated that 30 should be the minimum sample size in applied management research.

With the aim of further exploring the findings of the self-administered questionnaires, the researcher conducted semi-structured individual interviews. Five respondents who work in different departments and who had successfully completed the questionnaires were randomly selected for the interviews.

5.5.1. Distribution by department

Figure 15 below shows that all the departments within the TSC's were represented in the sample. It was particularly important to get input from the various departments to enable the researcher to study cross-functional collaboration within the TSCs.
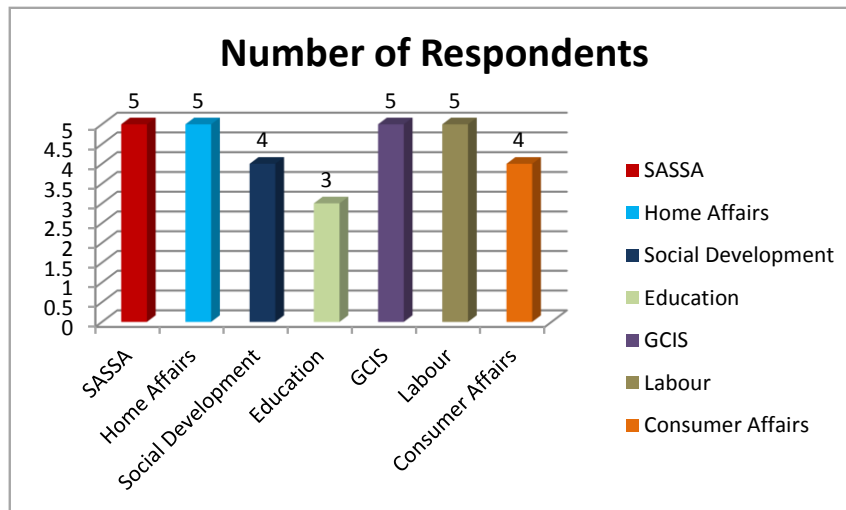
Figure 15: Distribution by department

5.5.2. Period of employment

In terms of period of employment, figure 16 below shows that the majority (61%) of the respondents had been employed for more than five years. This improved the quality of the data because those employed for more than five years are expected to be thoroughly informed about activities and interactions within the centre. Those employed between two to five years made up 29% of the sample and those who have been in the organisation for less than two years made up 10% of the sample.
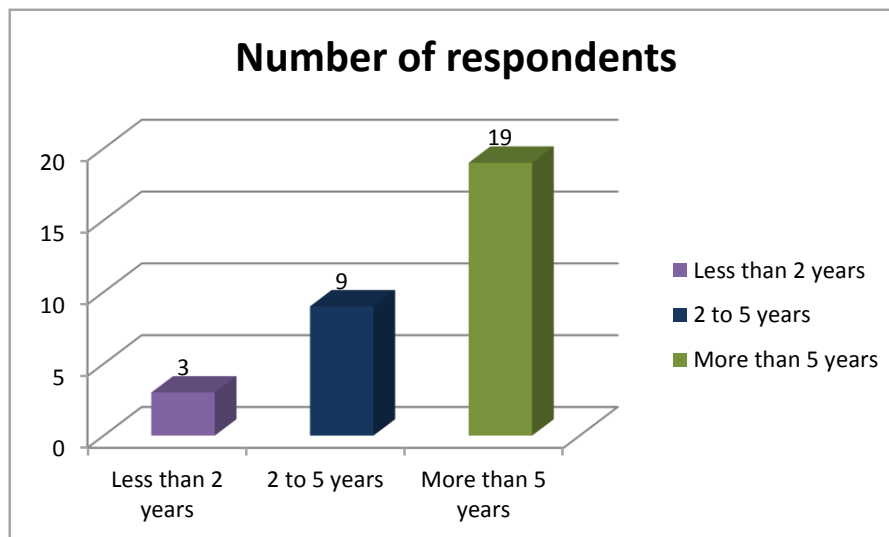
Figure 16: Period of employment

5.5.3. Position within the organisation

As depicted in figure 17 below, there were an equal number of respondents in non-management positions (42%) and in middle management positions (42%). Sixteen percent (16%) of the sample were in top management positions. Statistics regarding the respondents' positions enabled the researcher to assess whether there was a significant difference between the views of the respondents in the three position levels.
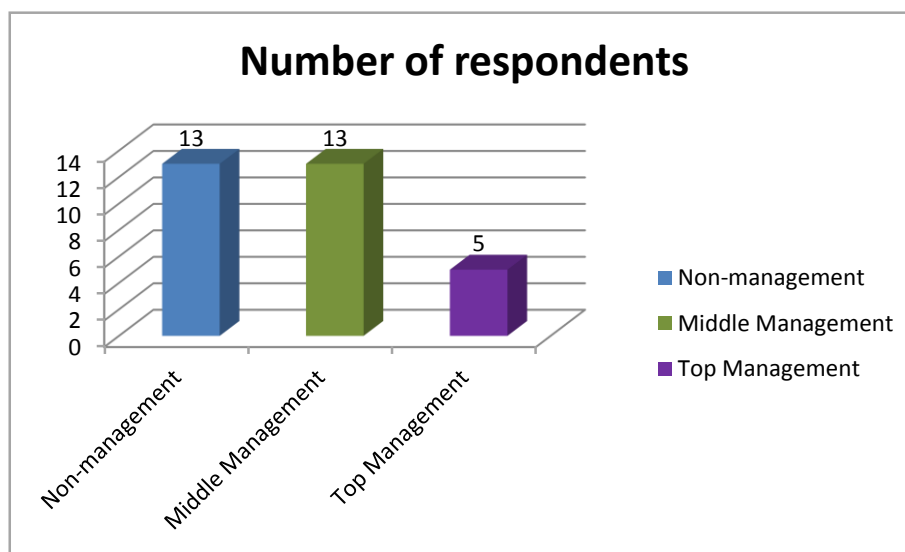
Figure 17: Distribution by position within organisation

5.6. Addressing Research Objectives

5.6.1 Objective 1: Assess the current state of cross-functional collaboration within the Thusong Centres

Questions 1, 2, and 3 of the questionnaire assessed whether the employees shared information and ideas with the other employees, and whether they exploited the skills and knowledge of employees working in other departments. The picture depicted by the respondents was that of separate departments all taking care of their own business in isolation from the others. Although they interacted with one another on an informal basis, they did not interact professionally. All of the participants in the study indicated that it was neither easy to share skills, nor to exploit one another's

knowledge, as they acted independently of one another and their mandates were all different.
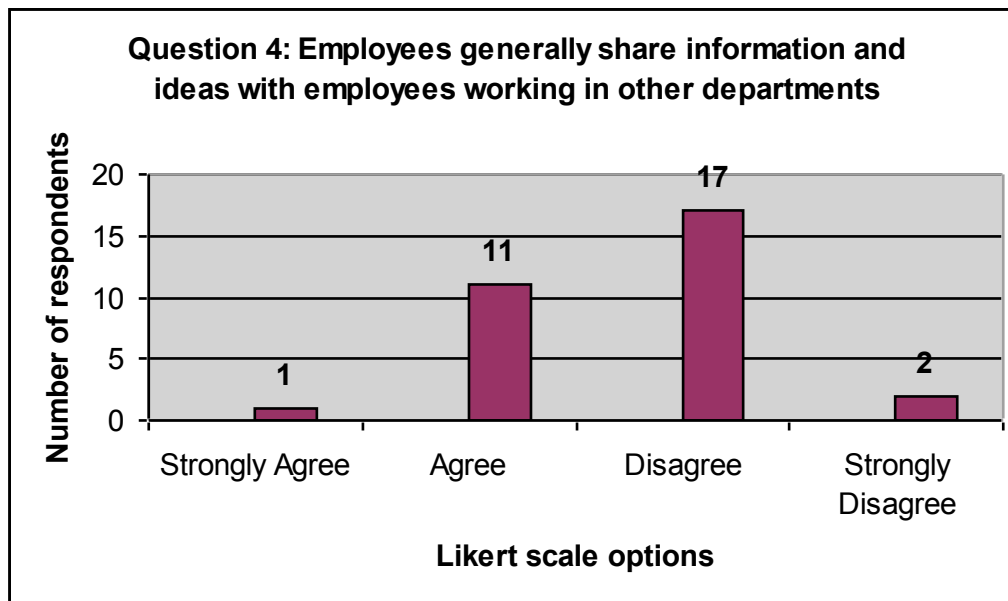
Figure 18: Distribution of responses on whether employees generally share information and ideas with employees working in other departments

Questions 4 to 8 of the questionnaire addressed the first research objective of reviewing the current state of cross-functional collaboration within the centre. With respect to question 4, figure 18 above shows that 17 respondents disagreed and two strongly disagreed with the statement that employees from different departments generally share information and ideas. This means that the majority of the respondents, a total of 61%, are of the view that information and ideas are generally not shared between the various departments.

In addition, table 13 below demonstrates that from the total of 19 (61%) who disagreed and strongly disagreed, 12 had been working within the centre for more than five years and six of them had been employed between two to five years. All three levels of management were also represented in those that disagreed and strongly disagreed. This therefore gives the researcher confidence that those who disagreed and strongly disagreed were drawing from their substantial and varied experience within the organisation.

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Less than 2 years		2	1	
2 to 5 years		3	5	1
More than 5 years	1	6	11	1
Total	1	11	17	2

Position level				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Non-management		4	8	1
Middle management		5	8	
Top Management	1	2	1	1
Total	1	11	17	1

Table 14: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in figure 18

In terms of question 5, the results were almost split in the middle. Figure 19 below depicts that 16 respondents agreed (52%) with the statement that employees within the centre tended to withhold information and ideas from employees working in other departments, while 15 respondents (48%) held a different view (14 disagreed and 1 strongly disagreed). The respondents were spread across the different periods of employment and position levels as depicted in table 14 below.

At this point the researcher found it interesting that for question 5, a significant majority did not automatically indicate that the reason for the lack of information and ideas sharing, as the response to question four had indicated, is because employees tend to withhold information and ideas. The researcher had numerous questions at this stage. Is it a case of employees wanting to share, but not having opportunities or sufficient opportunities to share with employees working in other departments? The researcher proceeded knowing that the set of questions assessing the impact of the TSC's functional structure on cross-functional collaboration (questions 9 to 15) of the questionnaire would shed more light in terms of the opportunities for information and ideas sharing.
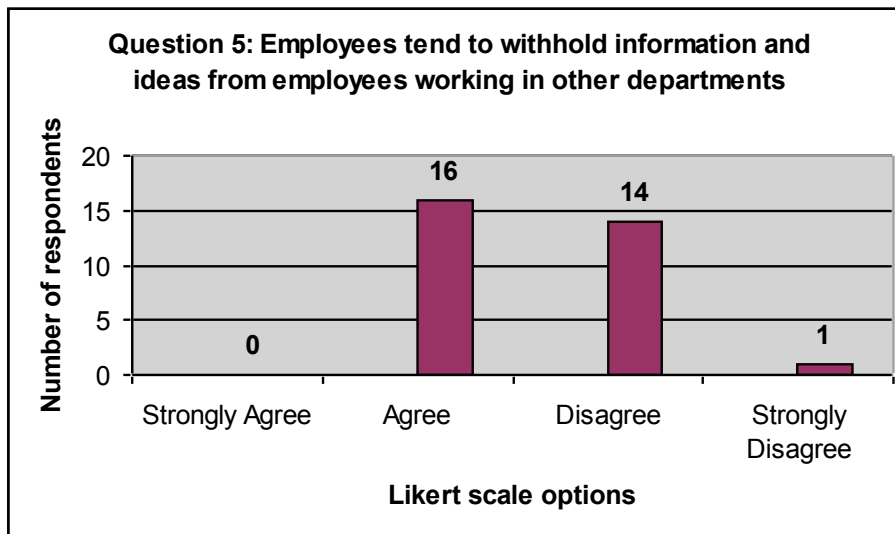
Figure 19: Distribution of responses on whether employees tend to withhold information and ideas from employees working in other departments

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Less than 2 years		1	2	
2 to 5 years		4	5	
More than 5 years		11	7	1
Total	0	16	14	1
Position level				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Non-management		7	6	
Middle management		8	5	
Top Management		1	3	1
Total	0	16	14	1

Table 15: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in figure 19

For question 6, figure 20 below shows that 16 respondents disagreed and one strongly disagreed with the statement that employees take full advantage of the expertise of employees working in other departments when doing their work. These

results represent 55% of the respondents as opposed to 45% of respondents (13 agreed and one strongly agreed) who indicated that employees do take full advantage of the expertise of employees working in other departments. The respondents were spread across the different periods of employment and position levels as depicted in table 4.

The fact that the results are almost split in the middle communicates that while employees do use the expertise of employees working in other departments, they do not fully take advantage of them.
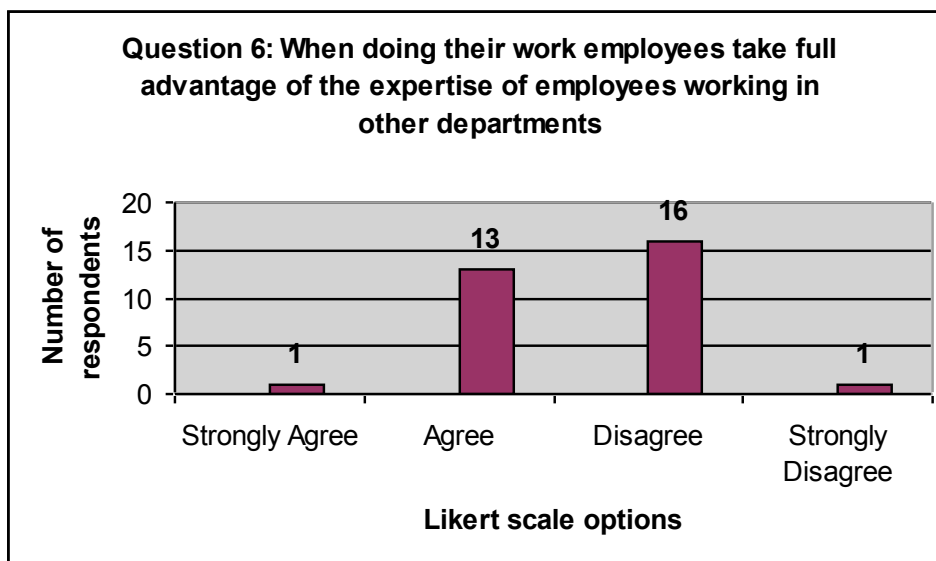
Figure 20: Distribution of responses on whether employees take full advantage of the expertise of employees working in other departments when doing their work

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Less than 2 years		1	2	
2 to 5 years		2	7	
More than 5 years	1	10	7	1
Total	1	13	16	1

Position level				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Non-management	1	5	7	
Middle management		5	7	1
Top Management		3	2	
Total	1	13	16	1

Table 16: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in figure 20

In terms of question 7, figure 21 below depicts that 15 respondents disagreed and one strongly disagreed with the statement that employees generally consult with employees working in other departments when making decisions on their projects. The result represents 52% of the respondents as opposed to the remaining 48% that agreed and strongly agreed. The respondents were spread across the various periods of employment and three position levels, as depicted in table 16 below.

Given the fact that the results were almost split in the middle, this indicates that there is some consultation with employees working in other departments when making decisions on projects, but the consultation does not happen on a continuous basis.
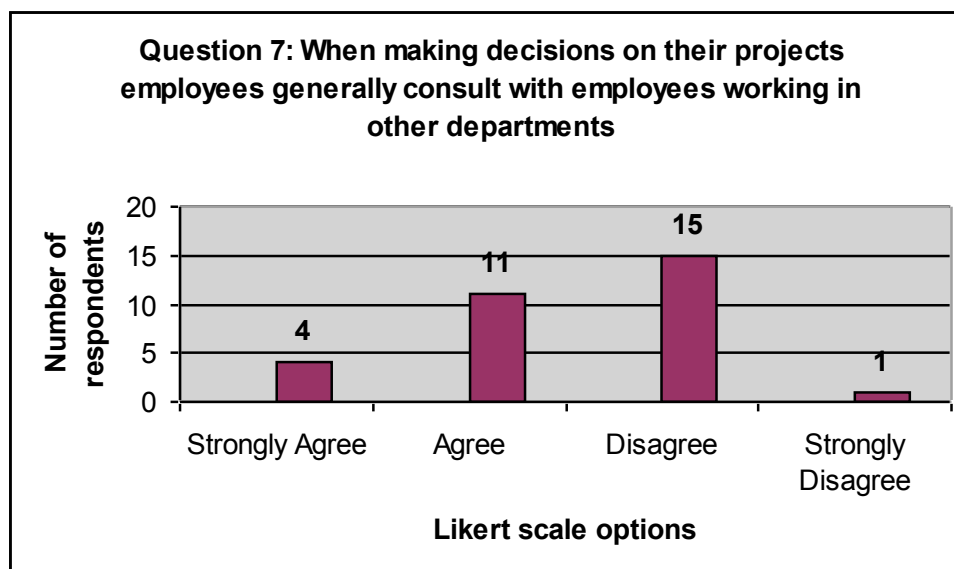
Figure 21: Distribution of responses on whether when making decisions on their projects employees generally consult with employees working in other departments

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Less than 2 years	1	1	1	
2 to 5 years		3	5	1
More than 5 years	3	7	9	
Total	**4**	**11**	**15**	**1**

Position level				
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Non-management	2	4	6	1
Middle management	1	5	7	
Top Management	1	2	2	
Total	**4**	**11**	**15**	**1**

Table 17: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in figure 21

Question 8 was the last question reviewing the current state of cross-functional collaboration within the TSC. Figure 22 below depicts that a majority of 20 respondents agreed and two strongly agreed that employees tend to make decisions without sufficient consultation with employees working in other departments. This represents 71% of the respondents.

This means that a substantial number of respondents (71%) support the researcher's observation that although there is a certain amount of consultation, it is not sufficient. In addition, a closer look at table 17 below shows that this view is held by respondents with different position levels and periods of employment, including all three of the respondents who have been working within the TSC's for less than two years.
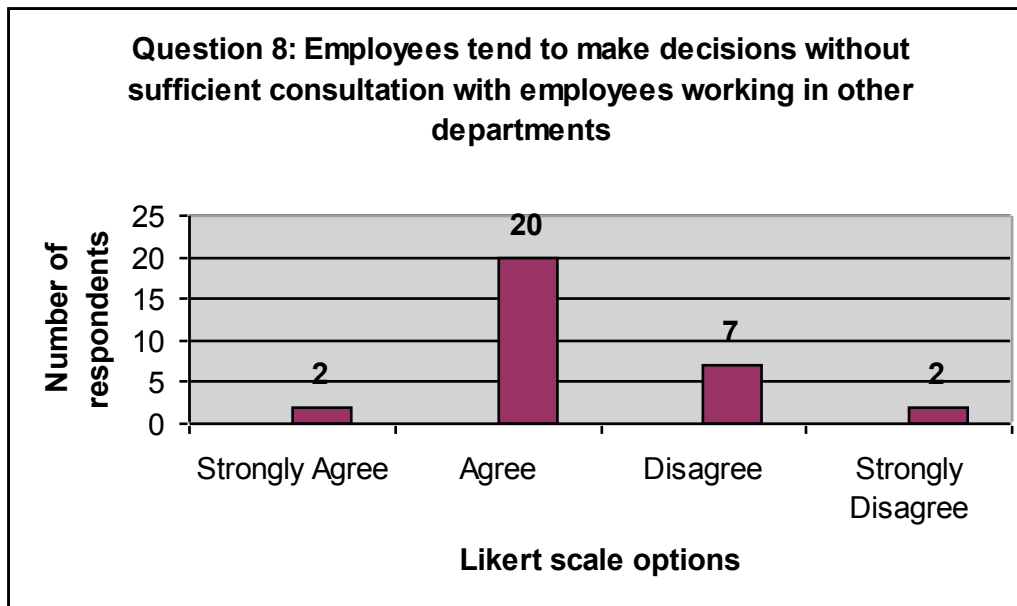
Figure 22: Distribution of responses on whether employees tend to make decisions without sufficient consultation with employees working in other departments

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Less than 2 years		3		
2 to 5 years		7	1	1
More than 5 years	2	10	6	1
Total	**2**	**20**	**7**	**2**
Position level				
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Non-management		10	1	2
Middle management	2	8	3	
Top Management		2	3	
Total	**2**	**20**	**7**	**2**

Table 18: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in figure 22

5.6.2 Objective 2: Assess the impact of the centre's functional structure on cross-functional collaboration

Questions 9 to 15 addressed the second research objective of assessing the impact of the centre's functional structure on cross-functional collaboration. In figure 23 the results for question 9 show that 17 respondents agreed and 1 strongly agreed (a total of 58%) that there are sufficient opportunities for employees to share information and ideas with employees working in other departments, while 42% disagreed. A look at table 19 shows that the respondents were spread across the various periods of employment and position levels. Since the results were almost split in the middle and this was only the first of numerous questions that assessed the impact of the Thusong Centre's functional structure on cross-functional collaboration, the researcher proceeded to the next questions for a more holistic picture rather than jumping into premature conclusions.
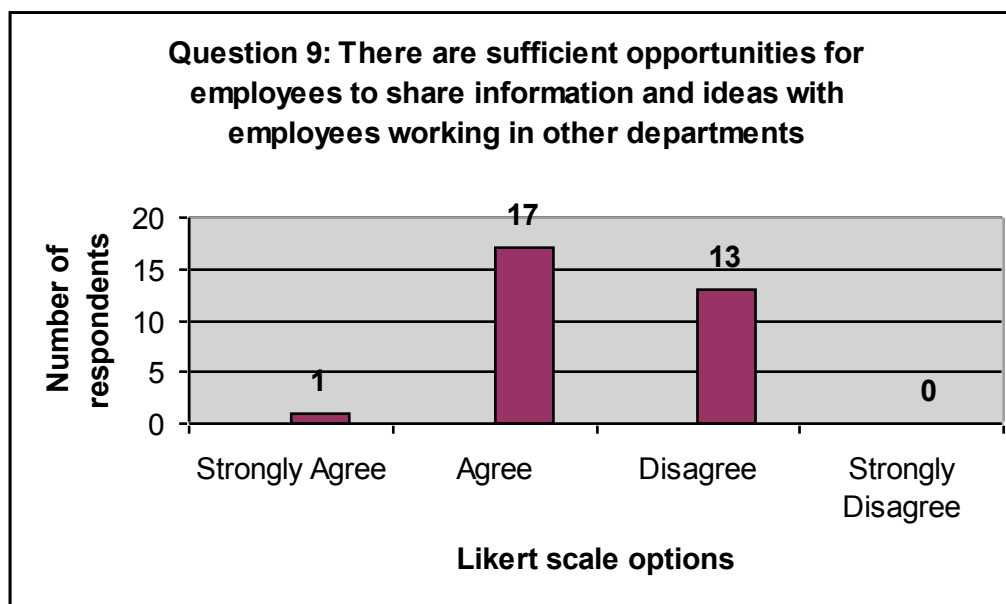
Figure 23: Distribution of responses on whether there are sufficient opportunities for employees to share information and ideas with employees working in other departments

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Less than 2 years		2	1	
2 to 5 years		4	5	
More than 5 years	1	11	7	
Total	1	17	13	0

Position level				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Non-management		8	5	
Middle management		6	7	
Top Management	1	3	1	
Total	1	17	13	0

Table 20: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in Figure 23

For question 10, figure 24 shows that a significant number of respondents (90%) indicated that there is a need to create more opportunities where employees can share information and ideas with employees working in other departments. As depicted in table 20, this view is shared by respondents across the various periods of employment and position levels, and notably, four of the five respondents in top management positions strongly agreed with this statement.
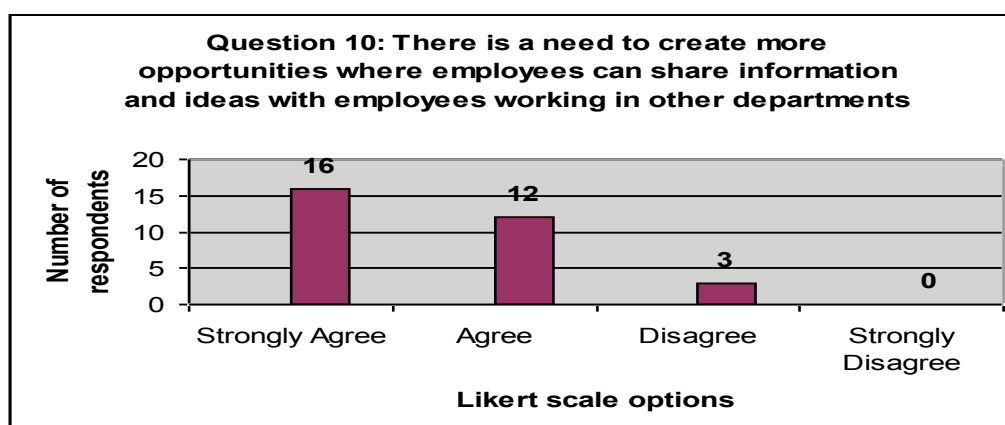
Figure 24: Distribution of responses on whether there is a need to create more opportunities where employees can share information and ideas with employees working in other departments

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Less than 2 years	1	2		
2 to 5 years	3	5	1	
More than 5 years	12	5	2	
Total	16	12	3	0

Position level				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Non-management	6	6	1	
Middle management	6	6	1	
Top Management	4		1	
Total	16	12	3	0

Table 21: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in Figure 24

In terms of question 11, figure 25 depicts that 21 respondents disagreed and one strongly disagreed with the statement that there are sufficient opportunities for employees to contribute towards the decisions that employees in other departments make. These results represent a majority of 71% of the respondents who feel that they do not have enough opportunities to contribute their skills and knowledge towards decisions made by employees in other departments. Notably, table 22 shows that this view was also shared by three of the five top managers who formed part of the sample.
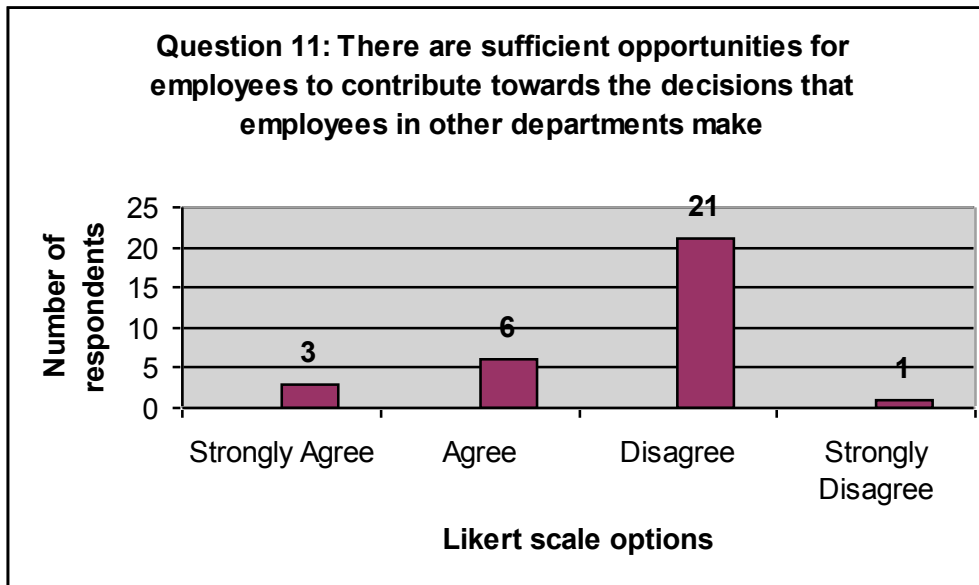
Figure 25: Distribution of responses on whether there are sufficient opportunities for employees to contribute towards the decisions that employees in other departments make

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Less than 2 years			2	1
2 to 5 years		3	6	
More than 5 years	3	3	13	
Total	**3**	**6**	**21**	**1**
Position level				
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Non-management		3	9	1
Middle management	1	2	10	
Top Management	2	1	2	
Total	**3**	**6**	**21**	**1**

Table 22: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in Figure 25

A look at the results to question 12 in figure 26 shows that 11 respondents strongly agreed and 18 agreed that there is a need to create more opportunities for employees to use their skills and knowledge to contribute towards the decisions

made by employees working in other departments. This represents a whopping 94% of respondents with different periods of employment and position levels, as depicted in table 23.

Figure 26: Distribution of responses on whether there is a need to create more opportunities where employees can use their skills and knowledge to contribute towards the decisions made by employees working in other departments

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Less than 2 years	2	1		
2 to 5 years	2	7		
More than 5 years	7	10	2	
Total	**11**	**18**	**2**	**0**
Position level				
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Non-management	6	6	1	
Middle management	4	9		
Top Management	1	3	1	
Total	**11**	**18**	**2**	**0**

Table 23: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in figure 26

In terms of question 13, figure 27 depicts that 15 respondents disagreed and five strongly disagreed with the statement that there are sufficient opportunities to make inputs during the planning, introduction and implementation phase of projects that employees in other departments are working on. These results represent a majority of 65% of the respondents with different periods of employment and position levels, as depicted in table 24.

Figure 27: Distribution of responses on whether there are sufficient opportunities to make inputs during the planning, introduction and implementation phase of projects that employees in other departments are working on

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Less than 2 years			2	1
2 to 5 years		2	5	2
More than 5 years	2	7	8	2
Total	**2**	**9**	**15**	**5**
Position level				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Non-management		5	6	2
Middle management		3	8	2
Top Management	2	1	1	1
Total	**2**	**9**	**15**	**5**

Table 24: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in Figure 27

Question 14 looked at whether respondents' work requires that they work mainly with employees from their department. This was an important question because working mainly with employees from your department would mean less opportunity for cross-functional collaboration. Figure 28 shows that 58% of the respondents indicated that their work does not require that they work mainly with employees from their department, although a still substantial 42% indicated that their work requires that they work mainly with employees from their department.

These results are of respondents with different periods of employment and position levels as depicted in Table 25.
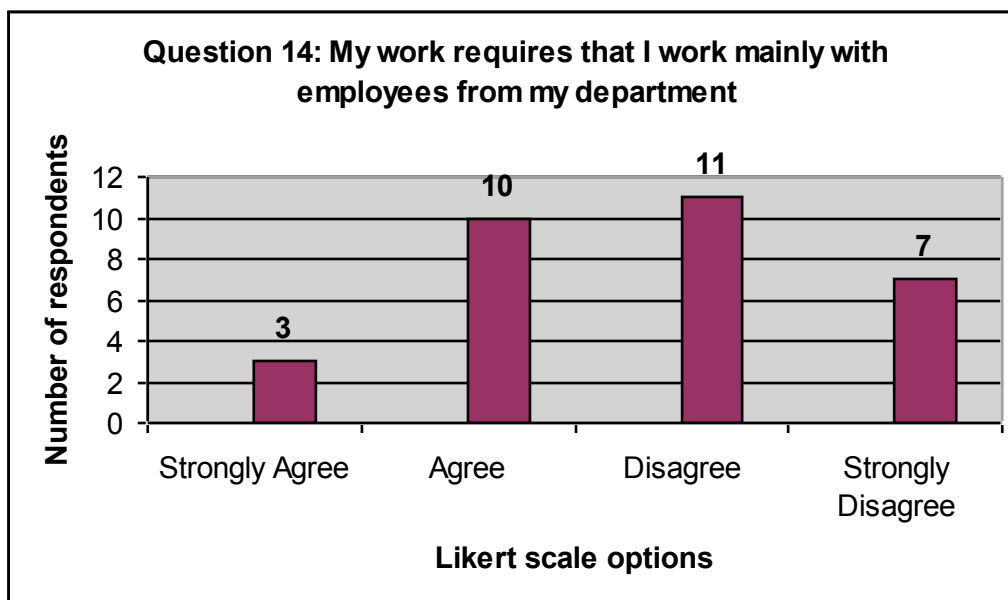
Figure 28: Distribution of responses on whether the respondents' work requires that they work mainly with employees from their department

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Less than 2 years	1	1		1
2 to 5 years		6	2	1
More than 5 years	2	3	9	5
Total	**3**	**10**	**11**	**7**

Position level				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Non-management	2	5	4	2
Middle management		3	6	4
Top Management	1	2	1	1
Total	3	10	11	7

Table 25: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in Figure 28

Question 15 was the reverse of question 14 as it looked at whether respondents' work requires that they work mainly with employees working in other departments. The results in figure 29 show that 58% of the respondents indicated that their work requires them to interact with other departments.

The remaining and substantial 42% of the respondents, which were also highlighted in question 14, indicated that they work mainly with employees from their department. These results are of respondents with different periods of employment and position levels as depicted in Table 26.
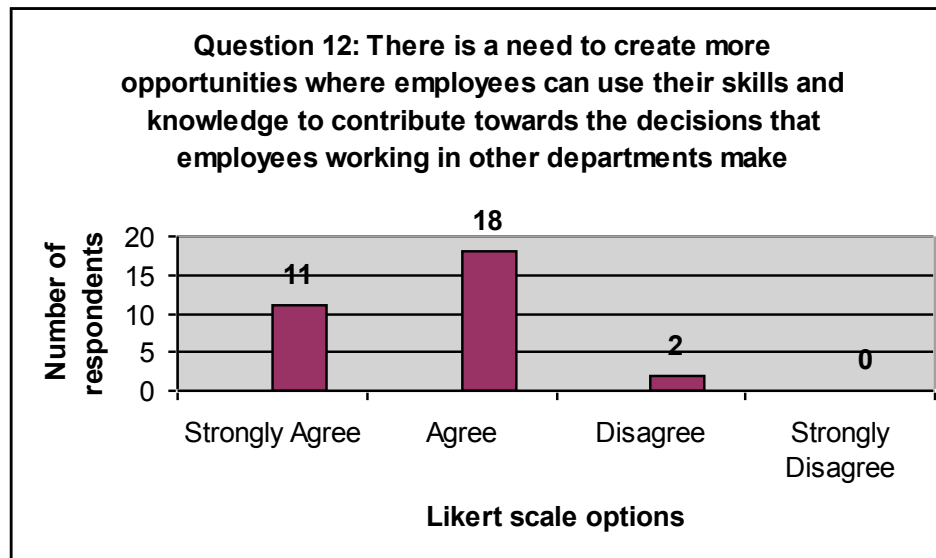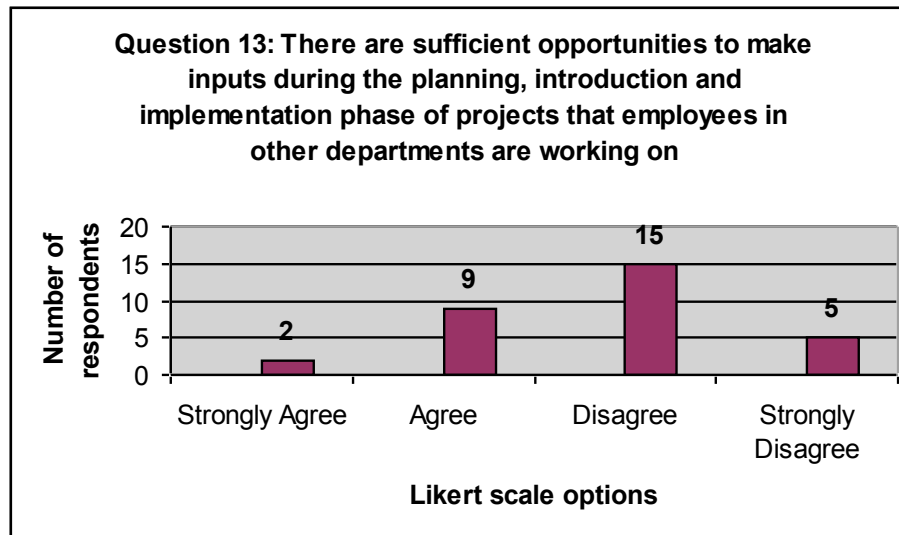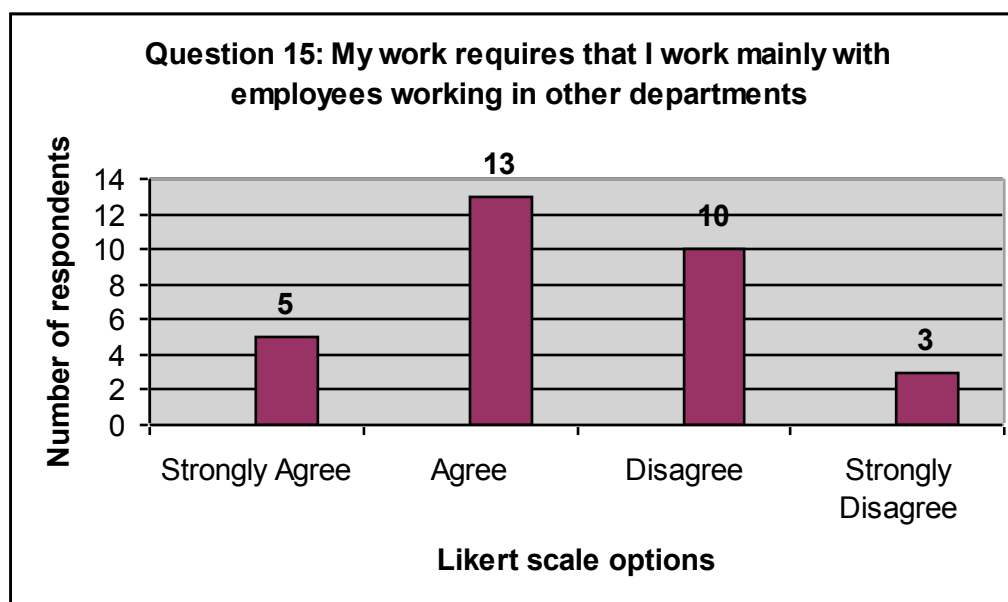

Figure 29: Distribution of responses on whether the respondents work requires that they work mainly with employees working in other departments

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Less than 2 years	1	1	1	
2 to 5 years		3	5	1
More than 5 years	4	9	4	2
Total	**5**	**13**	**10**	**3**

Position level				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Non-management	1	5	5	2
Middle management	3	7	3	
Top Management	1	1	2	1
Total	**5**	**13**	**10**	**3**

Table 26: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in Figure 29

5.6.3 Objective 3: Assess whether the functional structure promotes cross-functional collaboration

Questions 16 to 20 addressed the third research objective of assessing whether the culture that has developed within the functional structure promotes cross-functional collaboration.

With regard to question 16, results in figure 30 show that 55% of the respondents indicated that employees are generally eager to get input from employees working in other departments, while 45% were not in agreement. Both groups who agreed and disagreed included employees with different periods of employment and position levels, as depicted in table 14.

Given that the results of those who agree and disagree are almost split in the middle, the researcher cannot say without any doubt that employees are generally eager to get input from employees working in other departments.
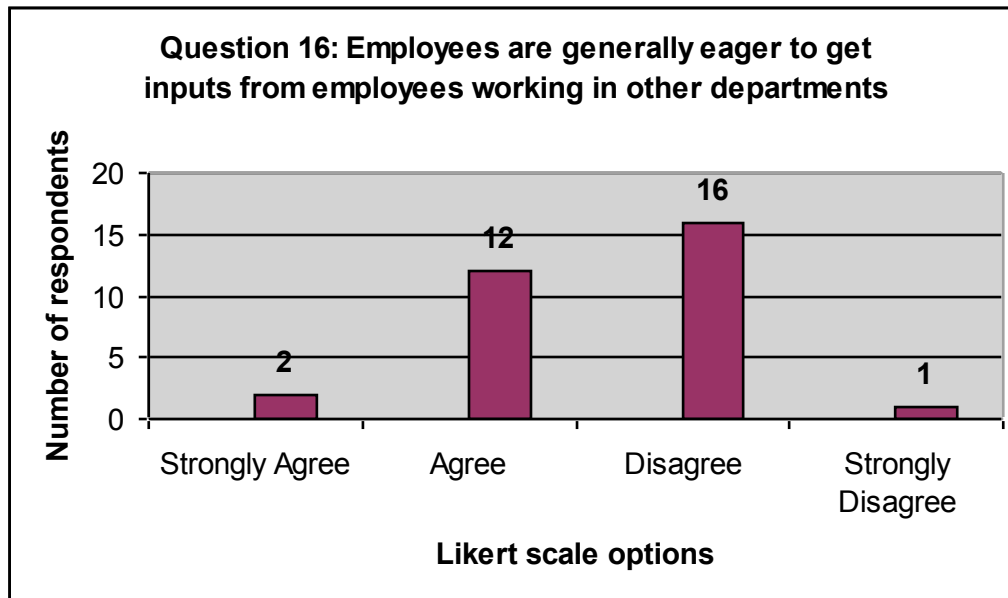
Figure 30: Distribution of responses on whether employees are generally eager to get inputs from employees working in other departments

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Less than 2 years		2	1	
2 to 5 years		5	4	
More than 5 years	2	5	11	1
Total	**2**	**12**	**16**	**1**
Position level				
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Non-management		5	8	
Middle management	1	6	6	
Top Management	1	1	2	1
Total	**2**	**12**	**16**	**1**

Table 27: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in Figure 30

In terms of question 17, Figure 31 depicts that 19 respondents agreed and one strongly agreed that employees are generally eager to use their skills and knowledge to assist employees working in other departments. These results represent a majority of 65% of the respondents with different periods of employment and position levels as depicted in Table 15.
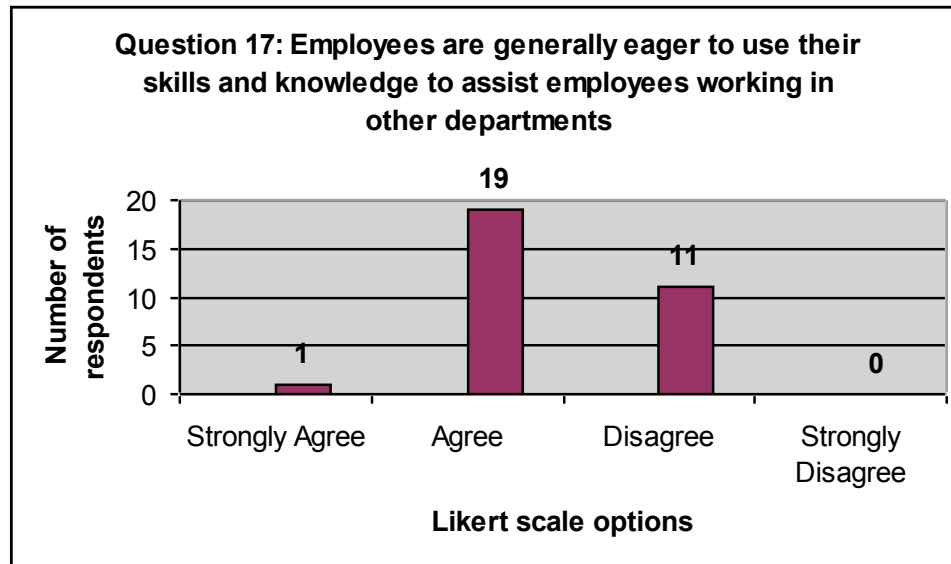
Figure 31: Distribution of responses on whether employees are generally eager to use their skills and knowledge to assist employees working in other departments

Period of employment			
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Less than 2 years		1	2	
2 to 5 years		7	2	
More than 5 years	1	11	7	
Total	**1**	**19**	**11**	**0**
Position level			
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Non-management		9	4	
Middle management		8	5	
Top Management	1	2	2	
Total	**1**	**19**	**11**	**0**

Table 28: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in Figure 31

Question 18 asked whether the relationship between the departments is competitive. Asking this question was important because competiveness steers the departments more towards working in competition with each rather than with each other.

The results in Figure 32 show that 68% of the respondents indicated that the relationship between the departments is competitive and this notably includes all five top managers who form part of the sample as shown in table 28

Question 18: The relationship between the departments is competitive

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Number of respondents	4	17	9	1

Likert scale options
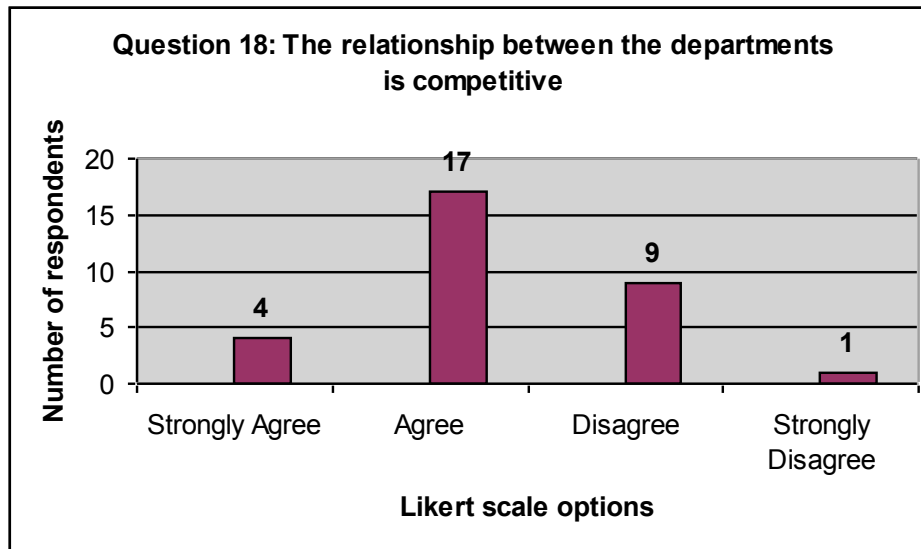
Figure 32: Assessment of the relationship between departments

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Less than 2 years			2	1
2 to 5 years	2	6	1	
More than 5 years	2	11	6	
Total	**4**	**17**	**9**	**1**
Position level				
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Non-management	1	5	6	1
Middle management	2	8	3	
Top Management	1	4		
Total	**4**	**17**	**9**	**1**

Table 29: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in Figure 32

Question 19 asked whether the relationship between the departments is collaborative, a key component for fostering cross-functional collaboration. Figure 33 shows that 20 respondents disagree and three strongly disagree with the statement that the relationship between the departments is collaborative. These results represent a significant 74% of the respondents with different periods of employment and position levels as depicted in table 30.
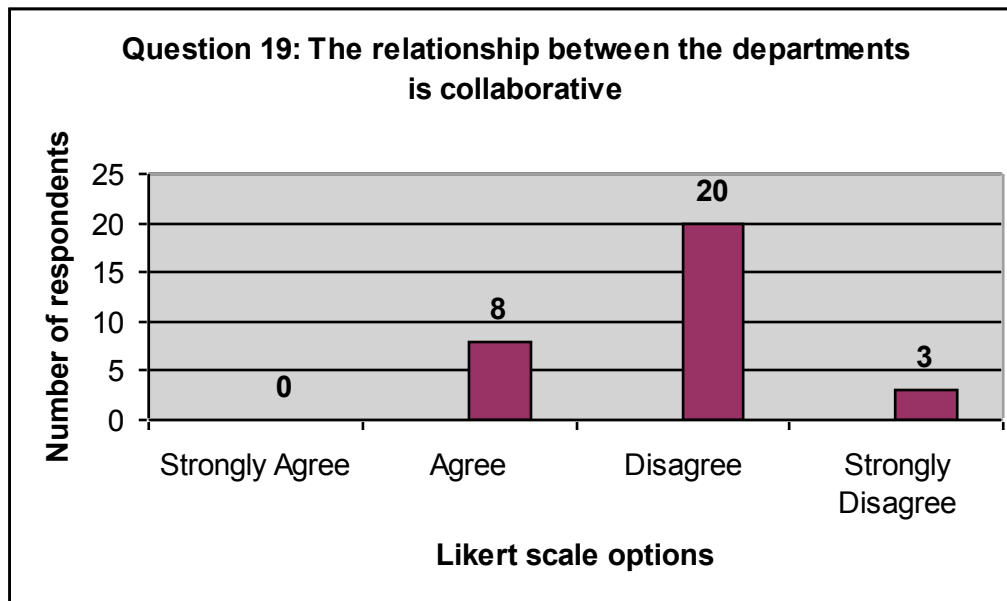
Figure 33: Distribution of responses on whether the relationship between the departments is collaborative

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Less than 2 years		2		1
2 to 5 years		1	7	1
More than 5 years		5	13	1
Total	0	8	20	3

Position level				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Non-management		4	6	3
Middle management		3	10	
Top Management		1	4	
Total	0	8	20	3

Table 30: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in Figure 33

The last question of the questionnaire, question 20, asked whether there is a common organisational culture that brings employees in the various departments together.

The results in figure 34 depicts that a considerable 81% of the respondents with different periods of employment and position levels, as shown in table 31 indicated that there is no common culture that brings employees in the various departments together. This result is significant because a lack of a common organisational culture is a barrier to cross-functional collaboration.
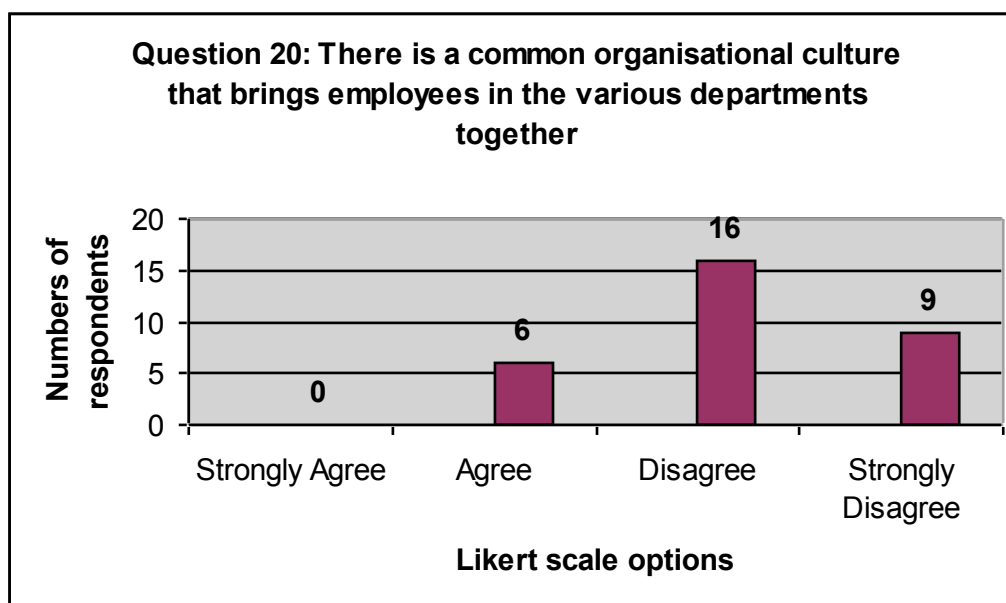
Figure 34: Distribution of responses on whether there is a common organisational culture that brings employees in the various departments together

Period of employment				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Less than 2 years		2		1
2 to 5 years		1	6	2
More than 5 years		3	10	6
Total	0	6	16	9
Position level				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Non-management		2	7	4
Middle management		2	7	4
Top Management		2	2	1
Total	0	6	16	9

Table 31: Period of employment and position level frequency of responses reported in Figure 34

5.6.4 Objective 4: Assess the alignment of service delivery models and resources with the community needs.

The researcher observed that, of the visited Thusong Centres, the benefits were more prevalent among the Thusong Centres in the rural areas. The above is also supported by figure 35 below, which shows the proportion of respondents that strongly agreed that communities derive benefits from the TSCs. Overall, the response looked very impressive, but, for the centres in urban areas, it painted a very gloomy picture.

The impediments to the communities were cost-related, in terms of accessing the service. They respondents were of the view that the fees charged for access to telecentres were too high for the communities concerned, especially considering the fact that most of the members of such communities were unemployed. The fees charged were intended to pay for the maintenance of equipment. Also noted was that accessibility posed a challenge to the intention for TSCs to benefit the communities fully. The operating hours of the TSCs were from 08h00 to 16h00, which was in compliance with the normal working hours of government departments.

With regards to the location of the TSCs, the majority of the respondents believed that they were very conveniently placed, so that visiting the government departments concerned could be minimised.

The greatest threat posed to the TSCs in the rural communities was identified as being technical and technological factors. Constant power failures were experienced, as well as poor connectivity, and computer and printer breakdowns, among other challenges. Such factors posed a threat to the sustainability of the TSCs.
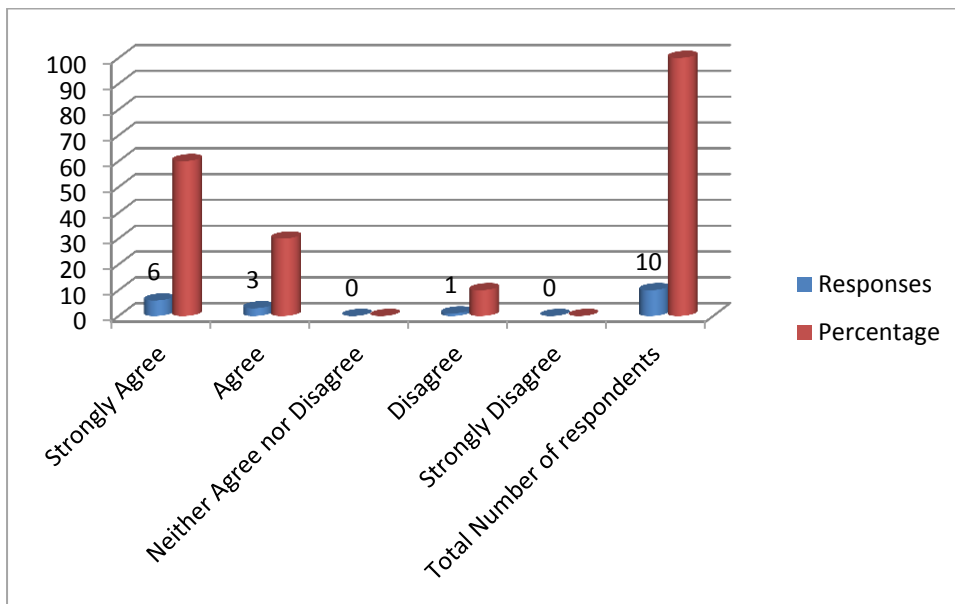
Figure 35: Proportion of respondents strongly agreed that communities derive benefits from the TSCs

5.7.   Semi-structured individual interviews

With the aim of further exploring the quantitative findings made as a result of the self-administered questionnaire, the researcher conducted semi-structured individual interviews. Five respondents who worked in different departments, and who had successfully completed the questionnaire, were randomly selected to be interviewed. As depicted in the interview schedule in Appendix B, the interview questions were designed and grouped with the study's research objectives in mind. What follows is an analysis of the themes that emerged from the semi-structured individual interviews.

5.7.1. Current state of cross-functional collaboration (Objective 1)

The main theme that emerged from the set of questions that assessed the current state of cross-functional collaboration within the Thusong Centres was that the departments tended to work in silos. The participants explained that even although the departments did share information ideas, skills and knowledge to a certain extent, the practice was neither continuous nor widespread across the government sphere.

One of the participants emphasised:

> "Departments are working in silos, so expert knowledge is retained within departments and is not shared. There is a lot of intellectual property, but people are not sharing."

The missed opportunity to capitalise on the skills and knowledge of employees in other departments was also mentioned by another participant, who indicated:

> "There is duplication of effort and departments miss opportunities to learn from each other's key lessons."

The extent of the barriers between the departments was highlighted by a participant, who explained:

> "Collaboration is supposed to happen. However, it's not happening, because you feel like you are invading when you go to another department, so you end up not involving them."

5.7.2. Impact of the compartmentalised structure on cross-departmental collaboration (Objective 2)

The main theme that emerged from the set of questions that assessed the impact of the Thusong Centres' compartmentalised structure on cross-functional collaboration was that more opportunities were needed to share information, ideas, skills and knowledge with other departments, particularly for employees in non-management positions. For instance, one of the participants highlighted that most platforms for sharing information, ideas, skills and knowledge were for the top and middle managers. He explained:

"There should be platforms for non-managers to engage, because they are the ones that run projects"

The valuable experience and knowledge that non-managers from the various departments have and should be sharing was emphasised by another participant:

"Employees in the various departments who possess the technical skills and implement programmes and services are the ones that know what happens on the ground. However, there are not enough platforms for them to share information and ideas and [to] capitalise on each other's strengths."

5.7.3. Culture that has developed within the compartmentalised structure (Objective 3)

The main theme that emerged from the set of questions that assessed the culture that had developed within the compartmentalised structure was that there was a competitive culture between the various departments. The competitive culture had become a barrier to sharing information, ideas, skills and knowledge.

When explaining the nature of the relationship concerned, one of the participants indicated:

"Working with the various departments can be challenging, because the main priority is to chase targets and be acknowledged. When plans succeed they are ready to take all the credit, but [they] will leave you to take the fall if things do not go according to plan."

Another participant echoed the same sentiments:

"It should not be about wanting to reach targets or [about] wanting to be seen to be doing something at the expense of others. We should work collectively, even if it takes longer to meet the targets, because our impact will be greater."

In emphasising the importance of fostering a collaborative, rather than a competitive, culture, a participant indicated:

"The platforms for information sharing between the departments should not be used to cut down people to size and ridicule them; the aim should be to support and assist."

In addition, in connection with assisting in building a collaborative culture, another participant suggested that there was a need for informal platforms, on which the various divisions could interact. She emphasised:

"This will open up the lines of communication and encourage knowledge sharing."

5.8. Discussion per objective and integration

What follows is a discussion and integration of the findings of the self-administered questionnaires, the semi-structured individual interviews, and the rich picture analysis. The researcher also makes reference to relevant literature that was discussed in Chapter 3.

5.8.1. Current state of cross-functional collaboration within the selected Thusong Centre (Objective 1)

The issue of insufficient sharing of information and ideas between the various departments was raised by 75% of the questionnaire respondents. In addition, the participants' statements during the interviews regarding the non-sharing of expert knowledge resulted in the identification of a theme that the departments worked in silos, which also support the previously stated argument.

The results also communicate that although the employees did make use of the expertise of employees working in other departments to a certain extent, they did not take full advantage of it. Only 45% of the questionnaire respondents stated that they felt that the employees took full advantage of the expertise of employees working in other departments when doing their work. Furthermore, interview statements such as, "*there are missed opportunities to capitalise on the skills and knowledge of employees in other departments*", also proved the point.

Findings also indicated that although there was some consultation with colleagues working in other departments when making decisions on projects, this did not

happen all the time and was insufficient. This was supported by a substantial 71% of the respondents to the questionnaire. Overall, the situation at the time of the study seemed to reflect insufficient sharing of knowledge and ideas between departments, the failure to fully capitalise on the expertise of employees working in other departments, and the existence of poor consultation with employees working in other departments. There were, therefore, missed opportunities to take full advantage of the value highlighted by Caruso and Woolley (2008:245), which comes from bringing together experts with diverse task-relevant experiences, viewpoints, and knowledge.

5.8.2. Impact of compartmentalised structure on cross-functional collaboration (Objective 2)

Initially, when responding to a question about whether there were sufficient opportunities for employees to share information and ideas with employees working in other departments, 58% of the questionnaire respondents said that there were enough opportunities, whereas 42% of them disagreed with the idea.

However, considering that the results were almost split down the middle, the researcher considered the next question, which phrased the question differently, by asking whether there was a need to create more opportunities where employees could share information and ideas with employees working in other departments. In response to the latter question, there was a clear and significant majority, with 90% of the questionnaire respondents, including four of the five top managers, indicating that there was a need to create more opportunities where the employees could share information and ideas with the employees working in other departments.

The concern about opportunities for sharing information and ideas with other departments continued. Of the questionnaire respondents, 71%, including three of the five top managers, indicated that they lacked enough opportunities to contribute their skills and knowledge towards the decision making of employees in the other departments. Of the questionnaire respondents, 94% communicated that there was a need to create more opportunities that would allow for the employees to use their skills and knowledge to contribute towards the decisions that employees working in other departments make. Sixty-five percent (65%) of the respondents said that there were insufficient opportunities to make input during the planning, introduction and

implementation phases of projects on which the employees in other departments were working. In addition, a considerable number of the respondents (42%) indicated that their job descriptions required that they work mainly with employees from their own department. Based on the research that was conducted by Hirunyawipada et al. (2009), since 42% of the questionnaire respondents had low network centrality because their job descriptions required that they worked mainly with employees from their department, they were unlikely to transfer to, or to be exposed to the experiences, practices, perceptions, and learning of employees from other departments.

The concern about insufficient opportunities to communicate and to collaborate with other departments, which was shared by the employees from all periods of employment and position levels, including top management, recalled the researcher to a question that had been asked when assessing the current state of cross-functional collaboration within the selected Thusong Centre. The researcher had asked the questionnaire respondents whether the employees tended to withhold information and ideas from employees working in other departments, and had found it interesting that only 52% of the respondents indicated that this was the case. The researcher found it interesting, given the previous results, that there was insufficient information and idea sharing between departments, and thought that a substantial majority of respondents would automatically accuse other employees of withholding information and ideas. However, once the concern about the opportunities to share, and to interact, with other departments arose, it became clear that, even though some employees did withhold information, there were those who wanted to share relevant information and ideas, but who felt that they lacked sufficient opportunities to do so. Concerns about being granted more opportunities to share information, ideas, skills and knowledge with other departments also came up prominently during the semi-structured individual interviews. The respondents particularly emphasised the need for more information, ideas, skills and knowledge-sharing opportunities among the employees who were in non-management positions.

The communicated need for more cross-functional opportunities within the selected centre's functional structure, therefore, made the researcher question the organisational design's ability to facilitate the recognition, creation, transformation

and distribution of knowledge sufficiently across departments, which Ramsey and Barkhuizen (2011) indicated is needed to ensure sustainability in today's environment.

5.8.3. The culture that has developed within the compartmentalised structure (Objective 3)

What was established during analysis of the questionnaire, and which unravelled further during the interviews, is that the relationships of the various departments were more competitive than collaborative. For instance, 68% of the questionnaire respondents, including all five of the top managers who formed part of the sample, indicated that the relationship between the departments was competitive. As top management plays a key role in moulding organisational activities and interactions, they must have contributed towards the competitive relations to an extent, but, most importantly, they could also play a key role in altering how the departments relate to one another.

The competitive behaviour present was also revealed by the fact that 74% of the questionnaire respondents disagreed with the statement that the relationship between the departments was collaborative. In addition, 81% of the questionnaire respondents indicated that no common culture brought the employees in the various departments together.

The researcher cannot also say without any doubt that the employees were generally eager to obtain input from the employees working in the other departments because the results that were obtained from the participants were almost split down the middle. Of the questionnaire respondents, 55% indicated that the employees were generally eager to obtain input from employees working in other departments, whereas 45% of the respondents disagreed with the notion.

There was, however, evidence of what Joshi and Roh (2008) and Engelen, Brettel and Wiest (2011) referred to as the cultural values of individualism and masculinity that emphasise the spirit of competitiveness.

On the positive side, 65% of the questionnaire respondents agreed that the employees were generally eager to use their skills and knowledge to assist

employees working in other departments. Availing themselves of more opportunities for information and idea sharing, as was discussed earlier, would help to ensure that their readiness to do so would be likely to translate into the actual capitalisation of the skills and knowledge of the employees working in other departments.

In an effort to address the existing challenge, a picture depicting how information should flow from one entity to the other was shown to the employees who dealt with foster parents visiting a branch of the Department of Home Affairs to apply for a birth certificate for their foster child. The picture depicted a trigger to SASSA, indicating that there was a potential beneficiary for a foster grant. The Department of Social Development was alerted to the existence of the foster family that they would need to visit to assess the quality of care being received by the foster child concerned. Processing the case could afford the government sufficient time to plan properly and thereby achieve a saving. The above is supported by Kanellis et al (2012), who argue that Service Canada achieved a saving of $300 million by streamlining their activities through using ICT. Such savings have been achieved through partnerships and by means of putting performance standards in place, such as enabling parents who are registering their newborn infant to receive both the provincial birth certificate and the federal insurance number within two weeks.

To best harness ICT and to achieve return on investment, Jensen (1998) argues for greater awareness among decision-makers at the highest levels and for the establishment of national ICT forums made up of regulators, operators, service providers and users. He notes the need for clear strategies for subsidising Internet services, shared access and public access facilities in the rural areas, such as telecentres. One of the findings was that the government needs to operate more like a business and to embrace the established term of 'new public management' (Bekkers et al, 2006:7). In terms of such new public management, some of the key elements that should take place are:

- a shift in value priorities away from universalism, equity, security and resilience, towards efficiency and individualism;

- a shift in the focus of management systems from inputs and processes towards results and outputs;

- a shift towards measurement and quantification, especially through the development of performance indicators and benchmark systems;

- a preference for more specialised, lean, flat, and autonomous organisational structures;

- a substitution of formal, hierarchical relationships between or within organisations by means of the establishment of contracts or of contract-like relationships; and

- an emphasis on service quality and consumer orientation (Bekkers et al., 2006:7-8).

5.9. Summary

The current chapter presented, analysed and integrated data collected from rich picture analysis, the self-administered questionnaires and the semi-structured individual interviews. The aim was to address the three research objectives through interpreting the findings made in connection with the research data obtained. Conclusions will be drawn, and recommendations will be made in the sixth and final chapter of this thesis.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1. Introduction

The last chapter of this research concludes the study and makes recommendations in connection with the findings obtained. The research problem, the research questions and the investigative questions are restated to determine whether they were successfully addressed by the research. The author concludes the chapter by making recommendations that are useful to the government across all spheres: local, national, and provincial government, together with its agencies and the NGOs concerned supporting the government departments involved. The researcher also elaborated on the lessons learnt throughout the research process.

The research problem statement for this dissertation reads as follows:

"The compartmentalisation of services maintained through the Thusong Centres operating model is not facilitating service delivery integration."

The Thusong Centres were found to be very effective means of communication in the rural areas for the government, but there is the potential that even more can be achieved by the centres if they are correctly utilised.

6.2. Conclusion

ICT applications are tools that can provide decision support to public administrators for the improving, planning and monitoring of developmental programmes that can improve services to the citizens, introduce greater transparency than at present and empower citizens through enabling access to information and knowledge. This research has presented an example of a Thusong Centre, and of how it utilises technology, together with its application, and has depicted a rich picture diagram of what can be achieved if there is integration amongst the various departments residing in the Thusong Centres.

The mini dissertation has striven to give insight into the reasons for the government, through the Thusong Centres initiative, not having achieved its mandate of

emancipating the poor through ICT, not expediting service delivery and not achieving service delivery integration through ICT. Had the government developed an all-encompassing ICT strategy that had forced the government departments to achieve economies of scale and of learning, and that had ensured the implementation thereof, the responses to the questionnaire posed would not have been so negative.

As the TSC concept evolves, the government needs to remain vigilant and to keep in mind different dynamics surrounding the initiative, to make it possible for such implementing bodies as the state-owned entities, like SAPO and SITA, among others, to operate without hindrance in the form of funding challenges.

The survey undertaken in this research addresses the questions raised by the researcher in assessing the effectiveness of the deployed ICT in the Thusong Centres, and provides an understanding of why the model, in some aspects, has not reached its intended goals.

The survey was aimed at addressing three different dimensions, as were mentioned in Chapter 5 of the research findings. All of the aspects were covered through rich picture analysis and the questionnaire, and, as a result, the government will be in a better position to redesign, or to rectify, where the TSCs have not done well, and to augment its success factors. Furthermore, the recommendations that have been made by the communities regarding how the uptake of the initiative can be enhanced will assist the department in future engagements, and with the allocation and management of the funding thereof.

The study will enable the government to understand the perceptions and the diverse implementation and challenges experienced by the Thusong Centres and communities in accessing/utilising the Thusong Centres. As a result, an informed solution will be provided.

The survey that is focused on areas that can bring about change and help are set to bring about service delivery integration through ICT. Future research can tap into the involvement of management and other untapped elements by allowing, for example, the communities concerned to offer solutions to the challenges regarding the TSCs. Improvements in connection with the uptake of the TSCs can surely be noted in future.

Further ICT training and induction will improve the service rendered at the TSCs. Continued assessment and analysis of the initiative can also improve the TSC model and provide a platform for authoring new solutions.

By basing the findings directly on the feedback obtained from the users, from the lessons derived from implementing the TSCs and from utilising the funds appropriately, the researcher is of the opinion that the conclusions of the study are grounded in a holistic understanding of both the product assessed and the target users. There are many funds disbursed to agencies, SOEs and others for different reasons, and simply allocating them will not result in the service delivery being as that envisaged.

Through the assessments and the implications for the TSCs outlined in the current thesis, the researcher believes that the recommendations will be considered to address the challenges experienced by said communities.

6.3. Recommendations

After gaining an understanding of the needs of the community and reaching conclusions about the impact that ICT has had on achieving service delivery integration, the researcher is now in a position to recommend the required changes that might better facilitate interdepartmental collaboration to achieve service delivery integration.

The recommendations based on the research results of the study, consequently, are as follows:

- **The Bokamoso Thusong Centre should adopt a matrix structure.**

What would happen in the matrix structure is that employees possessing a variety of expertise would be drawn from the relevant departments to form a team that will work on a particular project or product (Louw and Venter, 2006). Adopting the matrix structure would, therefore:

  - address the issue that there are insufficient opportunities for cross-functional collaboration, by providing an opportunity for the experts

housed in the various departments to share their information, ideas, skills and expertise;

– address the issue that there are insufficient idea and knowledge-sharing opportunities between employees in the various departments throughout the planning, introduction, implementation and monitoring phases of projects by using the product or project teams for such a purpose;

– address the issue that a competitive culture has developed between the various departments, by encouraging a culture of collaboration, through designing work to enable what Caruso and Woolley (2008:253) refer to as task interdependence and outcome interdependence;

– address the issue that, in particular, employees in non-management positions lack sufficient opportunity to share ideas and knowledge with employees from other departments by assigning the employees to the project or product teams, based on the relevant expertise that they possess, rather than on their position within the organisation;

– enable employees to retain and to hone their unique functional expertise, which Cheng and Sanchez-Burks (2008) emphasise are key to the success of cross-functional teams, because the various departments would serve as what Giancola (2007) refers to as the home base for employees who are deployed in the project or product teams.

- **Interdepartmental collaboration should be appraised and rewarded.**

Assessing whether employees actually do consult and share information and ideas with employees from other departments, and rewarding those who do so, can serve as a mechanism for motivating the employees to practise cross-functional collaboration.

For instance, 360-degree feedback could be used by a manager to assess the extent to which an employee engages in collaboration (Cameron, 2006). The

manager could conduct such feedback by obtaining feedback from individuals working in other departments with whom the employee who is being evaluated is expected to consult and to share information and ideas.

- **National government departments should play a leading role in fostering interdepartmental collaboration.**

Since top management, particularly departmental heads, play a key role in moulding organisational behaviour and activities, they should practise, encourage and enforce interdepartmental collaboration. Doing so would communicate their commitment towards achieving service delivery integration, serve as clear communication to all employees that change is indeed happening and motivate employees to follow suit.

- **There should be regular informal networking platforms that involve employees in all departments.**

As one respondent indicated, such platforms would open up the lines of communication and would assist in developing a culture in which employees voluntarily engage in interdepartmental collaboration because they recognise its value in meeting the demands of the dynamic and complex environment in which they operate. ICT can bridge this gap through introduction of platforms such as SharePoint and internal social sites developed in-house

6.4. Opportunities for further research

Since top management plays a significant role in moulding organisational practices and culture, further research can be conducted to define top management's actions that promote and discourage interdepartmental collaboration through ICT. Such a study would, therefore, assist in ensuring that top management knows exactly what type of behaviour to adopt and to avoid in its efforts to foster service delivery integration.

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APPENDICES

EVALUATION OF THE THUSONG SERVICE CENTRES - Employees

My name is **Portia Matsena** from the South African Post Office. I am a postgraduate student, conducting a study for my MComm qualification with the University of KwaZulu-Natal.   The aim of the study is to assess the impact of ICT in fast-tracking service delivery at the Thusong Centres. I would like to ask you a few questions regarding your experience in using the Thusong Centres. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes. The questionnaires should be returned to the researcher by 31 November 2012. For any enquiries, kindly contact the researcher on 083 381 3498 / 012 649 7346, or email all your queries to the following email address: Portia.Matsena@postoffice.co.za.

Thanking you in advance for participating in this study.

Purpose of the questionnaire

Anonymity and confidentiality

The information used from this questionnaire will be used by the researcher to complete her MComm in Leadership Studies.

Your anonymity is assured, and your feedback will be used for the purpose of the study and nothing else.

The results will not be made available to your supervisors or managers.

The results are confidential to the Graduate School of Business and Leadership and to the researcher.

Completion of the questionnaire

The questionnaire comprises 24 questions.

It should take you approximately 30 minutes to complete, if not less time.

Except for the first question, where you have to indicate the department in which you work, by crossing through one of the options, for the rest of the statements please cross one of the options to indicate how you feel about the issue at stake.

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I spend a lot of time reading emails.	1	2	3	4

Please indicate the department in which you work, by crossing through one of the options below:	
Government Communication and Information System	
Home Affairs	
Social Development	
SASSA	
SAPS	
Other (if other, specify)	

Period of employment:

Less than 2 years	
2 to 4 years	
More than 4 years	

3. Your position in the organisation:

Non-management position	
Middle management	
Top management	

Assessment of cross functional benefits derived from Thusong Centres:

Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. The Thusong Centres' functions are well-known.	1	2	3	4
2. Government services are easily accessible through Thusong Centres.	1	2	3	4
3. Thusong Centres are a cheaper form of communicating with the government.	1	2	3	4
4. The support provided by the Thusong Centre staff is	1	2	3	4

commendable.				
5. The feedback from the government is provided faster than that which can be obtained by visiting the various departments.	1	2	3	4
6. The usage of the Thusong has increased my chances of finding assistance from the government.	1	2	3	4
7. The Thusong Centres are easily accessible, and the service is faster than that which is obtainable elsewhere.	1	2	3	4
8. I would rather use Thusong Centres than use the government departments directly.	1	2	3	4
9. Thusong Centres are value for money.	1	2	3	4

Value derived from ICT integration:

Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
10. ICT has made it easy for me to offer an integrated service to our customers.	1	2	3	4
11. There are mechanisms in place to support any shortcoming	1	2	3	4

related to ICT.				
12. Training is provided by the government on the IT systems utilised.	1	2	3	4
13. The ICT that is deployed at the various Thusong Centres is a waste of time, and the government should scrap the idea.	1	2	3	4
14. The ICT deployed have enhanced the services offered at the Thusong Centres.	1	2	3	4
15. I know and understand the Thusong Centre vision and how it fits into the overall government strategy.	1	2	3	4
16. Integration of services is offered by the various government institutions residing in the Centre.	1	2	3	4
17. Information occurs easily amongst all partnering departments and institutions.	1	2	3	4

Stakeholder and relationship management

Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
18. The Government Communication and Information Services (GCIS) Department is actively involved in ensuring the success of the Thusong Centres.	1	2	3	4
19. Funding is available to support the running of the Thusong Centres.	1	2	3	4
20. Frequent feedback is given to the strategic partner, i.e. the GCIS.	1	2	3	4
21. The support provided by the GCIS Department is adequate.	1	2	3	4
22. The Community is benefitting from the product.	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR INDIVIDUAL SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Opening of the interview schedule

To make the respondent feel welcome and relaxed, the researcher will do the following:

- explain the purpose of the interview and the topics that will be covered;
- assure the respondents that they will not be identified by name, and that the information provided will be treated with the strictest confidence, and used purely for academic purposes;
- inform them that, although their participation is much appreciated, they are still taking part in the study voluntarily, and are free to withdraw from it at any time without giving reasons;
- ask permission to record and write notes;
- indicate the expected length of the interview; and
- offer to share the results of the study with them.

Body of the interview schedule

(Topic: assessing the current state of inter-functional collaboration)

1. Do employees generally share information and ideas with employees working in other departments? Please explain.

| |
| |
| |
| |

2. Do employees consult with employees working in other departments when making decisions about their departments? Please explain.

| |
| |
| |
| |

3. Do employees exploit the skills and knowledge of employees working in other departments? Please explain.

| |
| |
| |
| |

(Topic: assessing the ICT impact on service delivery integration)

4. What channels can an employee use to share information and ideas with employees working in other departments? Do you think that such channels are sufficient?

5. What ICT means are there for an employee to use his/her skills and knowledge to contribute towards the decisions that employees working in other departments make? Do you think that said means are sufficient for the purpose intended?

(Topic: assessing whether the culture that has developed within the compartmentalised structure supports inter-functional collaboration)

6. Do you think that ICT encourages employees to share information between the various departments? Please explain.

7. Do you think that the employees are willing and committed to using their ICT skills and knowledge to assist employees working in other departments? Please explain.

Do you think that the ICT deployed in the various divisions encourages employees to compete or collaborate? Please explain.

8. Are there restrictions between the various departments that prevent the sharing of information and collaboration? Please explain.

9. What measures can be taken to increase the willingness and commitment of knowledge-sharing and collaboration between the various departments?

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Closure of the interview schedule

The researcher will close the interview by doing the following:

- summarising the main issues discussed;
- discussing the next course of action; and
- thanking the respondent for taking part in the interview.

My name is **Portia Matsena** from the South African Post Office. I am a postgraduate student, conducting a study for my MComm qualification with the University of KwaZulu-Natal.   The aim of the study is to assess the impact of ICT in fast- tracking service delivery at the Thusong Centres. I would like to ask you a few questions regarding your experience in using the Thusong Centres. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes. The questionnaires should be returned to the researcher by 31 November 2012. For any enquiries, kindly contact the researcher on 083 381 3498 / 012 649 7346, or email all your queries to the following email address: Portia.Matsena@postoffice.co.za.

1.	Area	
2.	Thusong Centre	
3.	Name of Respondent:	

A. Participating Household (HH)					
1.Gender	Male		4. Educational Level	Never went to school	
	Female			Primary School	
2.Age				Secondary/ High School	
3.Marital Status	Married			Tertiary	
	Single		5. Employment Status	Unemployed	
	Divorced			Self Employed	
	Widowed			Employed (Number of Years)	
	Married but not living together			N/A (for Old age individuals)	
	Cohabitation			N/A (for Old age individuals)	

B. Household Information *(Compulsory)*								
10. Number of Children Living in the Household	11. Number of Adults living in the Household		12. Number of Household members employed Permanently and type of employment (e.g. Formal, Informal)		13. Number of Household members employed temporarily and type of employment (e.g. Formal, Informal)			Male
	Male		Male		Female		Old Age Grant		Nursery/Pre-school	
	Female		Female		Female		Child Support Grant		Primary school	
							Disability Grant		Secondary/High school	

Section 1: Demographic Information
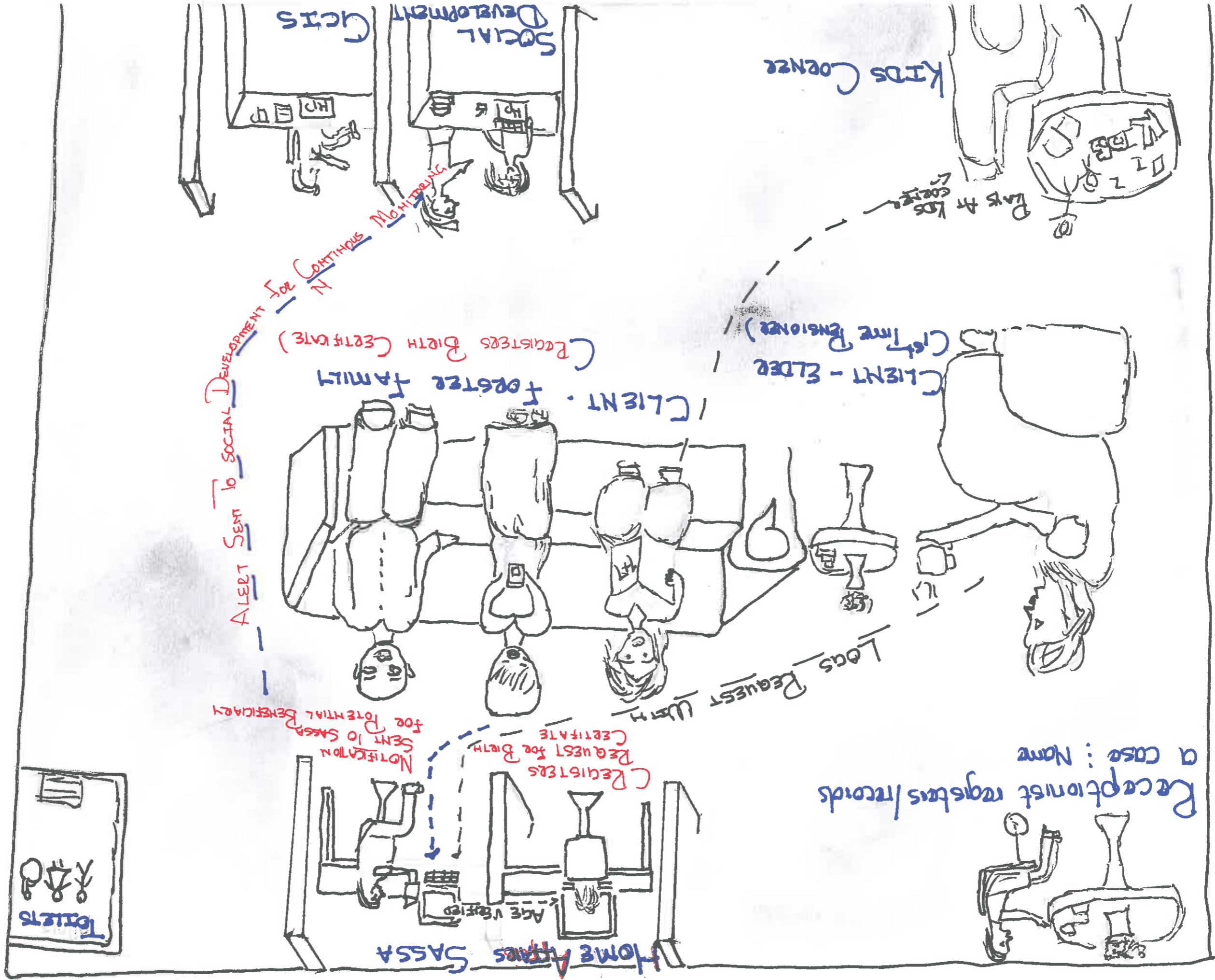
Section 2: Baseline Status

1. How did you access government services prior the Thusong Centres		

2. Was it difficult to access government services prior the Thusong Centre	Yes	Days
	No	

3. If Yes, briefly explain how you and your family coped with the situation		

4. The Thusong Centres are easily accesible and the service is faster than that which is obtainable elsewhere.	Yes	
	No	

5. Was the household losing out on the benefits provided by government prior the Thusong Centres		

6. How much money did your family spend on trying to access government services ?	R 0	
	R1- R300	
	R301- R600	
	R601- R900	
	R900+	
	Cannot specify	

7. The Thusong Centres are easily accessible and the service is faster than that which is obtainable elsewhere	Yes	
	No	

8. Do you believe that the Centres are a value for money?	Yes	
	No	

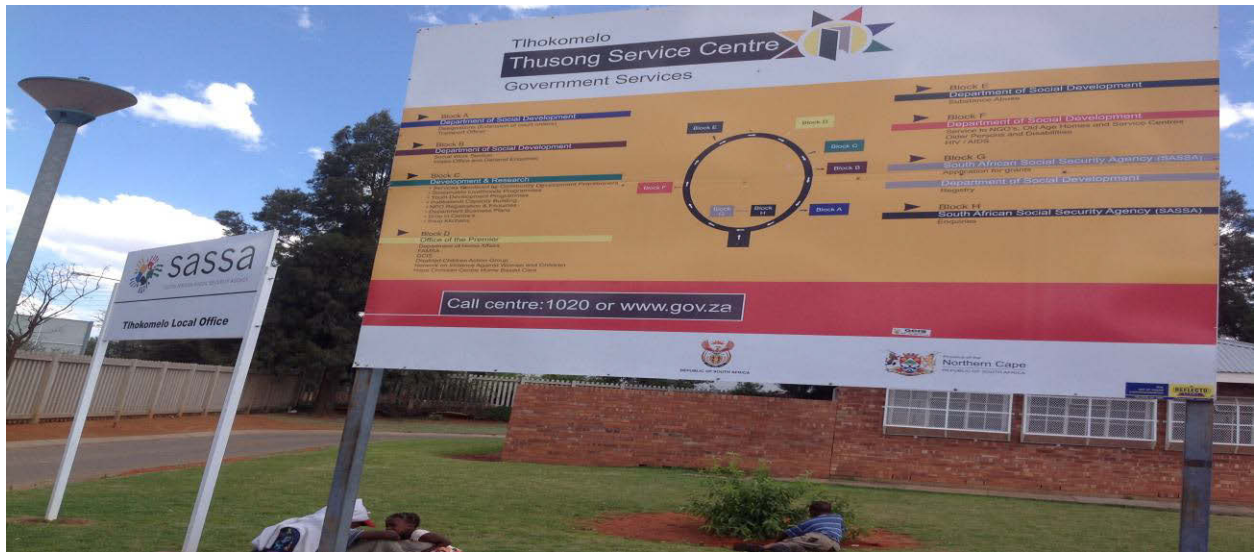| 9. If no, briefly explain why not		

*Types of grants

1. Grant for Older Persons/ Old Age Grant
2. Disability Grant
3. War Veteran's Grant
4. Child Grants: Foster Child Grant
5. Care Dependency Grant
6. Child Support Grant
7. Grant-in-aid

Thank You

Rich Picture - Possible Scenario Through Cross Departmental Collaboration Enabled By ICT

Social Development GCIS

Kids Corner

Play At Kids Corner

Alert Sent To Social Development for Continuous Monitoring

Registers Birth Certificate

CLIENT - Foster Family

CLIENT - ELDER (Left Time Pensioner)

Let's Request With...

Notification Sent To Sassa for Potential Beneficiary

Registers Request for Birth Certificate

Receptionist registers/records a case : Name

Age Verified

Home Affairs SASSA

Toilets

Annexure B

Thusong Service Centre

Government Services

- Office of the Premier
- Department of Home Affairs
- Government Communication and Information System (GCIS)
- Disabled Children Action Group
- FAMSA
- Look - Look Photos
- Network on Violence Against Women and Children
- Telecentre
- Hope Christian Centre Home Based Care

Call centre:1020 or www.gov.za

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Province of the
Northern Cape
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Tlhokomelo
Thusong Service Centre

Government Services

- Office of the Premier
- Department of Home Affairs
- Government Communication and Information System (GCIS)
- Disabled Children Action Group
- FAMSA
- Look - Look Photos
- Network on Violence Against Women and Children
- Telecentre
- Hope Christian Centre Home Based Care

Call centre:1020 or www.gov.za

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Tlhokomelo
Thusong Service Centre

Government Services

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- Government Communication and Information System (GCIS)
- Disabled Children Action Group
- FAMSA
- Look - Look Photos
- Network on Violence Against Women and Children
- Telecentre
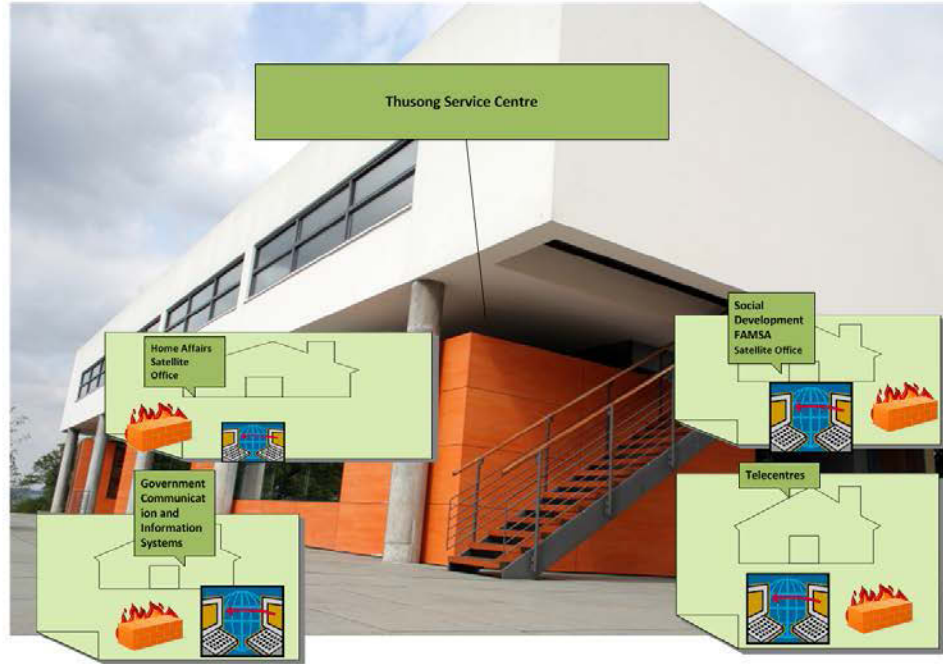- Hope Christian Centre Home Based Care

Call centre:1020 or www.gov.za

Thusong Service Centre
Centre Name: Bokamoso

HOME AFFAIRS	ID APPLICATION, DEATH CERTIFICATE, BIRTH CERTIFICATE
SOC.DEV	SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
SASSA	SOCIAL GRANTS
TELE-CENTRE	COMPUTER LITERACY
THE PUBLIC PROTECTOR	PROTECT MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY
LABOUR DEPARTMENT	LABOUR RELATED PROBLEMS
GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS	DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION PROGRAMMES
D.E.T	EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT SERVICES HANDLE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS	CONSUMER COMPLAINS

CENTRAL HOUSE

GROUND FLOOR

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

ID PHOTOS & PASSPORT PHOTOS →

DEPT. HOME AFFAIRS
← SUITE 201

← SUITES

SUITES 202-203 →

ROYAL FUNERALS →

Annexure C

Editing Declaration

P O Box 531
Hillcrest
3650
KwaZulu-Natal

2013-10-28

<u>TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN</u>

Thesis Title: ICT and Service Delivery Integration at the Thusong Centres

Author: Portia Matsena

This is to certify that I have edited the above thesis from an English language perspective only, and have made recommendations to the author regarding spelling, grammar, punctuation, structure and general presentation.

A marked-up version of the thesis has been sent to the author and is available as proof of editing.

I have had no input with regard to the technical content of the document and have no control over the final version of the thesis as it is the prerogative of the author to either accept or reject any recommendations I have made. I therefore accept no responsibility for the final assessment of the document.

Yours faithfully

Margaret Addis

8 August 2012

Ms Portia Matsena   200279818
Graduate Shool of Business & Leadership

Dear Ms Matsena

Protocol reference number: HSS/0655/012M
Project title: ICT and service delivery integration at the Thusong Centres.

                                                                EXPEDITED APPROVAL
I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval through an expedited review process.

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)

/pm

cc Supervisor: Mr Stan Hardman
cc Academic leader: Dr S Bodhanya
cc School Admin: Mrs Wendy Clarke