

## **CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO AND OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study focuses on the influence of job satisfaction on burnout among pharmaceutical sales representatives. Chapter 1 deals with the background to the research, the problem statement and the research questions, the aims of the study, the paradigm perspectives of the research, the research design, the research methodology and the layout of the chapters.

### **1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH**

People are a vital component of the production factors of an organisation (Storey, 1995). A variety of factors influence their work lives. These factors affect their performance and ultimate productivity (George, 2000). Job satisfaction is a key factor in productivity. Employees' satisfaction levels are reflected in their intrinsic and extrinsic willingness to put their labour at the disposal of their employer (O' Malley, 2000).

Job satisfaction is certainly not the only factor that causes people to produce at different rates (Daniels, 2001). In addition to being influenced by the level of satisfaction, performance is affected by a worker's ability as well as a number of situational and environmental factors such as mechanical breakdowns, low-quality materials, an inadequate supply of materials, availability of stock and market forces (Gower, 2003).

Nevertheless, in the case of lower-level jobs where little ability is required, job satisfaction seems to be one of the key determinants of performance (Edward, 1994; Gower, 2003).

In an effort to satisfy the needs of employees, many managers make use of incentive programmes, despite the fact that research has consistently confirmed that no amount of money will translate into sustainable levels of job satisfaction or motivation (Toloposky, 2000).

This certainly applies to sales representatives since most of them complement their salaries with incentives such as commission schemes (Dorrian, 1996).

However it is not easy to determine if employees experience job satisfaction. Cockburn and Haydn (2004) suggest that the main problem might be that employees within organisations do not discuss the level of their job satisfaction, nor do they admit that their jobs might not be satisfying. Hence managers also find it difficult to determine whether job satisfaction is experienced in the workplace.

Cockburn and Haydn (2004) further contends that some employees might not even notice that they have a job satisfaction problem. Research (Weallens, 2000) suggests that most employees know when they have a satisfaction problem. A number of employees may feel that acknowledging the existence of a satisfaction problem is tantamount to admitting failure. Hence many employees do not want to appear weak or incompetent to their sales managers. According to Fletcher (1993), salespersons need to be extroverts with high self-esteem and generally domineering personalities. Tolposky (2000) suggests that people with high self-esteem and domineering personalities might have difficulty admitting defeat. This conclusion further serves to highlight the fact that it may be difficult to uncover the issues related to job satisfaction or the establishment of job satisfaction levels in an organisation hence the need for a scientific study (Carrell, Elbert, Hatfield, Grobler, Marx & Van der Schyft, 1998).

The above-mentioned fears intensify during times of change. That is, whenever organisations attempt to change, inter alia employees begin to worry and become more defensive. They try to stifle their fears and project an attitude of competence and self-confidence instead of talking openly about job satisfaction problems (Dubinsky, 2004).

Regarding burnout, Feldman (1993) contends that employees' may be influenced by a variety of positive or negative stimulus, and one of the key influencing factors is the level of job satisfaction.

Maslach (1982) concludes that employees who have lost interest and less satisfied in their job, who just go through the motions, are always tired, having colds, flu and headaches, can be suffering from burnout.

The initial work on burnout developed out of the occupational sector of human services and education. The occupational sector of human services and education continue to be the primary focus of burnout studies (Angerer, 2003). Of particular concern in these occupations were the emotional challenges of working intensively with other people in either a care-giving or teaching role (Angerer, 2003). Teaching as an occupational sector was characterised by the highest level of exhaustion (Brock & Grady, 2000). According to these authors, the medical occupation was characterised by somewhat lower levels of two components of burnout (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001), namely exhaustion, and a third component of burnout, cynicism, and by slightly higher levels of inefficacy.

Subsequent research expanded the focus to occupations that included contact with people, but for which the contact fell short of the demands of this more extensive relationship (eg computer programming). Some studies ultimately utilises occupations for which contact with people was a less important consideration (Weallens, 2003). Although the burnout concept seems to pertain to this wider range of occupations, there was still the hypothesis that the emotional stressors of “people-work” were something uniquely related to burnout (Taris, Peeters, Blanc, Schreurs & Schaufeli, 2001). Earlier research did not find much evidence to support such a hypothesis; instead, common job-related stressors (such as workload, time pressure or role conflicts) correlated more highly with burnout than client-related stressors (such as problems in interacting with clients, frequency of contact with chronically or terminally ill patients, or confrontation with death and dying) (Angerer, 2003).

Recent research, however, has focused explicitly on emotion work variables (eg the requirement to display or suppress emotions on the job and to be emotionally empathic) and has found that these emotion factors do account for additional variance in burnout scores over and above job stressors (Zapf, Morries, Weiten, 2001).

Another approach has been to look at the prevalence of burnout for different occupations. For example comparison was made between the burnout profiles for five occupational sectors (teaching, social services, medicine, mental health and law enforcement) in the USA and Holland, and the results revealed similar occupational profiles in both nations (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Profiles of law enforcement (ie police officers and prison guards) were characterised by comparatively high levels of cynicism and inefficacy and low levels of exhaustion (Burke & Greenglass, 2001).

In the USA, levels of cynicism in the social services were relatively high, whereas they were about average in Holland. Mental health workers in the USA experienced lower levels of exhaustion and cynicism, but these levels were higher in Holland (Zapf & Vash, 2001).

The above suggests that there are important characteristics of these occupations that affect workers' experience of burnout (Pones & Deale, 1998). However, these findings need to be viewed with some caution because other factors could be involved. For example, because there is a greater heterogeneity of specific occupations within some sectors than in others, the overall profiles could be masking significant differences. Furthermore, there are confounding variables in some occupations, which need to be taken into account (Garman, Corrigan & Morries, 2002). For example, men predominate in law enforcement occupations, and cynicism is usually higher for males (Weallens, 2003).

It is not clear at this point whether the latter findings reflect methodological variations (eg in sampling) or substantive national differences (eg in the nature of job demands or personal selection). Despite these differences in average level, the basic patterns of burnout are fairly similar across both countries (Shirom, 1989).

According to Perlman and Hartman (1982) and Miller (2000), the burnout condition usually begins with a mismatch between the demands of the job and the abilities of the individual. This mismatch causes stress. Stress induces anxiety and exhaustion, which provoke either action to resolve the problem, or burnout, which is a form of psychological escape. The burnout employee becomes cynical and works mechanically (Huczynski & Buchanan, 1991; Garman et al, 2002).

This study seeks to explore job satisfaction and burnout among medical sales representatives. The sales force is largely responsible for implementing a company's marketing strategies in the field. Moreover, sales representatives generate the revenues that are managed by the financial people and used by the production people. This direct link between their ability and the revenue generation of the company might cause serious stress and challenges among sales representatives (Dorrian, 1996).

Sales representatives are among the few employees authorised to spend company funds on building a customer base. Their effectiveness in discharging this responsibility efficiently influences marketing costs and profits. The fact that there is a significant marketing budget places more pressure on them to meet the set targets (Allen,1992).

Sales representatives represent their company to customers and society in general. Opinions of the company and its products are formed on the basis of impressions made by these people in their work and outside activities (Cockburn & Haydn, 2004).

The public ordinarily do not judge a company by its factory or office workers. This could place undue pressure on sales representatives because they are supposed to behave perfectly all times so that they do not bring the company's name into disrepute. They could therefore become branded as the organisation and always be expected to reflect the organisations image (Blem, 1990).

Sales people also represent the customer to their companies. They are primarily responsible for transmitting information on customer needs and problems back to the various departments in their own companies. This could creates some role ambiguity and internal conflict, which could generate anxiety and stress (Clarke, 1998).

Because of their absence from the office, medical sales representatives operate with little or no supervision. Their jobs therefore might be taxing both physically and mentally. They must contend with the reality of missing the monthly targets sometimes and to still intrinsically motivate themselves, as supervisors are normally office bound. This could place an enormous pressure on the sales team (Freudenberger,1975; Taris et al, 2001).

Representatives do not make sales every time, which means that they must be able to handle the negative feelings that come with losing or not making a sale and abuse from customers. This undoubtedly causes a great deal of stress in sales representatives (Clarke, 1998).

Medical sales representatives need more tact and social intelligence than other employees on the same level in the organisation. Many sales jobs require the representatives to socialise with customers, who frequently occupy the upper-echelons in their company. Considerable social intelligence may also be needed to deal with difficult buyers (Griffiths, 2003).

The level of social intelligence required might not be inherently available and cause sales representatives to behave pretentiously and put on a show every time they meet clients. This may result in conflict with their personalities and might result in some sort of stress (Dorrian, 1996; Rasmusson, 1997).

Sales jobs frequently require considerable travel and time away from home and family. This places an additional physical and mental burden on salespeople who already face huge pressure and many demands. Most salespersons are usually extroverts who enjoy talking to and being around people. Medical sales representatives invariably spend much time between meeting doctors and pharmacists. This could result in inherent conflict with their personalities and create additional stress (Sherman,1991).

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that medical sales representatives might not find their jobs satisfying and the nature and environment of a sales job are a good “breeding” ground for burnout inclined stress. If burnout is influenced by job satisfaction, there is even more reason to believe that medical sales representatives might be experiencing high levels of burnout inclined stress with consequences to their company and themselves.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The relationship between job satisfaction and burnout is well researched in the literature (Bantam & Murphy, 1993; Fullerton, McCarrol, Ursonor & Wright, 1992). Most of the studies concluded that burnout and job satisfaction are inversely related (Aronson & Kafry, 1998; Burke & Greenglass, 1991; Burke, 1987; Burke, Shearer & Deszca, 1984; Chess & Kunkel, 1986; Cohen, 2003; Cunnigham, 1983; Fourie, 2004; Griffiths, 2003; Iwanicki, 1983; Jones, 1981; Riggat, Godley & Hafer, 1984; Vigoda-Gadot, 2003).

Job satisfaction has traditionally been studied predominately on the bases of how it influences performance or production of labour (Cockburn & Perry, 2004). According to Johns (1992) and Daniels (2001), job satisfaction has hardly been studied on sales-driven jobs.

Burnout, however, has been studied as a consequence of degree of organisational dysfunction or personality dysfunction (Morrissette, 2004).

Furthermore, much of the research that has been conducted on burnout has centred on the helping professions such as teachers, nurses, physicians, social workers, therapists and police (Ivancevich & Matteson, 2005). Literature reviews also suggest that little work has been done on customer service agents, salespeople and related professions (Chernis, 1980; Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Maslach & Goldberg, 1998; Weiten, 1992; Weiten, 1992 and Willemse, 2003). The purpose of this study is thus to determine whether job satisfaction is a predictor of burnout among medical sales representatives.

The following research questions are formulated for this study:

- (1) What does job satisfaction mean and what constructs are involved?
- (2) What does burnout mean and what constructs are involved?
- (3) Is there a theoretical relationship between job satisfaction and burnout?
- (4) What are the levels of job satisfaction and burnout among medical sales representatives?
- (5) Is there is a relationship between job satisfaction and biographical characteristics?
- (6) Is there a relationship between burnout and biographical characteristics?
- (7) Can job satisfaction act as a predictor of burnout among medical sales representatives?
- (8) What recommendations can be made for future research and for the management of job satisfaction and burnout?



## **1.4 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH**

### **1.4.1 General aim**

The general aim of this study is to determine the influence of job satisfaction on burnout among medical sales representatives.

### **1.4.2 Specific aims of the literature review**

The specific aims of the research are as follows:

- to define the concept of job satisfaction
- to define the concept of burnout
- to determine the theoretical relationship between job satisfaction and burnout

### **1.4.3 Specific aims of the empirical study**

The specific aims of the empirical investigation are as follows:

- to determine the level of job satisfaction and burnout among medical sales representatives
- to determine the relationship between job satisfaction and biographical characteristics
- to determine the relationship between burnout and biographical characteristics
- to determine whether job satisfaction predicts the level of burnout in medical sales representatives
- to formulate recommendations on the management of job satisfaction and burnout in a pharmaceutical company

## **1.5 PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE**

This section will outline the relevant paradigms, meta-theoretical statements, and theoretical models used in the research.

### **1.5.1 Relevant paradigms**

The literature review on both the independent variable (job satisfaction) and the dependent variable (burnout), will be presented according to the humanistic paradigm (George, 2000).

The humanistic paradigm is characterised by two basic assumptions which distinguish both its methodology and its theories from other approaches; the focus on subjective experience (phenomenological viewpoint), and a rejection of determinism in favour of individual choice (Glassman & Hadad, 2004).

The empirical study will be presented from the functionalistic paradigm. This perspective is based upon the assumption that society has concrete, real existence, with a systemic character oriented to produce an ordered and regulated status quo (Savicki, 2002). The paradigm focuses on the functioning of the psyche, adaptation to environment and individual differences (Cohen, 2003).

### **1.5.2 Meta-theoretical statements**

The disciplinary context for this research is industrial psychology, more specifically occupational mental health.

#### ***1.5.2.1 Industrial psychology***

Industrial psychology is the branch of psychology concerned with the application of psychological principles in the workplace (George, 2000; Weiten, 1992).

Industrial psychology is therefore an applied field of psychology developed via various schools of thought and methods, namely those of structuralism, functionalism, behaviourism, Gestalt psychology, the psychoanalytic school, humanism and cognitive psychology (George, 2000).

Industrial psychology is an independent professional field of study which originated as a practical application of psychology and covers the following fields: research methodology, personnel psychology, organisational psychology, occupational psychology, ergonomics, career psychology, labour relations, occupational mental health (Weiten, 1992).

#### ***1.5.2.2 Occupational mental health***

The applicable subfield of the study is occupational mental health. This subfield refers to the application of psychological approaches to the study of human behaviour at work in order to enhance human effectiveness in organisations (Cohen, 2003; McCormick & Tiffin, 1975).

#### **1.5.3 Theoretical models**

For the purposes of this study, job satisfaction will be conceptualised according to its multidimensional dimensions, namely pay, work, promotion, supervision and co-workers (Morrisette, 2004; Winnubst & Cooper, 2003).

Burnout will be conceptualised according to its three key dimensions namely exhaustion, cynicism and detachment from the job (Savicki, 2002; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).

#### **1.5.4 Methodological assumption**

The central hypothesis is that job satisfaction is a predictor of burnout. It is a quantitative study, with the researcher being a master's student in industrial psychology and the second person, the individual being employed as a medical

sales representative in a pharmaceutical organisation. The unit of analysis is the individual sales representative.

## **1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research design involves a literature review and an empirical investigation to determine the predictive value of job satisfaction for burnout. For this study, job satisfaction will be the independent variable and burnout will be the dependent variable. The study will also be confined to the individual level of analysis.

The reliability and validity in this study is ensured through:

- the selection of models and theories in a representative manner, and presented in a standardised manner
- the selection of standardised measuring instruments in a responsible way and presented in a standardised manner

The external validity and reliability is further ensured by the random selection of the sample to be representative of the total population of sales representatives in a pharmaceutical company.

## **1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research will be presented in two phases, namely a literature review and an empirical study.

### **1.7.1 Phase 1: literature review**

The literature review will consist of three steps:

- **Step 1:** Job satisfaction will be defined.
- **Step 2:** Burnout will be defined.

- **Step 3:** The theoretical relationship between job satisfaction and burnout will be determined.

### 1.7.2 Phase 2: empirical study

This empirical study will consist of the following:

- **Step 1:** A random sample of 139 participants comprising medical sales representatives will be selected.
- **Step 2:** The job descriptive index and burnout index will be discussed and justified as instruments to assess job satisfaction and burnout.
- **Step 3:** The Job descriptive index and the burnout index will be administered to the sample of 139 participants.
- **Step 4:** The research hypothesis will be formulated.
- **Step 5:** The data will be analysed using a correlation and regression analysis, and the results will then be reported and interpreted.
- **Step 6:** The research findings will be integrated.
- **Step 7:** The limitations and conclusions of the research will be discussed
- **Step 8:** Recommendations will be made for the management of job satisfaction and burnout, topics for future research discussed.

## 1.8 CHAPTER LAYOUT

The chapter layout of this dissertation is as follows:

- Chapter 1: Background to and overview of the research
- Chapter 2: Job satisfaction
- Chapter 3: Burnout
- Chapter 4: The empirical study

- Chapter 5: Research results
- Chapter 6: Conclusions, limitations and Recommendations

## **1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter focused on the background to the research, the problem statement and the research questions, the objectives of the study, the paradigm perspectives of the research, the research design, the research methodology and the chapter layouts.

## **CHAPTER 2: JOB SATISFACTION**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this chapter is to define job satisfaction, identify the dimensions of the concept, explain its importance and examine the role of biographical variables in the concept.

### **2.2 DEFINATION OF JOB SATISFACTION**

On examining the relevant literature on job satisfaction, some authors appear to use the terms “job satisfaction” and “motivation” interchangeably. However, the two concepts can also be viewed as separate concepts. Motivation can be defined as a persistent effort directed towards a goal (Wealleans, 2003). Job satisfaction, on the other hand, refers to a collection of attitudes that workers have towards their jobs (Johns, 1992; Robbins, Odendaal & Roodt, 2003).

There are various definitions of job satisfaction. Most authors define it in terms of feelings, attitudes and beliefs. George and Jones (1996:70) define it as “the collection of feelings and beliefs that people have about their current jobs”.

Robbins et al, (2003) see job satisfaction as a subjective measure of worker attitudes, that is, an individual’s general attitude to his or her job. A person with high job satisfaction holds positive attitudes towards the job, and one who is dissatisfied with it has negative attitudes towards it (Robbins et al, 2003). Weir (1976) suggests that if an employee’s attitude is wrong he or she will not experience job satisfaction.

Osterhouse and Brock (1977) and Ivancevich and Matteson, (2005) define job satisfaction as an attitude that individuals have towards their jobs which stems from their perception of their jobs and the degree to which there is a good fit between the individual and the organisation.

According to Johns (1992), job satisfaction is a collection of attitudes that workers have about their jobs.

DuBrin (1981) and McCormick and Tiffin (1975) regard it as the feelings or attitude a person has towards his or her job. In other words, a person who is satisfied with his or her job is seen as someone whose expectations and needs are satisfied in the job situation.

Some authors define job satisfaction in terms of the way people react to their work environment. Gannon (1979:186), for example, sees job satisfaction as the “difference between the amount of some valued outcome a person receives and the amount of that outcome.” Thus an employee becomes dissatisfied when things are not the way they should be (Carrell, Elbert, & Hatfield, 1998).

Lawler & Hackman (1975) agree with the above definition by suggesting that, in general, job satisfaction appears to be determined by the difference between the amount of some valued outcome that a person receives and the amount of that outcome he or she feels should be received. Hence the larger the discrepancy, the greater the dissatisfaction will be.

Vroom (1964) defines the concept in terms of effective orientations on the part of individuals towards the work roles, which they are presently occupying.

It is also defined in terms of needs (Smith, 1974, Locke,1996). For example, Smith (1974, p247) sees it as a “consequence of the worker’s experience on the job in relation to his values, that is, to what he wants or expects from it”.

According to Locke (1976) job satisfaction is a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the perception of one’s job as fulfilling or allowing the fulfillment of one’s important job values, providing these values are compatible with one’s needs.



Francis and Milbourn (1980) attempt to summarise the various definitions of job satisfaction as follows: Generally, job satisfaction is the result of the individual's perception of what is needed and what is received from different facets of the work situation. The closer the expectation is to what is actually received, the greater the job satisfaction. According to these authors job satisfaction sometimes refers to an overall feeling of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the situation-as-a-whole (global satisfaction). At other times, job satisfaction refers to a person's feelings toward specific dimensions of the work environment (facet satisfaction).

As indicated by the above definitions, job satisfaction can be defined as an attitude that individuals have about their jobs and it results from their perception of their jobs and the degree to which there is a good fit between the individual or the needs of an individual and the organisation.

### **2.3 DIMENSIONS OF JOB SATISFACTION**

Based on the above definition, different dimensions of job satisfaction have been identified. According to Ivancevich and Matteson (2005) and Toposky (2000), job satisfaction stems from various aspects of the job such as pay, promotion opportunities, supervisors, and co-workers. It is also informed by factors of the work environment such as the supervisor's style, policies and procedures, work group affiliation, working conditions, and fringe benefits that is, if an inconsistency arises between the employees' perception of their jobs, job satisfaction suffers (Smith et al, 1969).

Ivancevich and Matteson (2005) suggest five crucial dimensions of job satisfaction, namely pay, job, promotion, supervisor and co-workers. Other dimensions such as policies and procedures, work group affiliation, working conditions and fringe benefits were found to be part of the five core dimensions. Work group affiliation dynamics, for example form part of co-workers. Fringe benefits are discussed under pay and working conditions are concerned with the job (Wealleans, 2003).

There seems to be consensus that the five crucial dimensions of Ivancevich and Matteson (2005) are the core dimensions of job satisfaction (Toposky, 2000; Wealleans, 2003; Lockburn & Terry, 2004). For the purpose of this study, the five dimensions will be regarded as, pay, job, promotion, supervisor and co-workers.

### **2.3.1 Pay**

In the literature, pay is often cited as a motivator of performance and a determinant of job satisfaction (Dibble, 1999; Vigoda-Gadot, 2003), although the exact role of pay has been questioned (Griffiths, 2003).

Johns (1992) suggests that the role of pay as a dimension of job satisfaction refers to the amount of pay received and the perceived equity of pay. The perceived equity of pay refers to the perception of employees regarding the fulfilment of payment obligations by the employer. According to Herzberg's (1966) two factor theory, if pay is acceptable to an employee, a level of job satisfaction may be increased to an extent that the employee's level of job satisfaction is dependent on pay. Armstrong (1993), also concludes that if employees perceive some equity between their work and pay, their job satisfaction will be enhanced to the extent that the satisfaction level depends on pay.

Johns (1992) also suggests that satisfaction and pay have a positive interrelationship. However, the author cautions that not everyone desires money to the same extent, and some workers are willing to accept less physically demanding work, less responsibility or fewer working hours for lower pay. Individual differences in preferences for pay are especially obvious in the case of employees' reactions to overtime (Herzberg, 1966).

Johns (1992) further suggests that in most companies, one finds a group of employees who are especially anxious to earn money by doing overtime and another group who actively avoid overtime.

To summarise, it wouldIn seem that low, uncompetitive pay is often one of the factors that detracts from overall job satisfaction (Griffiths, 2003; John & Weitz, 1989; Levine, 1995; Spector, 1997).

### **2.3.2 Job**

According to Ivancevich and Matteson (2005), the nature of the job as a dimension of job satisfaction focuses on how the job is structured. This dimension also refers to the extent to which job tasks are considered interesting and provide opportunities for learning and accepting responsibility (Cockburn & Haydin, 2004).

Herzberg (1966), argues that when job content is intrinsically challenging, it builds strong levels of job satisfaction that can result in good performance. If a job is intrinsically challenging, it might prove highly satisfying. Jobs should therefore afford an opportunity to experience a need for achievement. In order for job incumbent to experience achievement, inter alia their jobs should allow them to be recognized for achievements, they must feel accountable and the job must present opportunities for career growth.

The structure of the job affects job satisfaction in the sense that the job facets are enriched and enhance the level of employee empowerment in terms of authority and responsibility (Weallens, 2003). The of a satisfying job therefore allows for more innovation and flexibility, and does not involve too many routine activities (Dubinsky, 2004; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

Jobs that enhance job satisfaction allow employees to accept responsibility by being more accountable. Employees can be entrusted with some decision-making powers for them to plan the execution of their jobs (Goode, 2000). This may enhance their confidence in their jobs and they are likely to experience some satisfaction with their jobs because they can define the destiny of their actions (Armstrong, 1993; George, 2000; O'Malley, 2000).

Johns (1992) suggests that job satisfaction might be influenced by mentally challenging work (work that tests employees, skills and abilities and allows them to set their own working pace). Such work is usually perceived as personally involving and important and provides the worker with clear feedback on performance. However, some work may be too challenging, and this can result in feelings of failure and reduced satisfaction (Dubinsky, 2004). In addition, some employees seem to prefer repetitive, unchallenging work that makes few demands on them (Weallens, 2003).

To summarise, the above factors are directly related to the nature of the job or task itself. When present in the job, they contribute to satisfaction. This, in turn, can result in intrinsic task or job satisfaction (Griffiths, 2003; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). If a job does not include the above said satisfiers, dissatisfaction may result. The level of dissatisfaction may depend on how the incumbents value their jobs (Carrel et al, 1998; Csikszentmihalyi, 2003).

According to Organ (1988), the primary factor in job satisfaction is the kind of work employees perform (especially when it is challenging or interesting) and the freedom they have to determine how the work be done. Thus if the job is intrinsically challenging, it may prove highly satisfying.

Conversely, if the job is considered more routine and boring, and has less mental challenge and low/no decision making authority, it may be considered non- challenging and thus prove highly dissatisfying (Nicholson & Johns, 1985; Levine, 1995; Spector, 1997).

### **2.3.3 Promotion**

Promotion as a dimension of job satisfaction refers to the availability of opportunities for career advancement (George, 2000).

Career advancement may not necessarily be associated with hierarchical progress in the organisation, but includes opportunities for lateral movement and growth (Cockburn & Haydn, 2004; Robbins et al, 2003).

Johns (1992) and Vigoda-Gadot (2003) suggest that in order for promotion to be satisfying, promotion opportunities should fulfil the following:

- The position should enhance a need for achievement.
- The employee should feel the sense that he or she is being recognized in the organization.
- He or she should assume more challenging responsibility.

In principle, ample opportunities for promotion are a vital contributor to job satisfaction because promotions contain a number of valued signals about a person's self-worth (Toposky, 2000). Such signals may be material (such as an accompanying raise), while others are social (recognition in the organisation and increased prestige in the community).

Weallens (2003) however, suggests that the ready availability of promotions administered according to a fair system contributes to job satisfaction.

According to Johns (1992), there is a cultural and individual difference in what is seen to constitute a fair promotion system. Some employees may prefer a strict seniority system, while others may desire a system based strictly upon job performance. In addition, some people are more concerned with the opportunity for promotions than others. Johns (1992) also contends that these people feel that fair and ample opportunities will contribute most to job satisfaction. Individuals who are unwilling or unable to accept the extra work or responsibility that accompanies promotion will probably be less concerned with opportunities and fairness, and these factors will exert less influence on their job satisfaction (O' Malley, 2000).

### **2.3.4 The supervisor**

This dimension refers to the supervisors' ability to demonstrate interest in and concern about employees (Lockburn & Terry, 2004). It also refers to the ability of the supervisor to provide emotional and technical support as well as guidance on work related tasks (Robbins et al, 2003).

According to Herzberg (1966), the mere availability of a competent supervisor as in the above definition, does not necessarily increase job satisfaction but at least to maintain a level of "no dissatisfaction".

It must be borne in mind that in a number of instances, supervisors represent their organisations in selection interviews, disciplinary hearings and are charged with signing other documents (offers of employment, performance contracts etc) on behalf of the organisation. Supervisors may be perceived as organizations by their subordinates, as they normally represent the organization (Ellison, 1997). Hence, if employees are dissatisfied with the superiors, there is a good chance that they may also be dissatisfied with the organisation (Carrell et al, 1998; Dubinsky, 2004).

Another important role of the supervisors is during the induction phase. Supervisors are expected to ensure that new employees receive all the information necessary to enable them to function as efficiently and effectively as possible. This includes supervisors nurturing the range of feelings and beliefs that employees have about their jobs. If this nurturing does not take place, there is a good chance that employees will be dissatisfied with the jobs and their job context (Carrell et al, 1998; Dibble, 1999).

Insensitive, incompetent and uncaring supervisors seem to have the most negative effect on employee job satisfaction (George, 2000). This includes unfair, biased treatment by supervisors, failure to listen and respond to employees' problems or concerns and problems with management communication credibility.

There are many negative ratings on those survey issues directly affected by supervisory practices (O'Malley, 2000; Smith, 1992; Warr, 1987).

However, job satisfaction is improved when supervisors are perceived to be fair, helpful, competent and effective (Alexander, 2000). This includes the supervisor's skill as a problem-solver, coach, trainer and listener, and as the timely, authoritative source of key job-related information for employees. Thus the provision of emotional and technical support by supervisors may increase job satisfaction (Huczynski & Buchan, 1991; Smith, 1992; Spector, 1997).

### **2.3.5 Co-workers**

Co-workers as a dimension of job satisfaction relates to the extent to which they are friendly, competent and supportive (Hakim, 1994; Johns, 1992). This dimension is critical because employees need a friendly and considerate working environment to experience job satisfaction (Carrell et al, 1998; Lemmer, 1996).

Johns (1992) further suggests that individuals have a need to affiliate with others, and this affiliation is most rewarding when co-workers are comfortable company. In principle, individuals enjoy people who are easy to be around.

Further, individuals tend to be more satisfied in the presence of people who offer assistance in their attainment job outcomes that they value. Such outcomes might include doing their work better or more easily, receiving a raise or promotion, or even staying alive (Harris, 1999; Organ, 1988; Jaques, 1996).

This is in line with Herzberg's (1966) theory which suggests that if co-workers create a supporting environment and allow individuals to unleash their full potential, the job might be satisfying.

The need for affiliation in interpersonal relationship seems especially important in lower-level jobs with clear duties and various dead-end jobs and

clear boundaries (Spector, 1997). As jobs become more complex, pay becomes tied to performance or promotion opportunities increase, the ability of others to help others do their work well may contribute to overall job satisfaction in the workplace (Ellison, 1997; Johns, 1992; Levine, 1995; Reichheld, 1996).

The quality of relationships in the work group is crucial to employees, especially the extent to which the individual is accepted as part of the work unit and the friendliness and support of his or her fellow employees. Thus if co-workers create a supportive environment and allow individuals to unleash their full potential, the job might be satisfying (Ellison, 1997)

Conversely, interpersonal conflict, lack of teamwork, unfriendliness between co-workers and rivalries between managers and supervisors are reported to have a major negative effect on employee job satisfaction (Dubinsky, 2004).

Based on the above, one can conclude that job satisfaction is multidimensional, that is, it stems from several sources, such as pay, work, and opportunities for promotion, supervision and co-workers (Ivancevich & Matteson, 2005; Toposky, 2000; Weallens, 2003).

## **2.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF JOB SATISFACTION FOR INDIVIDUALS AND THE ORGANISATION**

A distinction can be made between the importance of job satisfaction for the organisation and the importance for individuals.

### **2.4.1 The Importance of job satisfaction for individuals**

It is suggested that, positive attitudes towards an individual's job are often associated with positive attitudes towards one's life in general (Ellison, 1997).

However, to the extent that job satisfaction does contribute to mental health and general life satisfaction, this may happen because of the possibility of acquiring self-esteem.



In other words, people experience a sense of accomplishment and worth in performing a satisfying job, and this feeling spills over to their off the job life (Warr, 1987). The opportunity to participate in satisfying work is often thought to contribute to psychological well-being. Hence, more satisfied workers tend to be psychologically healthier (George, 2000).

Other consequences of job dissatisfaction include burnout-inclined stress (Kadushin & Egan, 2001). This kind of stress is an individual experience specific to the work context and occurs because of the job-person fit. It may unfold in a gradual process where an individual, in response to prolonged stress and physical, mental, and emotional strain, detaches himself or herself from work and other meaningful personal relationships.

#### **2.4.2 The importance of job satisfaction for the organisation**

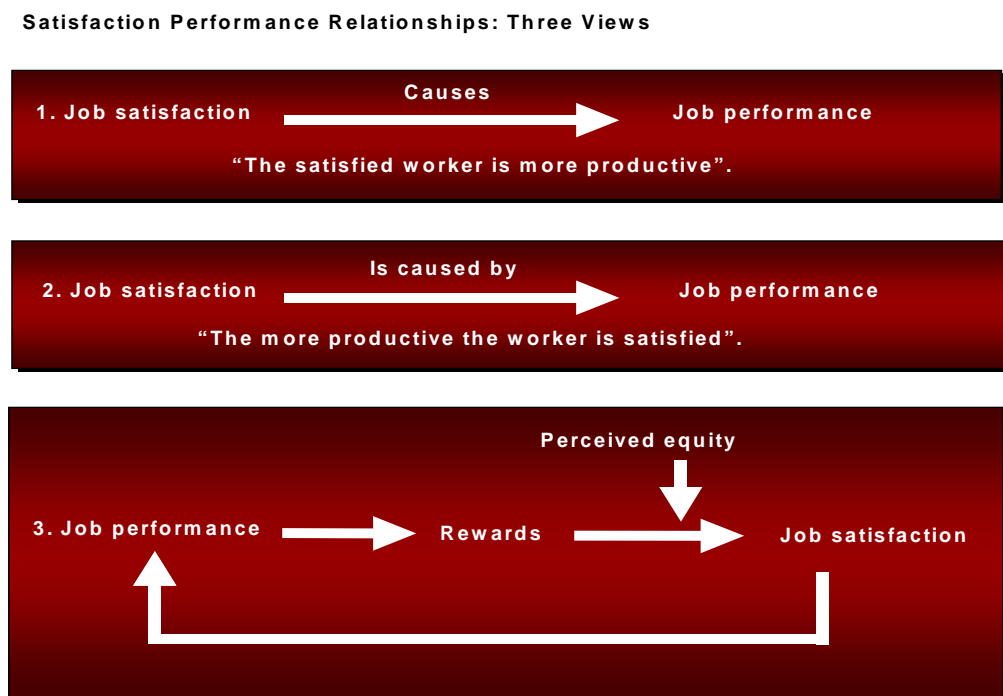
The experience of job satisfaction is not only important for the individual functioning but also for organisational functioning which refers specifically to performance, absenteeism, staff turnover and organisational citizenship behaviour.

Employees' job satisfaction is of interest primarily because of its possible influence on work outcomes such as absenteeism, turnover, grievances, accident rates, health, training readiness, and productivity (Armstrong 1993, O' Malley, 2000).

Many organisations recognise the importance of the potential link between job satisfaction and a number of desirable organisational outcomes such as performance and employee productivity (Huczynski & Buchan, 1991; Dibble, 1999; Vigoda-Gadot, 2003). A large number of studies have been designed to assess the impact of job satisfaction on a range of organisational issues such as employee productivity, absenteeism and turnover (Robbins et al 2003).

### 2.4.2.1 The importance of Satisfaction for job performance

The impact of job satisfaction on job performance has been studied for many decades (Ivancevich & Matteson, 2005). One of the most widely debated and controversial issues in the study of job satisfaction is its relationship with job performance (Ivancevich, et al, 2005). The following three general views of this relationship have been advanced: (1) satisfaction causes performance; (2) performance cause satisfaction; and (3) the satisfaction & performance relationship is moderated by other variable such as rewards. The views are illustrated in figure 2.1.



**Figure 2.1: satisfaction performance relationships: Three views**

The first two views have mixed, but generally weak, research support (Organ & Ryan, 1995). Most studies dealing with the performance and satisfaction relationship have found a low relationship between the concepts. There is convincing evidence that a satisfied worker is not necessarily a high performer.

In fact, a large body of research shows that the relationship between satisfaction and performance is positive but usually extremely low and often inconsistent (George, 2000; Neiner, 1985; Nicholson & Johns, 1985; Steers & Rhodes, 1984; Organ, 1988). A possible assumption is that individuals may work harder to pay back the organisation for a satisfying job.

However, some assumptions may also suggest that individuals may be so busy enjoying their satisfying job that they have little time to be productive. For example, satisfying co-workers and a pleasant superior may lead employees to devote more time to social interactions than to work (Smith, 1992; Vigoda-Gadot, 2003). Therefore managerial attempts to ensure that everyone is satisfied may not necessarily yield a high level of production.

Likewise, the assumption that a high-performing employee is likely to be satisfied is also not well supported (Kruse, 1993; Reichheld, 1996). The third view suggests that satisfaction and performance are related only under certain conditions (Steers & Rhodes, 1984; Spector, 1997). A number of other factors such as employee participation have been posited as moderating the relationship. The most attention, however, has been focused on reward as moderating the relationship. Generally, this view suggests that the rewards an individual receives as a consequence of good performance, and the degree to which these rewards are perceived as reasonable or equitable, affect both the extent to which satisfaction results from performance and the extent to which performance is affected by satisfaction (Dibble, 1999; Neir, 1985).

However the impact of job satisfaction on the performance of individuals cannot be discussed without considering other organisational factors. This is because the behaviour of employees at work is influenced by organisational dynamics (George, 2000). This view is shared by Robbins et al, (2003). The same authors also points out that when satisfaction and productivity data are gathered for the organisation as a whole instead of at the individual level, organisations with more satisfied employees tend to be more effective than organisations with a less satisfied work force.

### **2.4.2.2 The importance of job satisfaction for absenteeism**

According to George (2000), there is an inversely correlated relationship between job satisfaction and absenteeism. In other words, those workers with high satisfaction scores have higher attendance than workers with lower satisfaction levels. This relationship, however is influenced by other organisational factors such as company leave policy. Companies with a liberal leave policy may be confronted with the problem of persons taking leave than with strict leave policies companies (Ivancevich et al, 2005; Robbins et al, 2003).

Regarding the relationship between job satisfaction and absenteeism, Smith (1992) highlights the following research findings:

- The link between job satisfaction and absenteeism is fairly small.
- The satisfaction element that is the best predictor of absenteeism is the content of the work itself.
- Job satisfaction is a better predictor of how often employees are absent rather than how many days they are absent. In other words, it is associated more with frequency of absenteeism than with time lost.

Robbins et al, (2003) also note that the relationship between absenteeism and job satisfaction might not be that strong because actions with unpleasant consequences are unlikely to be repeated. Hence, employees who dislike their jobs may not necessarily be motivated to be absent from work on a regular basis.

Ivancevich et al, (2005) suggests that the link between attitudes and behaviour is not always strong, the relationship between satisfaction and absence being a case in point.

Several factors probably constrain the ability of many workers to convert their like or dislike of work into corresponding attendance patterns because some absence is simply unavoidable because of illness, weather conditions or pressing personal matters.

Thus some happy workers may occasionally be absent owing to circumstances beyond their control (Organ, 1988; Reichheld, 1996). Sometimes opportunities for off-the-job satisfaction on a missed day may vary- in other words, one employee may enjoy his or her job but also enjoy skiing or sailing even more. This employee may miss work, while a dissatisfied worker may show up (Kempen, 1982; Kruse, 1993). Sometimes it may be unclear to workers how much absenteeism is reasonable or sensible. With a lack of company guidelines, workers may look to the behaviour of their peers for a norm to guide their behaviour. This norm might have a stronger effect than the individual employee's satisfaction with their job (Nicholson & Johns, 1985; Reichheld, 1996).

Based on the above, one may conclude that a high level of absenteeism is unlikely to be caused by extreme job dissatisfaction only. Other organisational factors as in the above may account for absenteeism in the organisation (George, 2000).

Research on the link between job satisfaction and absence has implications for managing absenteeism. General increases in job satisfaction will probably have little effect on absence levels unless this satisfaction stems mainly from a revision of the job content. In addition, a high frequency of short-term absence spells is probably a better indicator of lack of job satisfaction than a few long spells of time lost (Goode, 2000; Haworth, 1997; Kempen, 1982; Scott, 1997).

#### ***2.4.2.3 The importance of satisfaction for staff turnover***

According to Seon-Lee (2001), it is important to understand the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover. Turnover refers to the movement of employees out of the organisation (Kadushin & Egan, 2001). Turnover results from resignations, transfers out of organisational units, discharges, retirement and death. Carrell et al, (1998) suggest that a certain amount of turnover is expected, unavoidable and considered beneficial to the organisation.

Satisfaction has an inverse relationship with turnover, but the correlation is stronger than the above scenario on absenteeism (Griffiths, 2003). Other factors such as the labour market conditions, expectations about alternative job opportunities, and length of tenure with the organisation are important constraints on the actual decision to leave one's current jobs (Locke, 1976; Stark, 1997).

Research also suggests that a key moderator of the satisfaction-turnover relationship is the employee's level of performance (Carrell et al, 1998; Riffle, 1999). Specifically, level of satisfaction is less significant in predicting turnover for superior performers (Robbins et al, 2003). Job satisfaction is therefore more important in influencing poor performers than superior performers to remain with the organisation (Kudishin & Egan, 2001).

#### ***2.4.2.5 The importance of job satisfaction for organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB)***

Organisational citizenship behaviour is voluntary, informal behaviour that contributes to organisational effectiveness (O'Malley, 2000). In many cases, it is not detected and rewarded by the formal performance evaluation system. Recent theories and research suggest that although job satisfaction is not closely related to formal performance measures, it is more closely related to the informal citizenship aspects of organisational membership (Weallens, 2003).

Satisfied employees would seem more likely to talk positively about the organisation, help others and go beyond the normal expectations in their jobs (Griffiths, 2003). Moreover, satisfied employees may be more prone to go beyond the call of duty because they want to reciprocate their positive experiences. Research has confirmed that satisfaction influences OCB but through perceptions of fairness. That is, if employees feel the organisation is fair, they are more likely to put their unreserved labour at the employers' disposal (Robbins et al, 2003).

Based on the above discussion, one may conclude that job satisfaction is not only vital for individual well-being but also for the organisations functioning.

## **2.5 THE ROLE OF BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES**

Biographical variables have been shown to relate to job satisfaction, but the relationships tend to be weak and variable (Dibble, 1999; Johns, 1992). Job satisfaction has also been associated with individual biographical factors such as age, gender, marital status and education (Carrell et al, 1998; Griffiths, 2003). One may therefore conclude that the biographical variables may only have a weak relationship with job satisfaction.

## **2.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter, job satisfaction was defined, the dimensions of the concept identified, and its importance for both the individuals and organisation discussed. This chapter concluded with a discussion of the role of biographic variables.

This realises the first aim of the study. A literature review on burnout and the integration of both job satisfaction and burnout is presented in chapter 3.

## **CHAPTER 3: BURNOUT**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this chapter is to define burnout, identify the dimensions of the concept, and explain its importance thereof, for individuals and organisations. The role of biographical information is also discussed. The chapter concludes with an integration of job satisfaction and burnout.

### **3.2 DEFINING BURNOUT**

According to Perlman and Hartman (1982), burnout is closely related to stress. Cherniss (1980) also concludes that burnout is a manifestation of prolonged stress, with different meanings and implications for different people.

Stress can be defined as any circumstances that threaten or are perceived to threaten one's well-being and also tax one's coping abilities (Weiten, 1992). Burnout forms part of the effects of stress on the psychological functioning of human beings (Savicki, 2002). Weiten (1992) also suggested that people struggle with many stresses everyday and most stresses come and go without leaving any enduring marks. However, when stress was severe or when many stressful demands pile up, one's psychological functioning may be affected. The threat that stress causes might be to immediate physical safety, long-range security, self-esteem, reputation, peace of mind or many other things one values (Weallens, 2003).

Stress is not inherently bad because it may force people to develop new skills, learn new insights and acquire new personal strengths (Shirom, 1989), research on the effects of stress has focused mainly on negative outcomes (Hartnett, 2004).

Ammondson (2001) suggest that stress may be harrowing, sometimes leading to impairments in performance, burnout and other problems.



Since burnout forms part of the effects of stress on psychological functioning it may have different meanings for different people (Cherniss, 1980; Weallens, 2003). Nonetheless, Pines and Aronson, (1988) and Pines, Aronson and Kafry (1981) have described burnout in a systematic way that has facilitated scientific study of the syndrome. According to the above authors, burnout involves physical, mental and emotional exhaustion that was attributable to work related stress. Weiten (1992) concurs with this description of burnout. Brown (1996) defines burnout as the belief by an employee that he or she cannot or will not continue to do a job. It is also defined as a psychological process, brought on by unrelieved work stress that results in emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and feelings of decreased accomplishment (Maslach, 1982).

Buczynski and Buchanan (1991) define employee burnout as the state of employee who have lost interest in their job, and who just go through the motions, always feel tired and suffer from colds and headaches. It is also defined as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment and the product of chronic emotional strain (Alexander, 2000). According to Pines et al, (1981) it is an experience of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion.

Cohen (2003) defines burnout in terms of the mismatch between the demands of the job and the abilities of the individual. One of the most recent approaches to the conceptualisation of burnout is Maslach's (2001) model. The author addresses the problem of burnout by means of a model that focuses on the degree of match or mismatch between the person and six domains of his or her job environment.

The greater the gap or mismatch between the person and the job, the greater the likelihood of burnout is. Conversely, the greater the match (or fit), the greater the likelihood of engagement with work is. One new aspect of this approach is that the mismatch focus is on the enduring working relationship people have with their job. This relationship is similar to the notion of a psychological contract (Rousseau, 1995).

Mismatches arise when the process of establishing a psychological contract leaves critical issues unresolved, or when the working relationship changes to something that a worker finds unacceptable. Secondly, whereas prior models of job-person fit predict that such fit produces certain outcomes (such as commitment, satisfaction, performance and job tenure), this new model hypothesises that burnout is an important mediator of this causal link. In other words, the mismatches lead to burnout which, in turn, leads to various outcomes, namely loss of motivation, absenteeism/tardiness, negative and emotional outbursts, health problems and increased drugs and alcohol use (Wealleans, 2003).

The above-mentioned model has brought order to the wide variety of situational correlates by proposing six areas of work life that encompass the central relationships with burnout: workload, control, reward, community, fairness and values (Savicki, 2002). Burnout arises from chronic mismatches between people and their work setting in terms of some or all of these six areas. This is a comprehensive model that includes the full range of organisational factors found in research related to burnout.

On the basis of all of the above definitions, for the purpose of this study, burnout is defined as an individual experience specific to the work context, occurring because of a mismatch between job-person. It unfolds in a gradual process by which a person, in response to prolonged stress and physical, mental and emotional strain, detaches himself or herself from work and other meaningful relationships.

### **3.3 DIMENSIONS OF BURNOUT**

A review of the literature suggests that there is some congruency of view between three core dimensions of burnout, namely emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and mental exhaustion. This conclusion is consistent with the research by Perlman and Hartman (1982) and the subsequent development of the multidimensional theory of burnout by Maslach (2001). These core dimensions of burnout will now be explained.

### **3.3.1 Emotional exhaustion**

The dimension of emotional exhaustion is described as a wearing down, loss of energy, depletion, debilitation and fatigue (Perlman & Hartman 1982; Miller, 2000; Savicki, 2002). Shirom (1989) suggests that emotional exhaustion is the central quality of burnout and the most obvious manifestation of this complex syndrome. When people describe themselves or others as experiencing burnout, they are generally referring to the experience of exhaustion. Of the three aspects of burnout, exhaustion is the most widely reported and most thoroughly analysed (Berger & Mizrahi, 2001). The strong identification of exhaustion with burnout has led some to argue that the other two aspects of the syndrome are incidental or unnecessary (Lee & Ashforth, 1996).

However, the fact that emotional exhaustion is a necessary criterion for burnout does not mean it is sufficient. According to Jackson, Schwab and Schuler (1986) if burnout is analysed out of context and simply focuses on the individual exhaustion component, one loses sight of the phenomenon entirely.

Although emotional exhaustion reflects the stress dimension of burnout, it fails to capture the critical aspects of the relationship people have with their work (Seon-Lee, 2001). Emotional exhaustion is not something that is simply experienced. Instead, it prompts actions to distance oneself emotionally and cognitively from one's work, presumably as a way of coping with the work overload. In the human services, the emotional demands of the work can exhaust a service provider's capacity to be involved with and responsive to the needs of service recipients (Brabson, Jones & Jayaratne, 1991; Jackson et al, 1986; Martin & Schnike, 1998).

### **3.3.2 Depersonalisation**

The dimension of depersonalisation can be defined as an attempt to place distance between oneself and service recipients by actively ignoring the qualities that make them unique and engaging people (Maslach, 1999).

Their demands are more manageable when they are considered impersonal objects of one's work. Outside of the human services, people use cognitive distancing by developing an indifference or cynical attitude when they are exhausted and discouraged (Morrissette, 2004).

Distancing is such an immediate reaction to exhaustion that a strong relationship from exhaustion to cynicism (depersonalisation) is found consistently in burnout research, across a wide range of organisational and occupational settings (Pines et al, 1981).

### **3.3.3 Mental exhaustion**

This dimension refers to a negative response towards oneself and one's personal accomplishments (Weallens, 2003). Mental exhaustion is sometimes referred to as inefficacy, namely reduced personal accomplishment (Koeske & Koeske, 1993). Symptoms include lowered job productivity, depression, low morale, withdrawal and an inability to cope (Perlman & Hartman, 1982).

The relationship between mental exhaustion and the other two dimensions of burnout is somewhat more complex. In some instances, to some degree it appears to be a function, of exhaustion, sometimes cynicism, or a combination of the two (Byrne, 1994; Lee & Ashforth, 1996).

A work situation with chronic, overwhelming demands that contribute to exhaustion is likely to erode one's sense of effectiveness (March et al, 2003). Further, emotional exhaustion or depersonalisation interferes with effectiveness. It is difficult to gain a sense of accomplishment when feeling exhausted or when helping people towards whom one is indifferent. However, in other job contexts, inefficacy appears to develop in parallel with the other two burnout aspects, instead of sequentially (Leiter, 1993; Pones & Deale, 1998). The lack of efficacy seems to arise more clearly from a lack of relevant resources, whereas exhaustion and cynicism emerge from the presence of work overload and social conflict (Zapf et al, 2001).

On the bases of the above discussion on the dimensions of burnout, one may conclude that the higher the responded measures on the symptoms of emotional, physical and mental exhaustion, the higher the level of burnout will be.

This theoretical framework continues to be the predominant one in the burnout field (Pines et al, 1981; Maslach, 2001; Zapf et al, 2001; Wealleans, 2003). It may therefore be necessary to understand burnout from both the perspective of individual functioning and of organisational functioning. The next section will focus on the importance of burnout.

### **3.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF BURNOUT FOR INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS**

The burnout syndrome affects both individuals and organisations (Weallens, 2003). The significance of burnout for individuals and organisations will be discussed in this section.

#### **3.4.1 The importance of burnout for individuals**

Based on the discussion of the dimensions of burnout the consequences of burnout on the individual are underpinned by physical exhaustion, emotional exhaustion and cynicism (Pugh, 1991).

Marc (2003) designed a table to depict the construct of exhaustion and the associated individual symptoms of burnout.

**Table 3.1: constructs of exhaustion and symptoms**

<b>Exhaustion</b>	<b>Symptoms</b>
Emotional	Feeling anxious, feeling trapped, feeling depressed, being emotionally exhausted, being troubled, feeling hopeless
Mental	Feeling disillusioned, feeling rejected, resentful about people, feeling worthless, being sad
Physical	Feeling weak, feeling wiped out, being weary, being physically exhausted, being tired

**Marc (2003, P169)**

Other individual consequences of burnout as underpinned by the above dimensions include the following:

- Low job satisfaction results in cynicism, physical and emotional exhaustion (Pones & Deale, 1998).
- Low employee morale develops because burnout is linked to stress and stress-inclined employees may not be motivated. Employees may experience withdrawal symptoms caused by burnout-inclined stress (Marc, 2003; Siefert, Jayaratne & Chess, 1991)
- Employees become emotionally exhausted because they start feeling the effects of burnout-inclined stress (Savicki, 2002)
- There is psychological withdrawal from the job because its demands exhaust an individual's energy to the extent that recovery becomes impossible (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).
- Low self-esteem develops because employees lose their self-worth caused by prolonged stress (Zapf et al, 2001)
- General feelings of disempowerment result in employees because of lower energy levels, physical and emotional exhaustion and cynicism (Cohen, 2003).

### 3.4.2 The importance of burnout for organisations

According to O'Malley, (2000) organisations are not immune from the negative consequences of burnout. He also maintains that it is in the nature of organisations to make use of employees to achieve their objectives. Organisations cannot therefore ignore the effects of its demands on people. In fact, a positive psychological state of mind is vital if employees are to achieve their key performance areas. If they do not because of burnout, the organisation may suffer (Morrissette, 2004).

Pugh (1992) further suggests that the above consequences of burnout on individuals could have the following impact on the organisation:

- Low staff morale might adversely affect productivity levels in an organisation (Kadushin & Egan, 2001).
- An organisation with high burnout levels could lose clients because of employees' levels of enthusiasm (George, 2000).
- The impact of disempowered employees on the organisation includes poor results and the lack of competitive edge caused by noninnovative employees. General organisational performance could also be affected (Pones & Deale, 1998).
- Employees with low energy levels and withdrawal symptoms can not be expected to have a positive influence on the productivity and general performance of the organisation (Seon-Lee, 2001).
- Low employee morale and low job satisfaction could be the result of a lack of fairness in the organisation, which exacerbates burnout among employees in at least two ways. Firstly, the experience of unfair treatment is emotionally upsetting and exhausting. Secondly, unfairness fuels a deep sense of cynicism about the workplace (Pons & Deale, 1998). The general performance of an organisation with the above group of employees could be affected (Rousseau, 1995)

As shown above, the consequences of burnout in organisations may be severe. Hence the need to explore ways of managing burnout and addressing its consequences.

### **3.5 THE ROLE OF BIOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Biographical characteristics have been shown to be related to burnout, but the interrelationship appears to be weak and variable (Cherniss,1980; Shirom, 1989; Weiten,1992; Semmer,1996; Weallens,2003). Burnout has also been associated with individual characteristics such as age, gender, marital status and education (Perlman & Hartman, 1982; Jackson et al,1986; Kahill, 1988; Byrne, 1994; Lee & Ashforth,1996; Maslach, 1998; Zapf et al, 2001).

House (1981) suggests that of all the biographical variables that have been studied, age is the one that has been most consistently related to burnout. Among younger employees, the level of burnout is reported to be higher than among those over 30 or 40 years old. Age is associated with work experience and finding different survival strategies, so burnout appears to be more of a risk earlier in one's career. The reasons for such an interpretation have not been studied in depth.

However, these findings should be viewed with caution because of the problem of survival bias, that is, those who burn out early in their careers are likely to quit their jobs, leaving behind the survivors who consequently exhibit lower levels of burnout (Ammondson, 2001).

The biographical variable of gender has not been a strong predictor of burnout (despite arguments that burnout is more of a female experience). Some studies show higher burnout for women, others show higher scores for men, while others again find no overall differences (Koeske & Koeske, 1993). The one small but consistent gender difference is that males often score higher on cynicism (Leiter, 1993; Maslach & Goldberg, 1998; Schaufeli et al, 2000). There is also a tendency in some studies for women to score slightly higher on exhaustion. These results could be related to gender role stereotypes, but



they may also reflect the confounding of gender with occupation (eg police officers are more likely to be male, while nurses are more likely to be female (Ammondson, 2001)

Regarding marital status, unmarried people (especially men) seem to be more prone to burnout than their married counterparts. Singles seem to experience even higher burnout levels than those who are divorced (Alexander, 2000; Smith, 1992).

As far as ethnicity, very few studies have assessed this biographical variable, and it is therefore not possible to summarise any empirical trends (Leiter & Maslach, 2000; Shirom, 1989).

Education levels also play a role in the level of burnout. Some studies have found that individuals with a higher level of education report higher levels of burnout than less educated employees (Cockburn & Terry, 2004; Weiten, 1992; Van Dierendonck, Schaufeli & Buunk, 1998).

It is not clear how to interpret this finding, given that education is confused with other variables, such as occupation and status. People with higher education may have jobs with greater responsibilities and higher stress levels. Or highly educated people may have higher expectations for their jobs, and are thus more distressed if these expectations are not realised (Shirom, 1989; Savicki, 2002; Hartnet, 2004)

### **3.6 INTEGRATION OF JOB SATISFACTION AND BURNOUT**

In order to determine the theoretical relationship between job satisfaction and burnout, the different dimensions associated with job satisfaction will be integrated with the dimensions of burnout.

A literature review has suggested that pay is critical to employees experiencing a high self-esteem level and generally receiving some sort of a short-term motivation (Bono, Thoresen & Patton, 2001).

Pay also impacts on the persons quality of life. If employees are not happy with their pay, over time, they may experience emotional exhaustion and feel a general loss of energy. This state could lead to burnout (Siefert et al, 1991).

Emotional exhaustion is not something that is simply experienced. Instead, it prompts actions to distance one emotionally and cognitively from one's work, presumably as a way of coping with work overloads (Hartnett, 2004). Similarly, sales representatives who become less satisfied with their jobs after experiencing the prolonged stress of trying to make more money (sales commission) could end up emotionally exhausted (Alexander, 2000; Chachkes, 1994).

The second dimension of job satisfaction refers to the nature of the job. The job of sales representatives includes pursuing high sales targets.

As targets become increasingly difficult to meet, sales representatives may no longer experience satisfaction in a job that does not yield incentives (commission) and could end up with a negative response towards themselves. The result could be a lower job productivity, depression, low morale withdrawal and an inability to cope (Jones 1981). When this state is prolonged, employees could start feeling emotionally and physically exhausted with their jobs, ultimately also resulting in cynicism (Strom-Gottfried, 1996).

Bantan and Murphy (1993) also point out that in the absence of the job being achievable, providing enough challenge, having variety and not being routine, employees could burn out. The literature also suggests that sales-persons normally remain in one organisation for as long as the job is a challenge. However they easily become bored and leave if they have been selling the same products for a long time (Vigoda-Gadot, 2003; Zapf et al, 2001).

The third dimension of job satisfaction is promotion. Newly promoted employees normally experience job satisfaction because their jobs are new and pose some challenges (Fullerton et al, 1992; Kudushin & Harkness, 2002).

The fourth dimension of job satisfaction is supervision. Supervisors are responsible for the performance of their teams and for providing emotional and technical support for employees. Supervisors need to ensure that there is a balance between the capabilities of employees and the demands of the job. If they cannot maintain balance between the above aspects, employees might experience emotional and mental exhaustion. This could lead to depersonalisation or cynicism among employees (Fuller et al, 1992; Newsome & Pillari, 1992; Berger & Mizrahi, 2001; Kudushin & Harkness, 2002).

The fifth dimension of job satisfaction refers to co-workers. Co-workers are vital stakeholders in a working relationship (Rauktis & Koeske, 1994; Wolpin, Burke & Green, 1999;).

Gobbs (1976) suggests that the relationship between stressful life experiences and psychological distress could be diminished under conditions of greater social support from co-workers. By providing emotional sustenance, employees help other employees to master their own emotional problems by mobilising their psychological resources.

Pines et al, (1981), conclude that social support systems are necessary for job satisfaction in the workplace and provide an effective mechanism against burnout. Social support from co-workers has been indicated as essential for medical sales representatives (Breaton & Murphy, 1993; Fullerton et al, 1992; Hartsough, 1985; Steinmetz Kaplan & Miller, 1982; Vinokur-Kaplan, 1996). Hence this validates the fact that sales representatives operating alone will not be satisfied with their secluded jobs and might be more prone to burnout. Based on the above integration of the dimensions of job satisfaction and burnout, it may be concluded that the literature review has provided evidence of a theoretical relationship between the two variables.

This achieves the third theoretical aim of this study, namely to determine the theoretical relationship between job satisfaction and burnout. The next chapter, which deals with the first four steps of the research, covers the empirical study.

This includes the determination and description of the sample population, the selection of the measuring instruments, the administration and scoring of the instruments, the statistical processing of the data, and finally, the formulation of hypotheses.

### **3.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The aim of this chapter was to define burnout, identify the dimensions of the concept, and describe the importance of burnout for individuals and organisations. The role of biographical information was also discussed. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the integration between job satisfaction and burnout. Chapter 4 focuses on the empirical study

## **CHAPTER 4: THE EMPIRICAL STUDY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to select and discuss the population sample and the selection of the measuring instruments. Data collection and the administration of the measuring instruments, data analysis and the formulation of the hypotheses are also covered.

### **4.2 SELECTION AND DISCUSSION OF THE POPULATION SAMPLE**

In order to explain the population sample, the organisation from which the sample was extracted will be discussed. This will be followed by a description of the sample and its biographic details.

The organisation used in this research is a major supplier of branded pharmaceutical and health-care products, and is of the leading producer of affordable generic medicines in South Africa. The values of the group are represented by three key components:

- (1) a substantial intellectual property base comprising patents, trademarks and pharmaceutical dossiers
- (2) manufacturing facilities capable of producing substantial volumes of high-quality, low-cost pharmaceuticals
- (3) committed employees who bring to the organisation know-how, innovation, entrepreneurship and productivity

A critical component of the employees who provide the know-how, innovation and entrepreneurship are the sales representatives. At the time of this study, the organisation had a total complement of 460 sales representatives. The questionnaire was distributed to 139 sales representatives constituting 30% of the total population of sales representatives.

The organisation's strong business foundation in South Africa provides the launching pad for global expansion. The Group has made strategic investments in the UK and Australia in line with its plan to harness synergies internationally. Since achieving its JSE Securities Exchange South Africa (JSE) listing through the reverse takeover of Medhold in July 1998, the Group has followed a path of rapid growth. By the end of 2001, according to its group report, the company was the largest pharmaceutical company listed on the JSE with a market capitalisation in excess of R2.4 billion.

### **4.3 THE SAMPLE**

According to Sekaran (1992), sampling " is the process of selecting a sufficient number of elements from the population so that by studying the sample, and understanding the properties or the characteristics of the subjects, we will be able to generalise the properties or characteristics to the population elements" (Sekaran, 1992).

Christensen (1997), indicated that there are two main types of sampling, namely probability and nonprobability sampling. The former refers to a sample in which the elements have some known chance of being selected as sample subjects. In the latter, namely probability sampling, the elements do not have a predetermined chance of being selected as subjects.

This study made use of the nonprobability sampling. It used a method called convenience sampling, which is part of nonprobability sampling (Sekaran, 1992). Convenience sampling involves collecting information from members of the population who are readily available (Christensen, 1997).

The sample was extracted from the medical sales representatives across the different levels of the hierarchy of the organisation. The duty of representatives is to sell company products to different customer bases. They all spend time on the road and their performance contracts are basically the same except for the performance targets.

The targets are based on the kind of area in which the representative is deployed. For example, if a representative is deployed in an upmarket area with many chemists, the target will be high compared with one deployed in a rural area with only one or two chemists.

#### **4.3.1 The characteristics of the sample**

This section is aimed at exploring the biographical characteristics of the sample.

##### **4.3.1.1 Gender**

The following table depicts the sample in relation to gender.

**Table 4.1: Frequencies and percentages of the sample by gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	72	52
Female	67	48
Total	N = 139	100%

The study had almost an equal number males and females. This may be attributed to the general complement levels in relation to gender in the company. The sample consisted of 52% males and 48% females.

Notwithstanding the fact that convenience sampling was used, a fair distribution of the questionnaire across the gender lines was achieved. This is also a reflection of the total organisational complement per gender.

### 4.3.1.2 Age

The following table depicts the sample in relation to age.

**Table 4.2: Frequencies and percentages of the sample per age**

Level	Frequencies	Percentages
Under 20	-	0
20-30	29	21
30-40	76	55
40-50	22	16
50-60	12	9
Total	N = 139	100%

Approximately 29% of the sample of employees were between the ages of 20 and 30. Of the sample 55% were between 30 and 40. Based on table 4.2, it would seem that as the age level increased, the number of frequencies decreased. For example 12% of employees are between 50 and 60 years old. The age frequencies could also suggest that the organisation is young, hence the high energy levels associated with young people (O'Malley, 2000). Another assumption could be that young people with correct attitudes and skills may actually go an extra mile. In point of fact, most of them are still hungry for success (Toposky, 2000). One would therefore expect their output to be higher than ageing and plateaued employees.



### 4.3.1.3 Education level

The following table depicts the sample in relation to education level:

**Table 4.3: Frequencies and percentages per education level**

Level	Frequencies	Percentages
Elementary school	0	0
High school	53	37
College/technikon	51	38
Bachelor's degree	22	16
Honours degree	13	9
Master's degree	0	0
Doctoral degree	0	0
Total	N = 139	100%

The number of employees with a High school education is worth noting at 37%. The same applies to college/technikon at 38%. University qualifications are 16% bachelor's degree and 9% honours degrees respectively. This can be attributed to the minimum entry requirements in the organisation. The investment brands division of the company, for instance, requires a science degree as an entry qualification. The other divisions require a minimum of a matric qualification with a satisfactory pass in Mathematics, Biology and Physical Science. The educational levels are generally high and mirror the pharmaceutical industry's high educational qualifications requirements (Dorrian, 1996).

### 4.3.1.3 Position

The following table depicts the sample in relation to position:

**Table 4.4: Frequencies and percentages of the sample by employment status.**

Position status	Frequencies	Percentage
Trainee representatives	3	2
General representatives	97	20
Specialist representatives	2	2
Professional representatives	3	2
Supervise representatives	7	5
Manager representatives	21	15
Executive representatives	6	4
Total	N = 139	100%

Johns (1992) suggests that deeper structures tend to have fewer persons at the top. The frequency distribution of the organisation under survey is more heavily populated at the lower levels of the hierarchy. This is in line with the organisation's deployment methodology and acknowledgement of what drives their business, which is the sale of pharmaceutical products hence a deployment of more resources at the lower levels of their organisational structure. This can also be attributed to the organisational design. The organisation in question is more prone to deeper structures. One would normally expect fewer people as the organisational ladder tapers towards the top.

### 4.3.1.3 Tenure

Table 4.5 depicts the sample in relation to tenure:

**Table 4.5 Frequencies and percentages of the sample by tenure.**

Tenure	Frequencies	Percentage
Less 1	22	16
1-3	47	34
4-6	49	36
7-10	11	7
Over 10	10	7
Total	N=139	100%

There appears to be a decline in the number of employees after about six years of service. This could suggest that most employees resigned after six years of service. There is a possibility that as people stay with the organisation for more than six years, they join the managerial structure and may not therefore have formed part of the core sample.

Literature also suggests that salespersons normally stay with one organisation for as long as the job challenges them (Griffiths, 2003). However, they easily become bored and leave if they have been selling the same products for a long time (Seon-Lee, 2001). Their departure from the company is sometimes caused by a lack of job satisfaction or the fact that they suffer from burnout-inclined stress.

## 4.4 Measuring instruments

The Pines, Aronson & Kafry (1981) Burnout Index and The Smith, Kendall & Hulin (1969) Job Descriptive Index were chosen to measure employee burnout and job satisfaction respectively.

The primary reason for selecting the above instruments was their level of consistent reliability and validity. The literature also suggests a high level of reliability and validity (De Mose, 1995; Maslach, 2004; Muchinsky, 1983; Toposky, 2000; Vigoda-Gadot, 2003).

The level of reliability in this study and the Cronbach alpha will be discussed in more detail in chapter 5.

#### **4.4.1 Measuring job satisfaction**

According to Reichheld (1996), job satisfaction is measured by means of a paper and pencil questionnaire which is divided into two groups namely direct and indirect measures. Direct measures are usually questionnaires that utilise Thurstone, Guttman or Likert scales. Indirect measures are described as projective measures such as, sentence completion and so called "error-choice" methods.

Research on job satisfaction has produced two widely used satisfaction measuring instruments namely the (JDI) and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaires (Haneman, Schwab, Fossum & Dreyer, 1983). There are however, a number of non validated instruments including the job satisfaction questionnaire by Burn and Payment (2000).

Seon-Lee (2001) further suggest that the scales utilised to measure job satisfaction can be subdivided into two groups, namely tailor-made and standardised scales. Tailor-made scales are usually developed to establish group norms for the scales and to ensure the reliability and validity of the measuring instruments.

The Smith et al, (1969) JDI will be discussed in detail. After 40 years of research and application the JDI remains one of the most widely used measures of job satisfaction (De Mose, 1995).

The most popular standardised job satisfaction scale is the JDI (Muchinsky, 1983). The Smith et al, (1969) JDI will be discussed in the section below.

#### ***4.4.1.1. The JDI***

The purpose of the Smith et al, (1969) JDI is to evaluate five important aspects or facets of job satisfaction. The full-length JDI subscales contain either nine or eighteen items, with an overall total of 72 items. Each item is short - a descriptive word or phrase. (See questionnaire appendix I).

Overtime, the development of the JDI has experienced many phases . An abridged version of the JDI was developed in 1995 (De Mose, 1995). The abridged JDI (AJDI) contains 25 items overall (5 items for each facet). The more recent JDI contains 90 items, and abridged versions contain 33 items (Spector, 1997).

The JDI has been translated into many different languages and dialects. A considerable body of research on the instrument since its publication has provided support for its reliability and validity despite all the adjustments it has been subject to (Spector, 1997; De Mose, 1995; Muchinsky, 1983). The Smith et al (1969), JDI was therefore chosen as the job satisfaction measuring tool for this study.

The JDI has five facets, namely satisfaction with the work itself, supervision, compensation, promotion and co-workers. Each facet consists of nine to 18 items which consist either of words such as “routine”, or short phrases such as, “gives a sense of accomplishment”. The section below focuses on the administration of JDI.

#### ***Administration of the JDI***

Because the JDI is selfadministering, it is easy to apply, adjust and compute without influencing its validity and reliability (Balzer et al, 1997).

The following instructions are given when completing the JDI:

- Think of the work you do at present.
- How well does each of the following words or phrases describe your job?
- In the blank beside each word or phrase below write:
  - Y for “yes” if it describes your work
  - N for “No” if it does not describe it
  - ? for “?” if you can not describe

Time intervals are not prescribed but most respondents should take less than 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

#### *Scoring and Interpreting the JDI*

The interpretation of the JDI has been under constant review over time. The latest JDI national norms were published in the revised manual by Balzer et al, (1997).

The total score of the JDI is 210. Scores below 100 are generally considered low. Scores between 101 and 150 would represent an average level of job satisfaction. If the score is above 150 to 210, the level of job satisfaction is considered high (Balzer et al, 1997). The following traditional and original weights were therefore used in the interpretation:

**Table 4.6: Scoring the JDI**

Response	Weight
Yes to a positive item	3
No to a negative item	3
? To any item	2
Yes to a negative item	1
No to a positive item	1

Following from the above, the following JDI possible maximum scores will be used for computation, analysis and comparisons:

**Table 4.7: Maximum JDI scores**

<b>JDI Facets</b>	<b>Score</b>
Work on present Job	51
Supervision	54
Present pay	24
Opportunities for promotion	27
Co-workers	54

#### **4.4.2 Measuring burnout**

Maslach et al, (1996) suggest that two main instruments have been developed to measure burnout, namely the MBI Human Services Survey and the burnout index. The above survey was designed for use with people working in the human services and health care sector (helping professions). People working in educational settings developed the second version of the MBI-Human services for use. This survey has certain limitations because it focuses on specific professions. The validity and reliability of the latter instrument may only be confirmed in the above said professions (Wealleans, 2003).

However, contemporary studies on burnout (Savicki, 2002) seem to be more inclined towards the Pines (1981) BI. This index is centred around the symptoms of exhaustion. This measuring instrument has been standardised across professions. The reported reliability and validity can be ascertained across different settings (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). For the above reasons the Pines, Aronson & Kafry (1981) burnout index was chosen.

The Pines et al, (1981) BI was constructed around three constructs of exhaustion namely physical exhaustion, emotional exhaustion and mental exhaustion. Table 4.8 depicts the Pines et al, (1981) constructs of exhaustion and its symptoms.

**Table 4.8: Constructs of exhaustion and associated symptoms**

<b>Exhaustion</b>	<b>Symptoms</b>
Emotional	Feeling anxious, feeling trapped, feeling depressed, being emotionally exhausted, being troubled, feeling hopeless
Mental	Feeling disillusioned, feeling rejected, resentful about people, feeling worthless, being sad
Physical	Feeling weak, feeling wiped out, being weary, being physically exhausted, being tired

*The administration of the BI*

The BI can be administered in a group or on an individual basis without compromising the validity and reliability of the scores (Pines et al, 1981). It is a self-administered test and can be completed at home by respondents. Participants rate themselves around the above symptoms. The test does not have time intervals but most respondents are able to complete it in less than 15 minutes.

The instructions for the BI are as follows (Pines et al, 1981):

- How often do you have the following experiences?
- Please rank them on a scale of 1 (never) to 7 (always).
- Fill in your answers on the questionnaire.



*Scoring and interpretation of the BI score:*

In order to compute the burnout score, the following process must be followed (Pines et al, 1981):

(1) Add the values next to the following items:

1,2,4,5,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,21(A)

(2) Add the values to the following items:

3,6,19,20(B)

(3) Subtract B from 32 (C).

(4) Add A and C (D).

(5) Divide D by 21 to obtain the respondent's total burnout score.

Carrell et al, (1998), point out that of the thousands of respondents in the BI, no-one has ever scored either a 1 or a 7 because it is unlikely that anyone would be in a state of eternal euphoria implied by the score 1. By the same token it is unlikely that someone who scored 7 would be able to cope with the world well enough to participate in a burnout workshop or a research project.

If the respondent's score is 2 and 3, he or she is doing well, because this indicates a burnout that is not high. It is recommended that the administrator should go through the score sheet to make sure that the responses have been honest (Pines et al, 1981). If the responses are between 3 and 4, it is recommended that the respondent examine his/her work life, priorities and consider possible changes. If the score is higher than 4, the person is experiencing burnout to the extent that it becomes mandatory to do something about it. A score of higher than 5 indicates an acute state and a need for immediate help (Pines et al, 1989).

#### **4.5 DATA COLLECTION AND ADMINISTRATION OF QUESTIONNAIRES**

The study was conducted in a South African leading pharmaceutical generic company. One hundred and thirty nine Questionnaires were distributed to the subjects. The researcher distributed, administered and collected the questionnaires personally. The details of the sample were provided in the preceding sections.

All the questionnaires were fully completed and returned. The data were gathered over three days. This method of collecting data is referred to as called one shot/cross-sectional (Christensen, 1997).

#### **4.6 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES**

The data were analysed by using a statistical program called SAS (Christensen, 1997). The program is widely used to perform statistical analysis by using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics describe the phenomena of interest, while Inferential statistics allow the researcher to draw inferences from the sample of the population (Sekaran, 1992).

This study made use frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, correlations, linear regression and the analysis of variance (ANOVA) to analyse the data. For example, the frequencies were used to determine the population sample. The means and standard deviation were used to determine the level of job satisfaction and burnout. Correlations were used to establish the correlation between job satisfaction and burnout.

The effect size was also calculated to determine the practical significance where significant correlation was found regarding the relationship between the biographical variables and job satisfaction and burnout respectively. The following reference were used: small = 0,1; medium = 0,25; large = 0,40.

Coe (2000) suggests that the effect size used for determining the practical significance is “simply a way of quantifying the effectiveness of a particular intervention, relative to some comparison”. It therefore measures whether the findings are significant in the practical context.

#### **4.7 FORMULATION OF THE HYPOTHESES**

The hypotheses for this study were formulated as follows:

##### Hypothesis 1

- Ho There is no significant difference between the biographical variables for individuals scoring high and individuals scoring low in job satisfaction.
- H<sub>1</sub> There is a significant difference between the biographical variables for individuals scoring high and individuals scoring low in job satisfaction.

##### Hypothesis 2

- Ho There is no significant difference between biographical variables for individuals scoring high and individuals scoring low in burnout.
- H<sub>2</sub> There is a significant difference between biographical variables for individuals scoring high and individuals scoring low in burnout.

##### Hypothesis 3

- Ho Job satisfaction is not related to burnout.
- H<sub>3</sub> Job satisfaction is related to burnout.

#### **4.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter dealt with the population sample, selection of the measuring instruments, data collection, administration of the measuring instruments and data analysis. The chapter concluded with the formulation of the hypotheses relating to the study. The research results will be analysed in chapter 5.

## **CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH RESULTS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this chapter is to present the findings of the study. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire will be discussed. The characteristics of the sample were discussed in section 4.3. The biographical variables will also be discussed insofar as they predict job satisfaction and burnout. The findings will also include information on the level of job satisfaction and burnout. The chapter will be concluded with an integration of the literature review and the empirical study.

### **5.2 RELIABILITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES**

The questionnaires that were used for Job satisfaction and burnout were highly reliable. According to Christensen (1997), the medium point of the Cronbach alpha is 0,6 to 0,8. The Cronbach alpha of the JSI and the BI was 0,932 and 0,883 respectively. Since the Cronbach alpha of both variables is above 0,8, the questionnaires is extremely reliable.

### **5.3 BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES AS PREDICTORS OF JOB SATISFACTION**

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to establish the role of biographical data to predict job satisfaction. The ANOVA will also be used to establish the role of biographical data to predict the levels of burnout.

Analysis of variance was used to test the significance of the differences between the means of different biographical variables (Christensen, 1997). An individual analysis of variance was used for this study.

**Table 5.1: Individual analysis of variance: biographical variables and job satisfaction**

<b>Biographical variable</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>F value</b>	<b>P-value significance</b>	<b>Practical significance value</b>
Gender	1	0,41	0,520	0,055
Race	3	0,28	0,840	0,070
Age	3	2,50	0,062	0,241
Education	5	1,97	0,087	0,270
Position	5	4,08	0,001*	0,430**
Tenure	4	2,12	0,082	0,287
Department	1	0,00	0,975	0,003

\*p<0,5. \*\* small = 0,1, medium = 0.25, large = 0,40

Most of the biographical variables do not have a significant influence on job satisfaction. This is confirmed by the p value in all the biographical variables excluding position with a large practical significance value of 0,43. The p value for position is <0,05 at 0,001. It should also be noted that the variable (position) has many categories that could have influenced the p value (p = 0,001).

Another biographical variable, age at the p value of 0,0620 is significant at p<0,10. However further analyses were not done on age because of the high p value.

Since position has influence on job satisfaction, table 5.2 will explore the different levels of position and how they relate to job satisfaction. As there is a significant difference between the means and standard deviation scores of position and job satisfaction, table 5.2 will also examine the different levels of position and how they relate to job satisfaction.

**Table 5.2: position and job satisfaction**

Level of position	N	Mean	std deviation
Trainee representatives	3	155,333	28,307
General representatives	97	168,752	16,226
Professional representatives	2	160,000	5,656
Supervisory representatives	7	175,142	10,991
Manager representatives	21	181,095	6,941
Executive representatives	6	183,166	12,512

Table 5.2 shows that the general level of job satisfaction is high (scores between 150 and 210). Also, middle management and senior management experience an even higher level of job satisfaction at an average mean of 180. The theoretical review suggested that the greater the challenge and acceptable complexity of the job, the more satisfaction employees experience (Seon-Lee, 2001). High level jobs are normally expected to be more challenging and complex hence the higher level of satisfaction (Goode, 2000).

This is contrary to the trainee, general and professional sales representatives who display a lower level of job satisfaction compared with managing sales representatives (supervisory representatives, manager representatives and executive representatives). Their mean average is 161.

Some of the categories, however, had extremely low numbers (eg there were only three trainee representatives) among the participants. Another worrying factor in the analysis of position and job satisfaction was the high standard deviation in some categories (eg 28,307 for trainee representatives) One may therefore conclude that the variances are not homogeneous that is, they are not consistent with the assumptions of the technique/model (analysis of variance in general).

Only one category in the biographical variables, namely position (specifically, supervisory representatives, manager representatives and executive representatives) has a higher mean job satisfaction score and a significant practical value. Hence the relationship between the sub categories of a biographical variable, that is, managerial (supervisory representatives, manager representatives, Executive representatives) may not suggest that biographical variables in general influence job satisfaction.

Furthermore, their influence on the overall relationship between biographical variables and job satisfaction, could hold less weight since the numbers involved are minimal (ie a total N of 34 out of a total N of 139). One may therefore conclude that the different biographical variables do not significantly predict the level of job satisfaction.

A factor that could account for the above finding is that biographical variables are influenced by a number of social, political, economic, physiological dynamics that vary from one person to the next (Christensen, 1997). This finding confirms the literature review that demographic variables have been shown to relate to job satisfaction, but the relationships are weak and variable (Johns, 1992; Carrell et al, 1998).

## 5.4 BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES AS PREDICTORS OF BURNOUT

The following table depicts the relationship between biographical variables and burnout:

**Table 5.3: Individual analysis of variance: biographical variables and burnout**

<b>Biographical variable</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>F value</b>	<b>P-value significance</b>	<b>Practical significance value</b>
Gender	1	3,18	0,076	0,15
Race	3	1,16	0,328	0,19
Age	3	2,47	0,064	0,23
Education	5	2,08	0,072	0,25
Position	5	4,68	0,006*	0,35**
Tenure	4	0,32	0,867	0,09
Department	1	0,17	0,682	0,04

\*p<0,5. \*\* small = 0,1, medium = 0.25, large = 0,40

Most of the biographical variables are not a significant predictor of burnout among medical sales representatives. This finding is confirmed by the p value of <0,05 in the above table. This, however, does not hold for position (P = 0,0006).

This finding contradicts the findings of Shiron (1989), who concluded that burnout is higher in younger persons between the ages of 18 and 30. The same applies to all other biographical variables. However, further analyses was not conducted.



As suggested in chapter 3, Shirom's (1989), findings should be viewed with caution because of the problem of survival that is those who burnout early in their careers are likely to resign, leaving behind the survivors who consequently exhibit lower levels of burnout. Shirom's (1989) findings also suggest that when comparing means for gender, males often score higher on cynicism and women higher on exhaustion.

As suggested in chapter 3, although these results could be related to gender role stereotypes, they may also reflect the traditional/historical conformance of gender with occupation (eg police officers are more likely to be males and nurses are more likely to be females).

Some studies have also concluded that persons with a higher level of education report higher levels of burnout than less educated employees (Miller, 2000; Savicki, 2002). A possible reason for this could be people with a high education have senior jobs and higher expectations, and are more inclined to stress because of their job challenges (Shirom 1989). This study found a weak correlation between the level of education and burnout a p value of 0,10 supporting the finding of the above analysis. Regarding the practical significance, the only biographical variable that at least has a medium effect on size is position (0,35).

As highlighted above, namely that position is related in some way to burnout, table 5.4 depicts the nature of the relationship between different categories of position and burnout.

**Table 5.4: Means and standard deviation for position and burnout**

Level of position	N	Mean	std deviation
Trainee representatives	3	4,412	1,953
General representatives	97	2,707	0,685
Professional representatives	2	3,142	0,673
Supervisory representatives	7	3,312	0,975
Managerial representatives	21	2,514	0,611
Executive representatives	6	2,746	0,490

As indicated above, the level of the burnout score among the trainee representatives is high (above 4). This could be attributed to diverse factors, inter alia, the fact that some people at this level perform jobs that are physically inclined, routine and nonchallenging. Owing to the low N (only 3 respondents), however, this depended on circumstances. Shirom (1989), however argues that these jobs have a tendency to cause physical exhaustion including the fact that the job may be too simple and routine to constitute a mental challenge. The level of burnout among middle managers and senior managers is low. This could be an indirect consequence of the level of challenge in the job and the actual job content and clear recognition for achievement among executive representatives. Senior staff may not experience the same pressures of meeting targets as junior staff.

According to Carrell et al, (2000), senior staff focuses on general management practices, competition analysis, market intelligence and managing their deployment. If they source correct talent and achieve the above roles, there may be a smaller likelihood of burnout developing.

Carrell et al, (2000) further suggest that the jobs of senior salespersons might not be as stressful as more junior sales representatives who need to achieve a predefined target on a daily basis. These authors conclude that superiors may receive accolades for team performance and this could prevent the development of burnout.

Based on the above analysis of the role of biographical variables as predictors of burnout, one may therefore conclude that the biographical variables as a whole do not significantly predict the level of burnout. As in job satisfaction, the main factor accounting you the above finding is that biographical variables are influenced by a number of social, political, economic, physiological dynamics that vary from one person to the next (Christensen, 1997).

## **5.5 LEVEL OF JOB SATISFACTION AND BURNOUT IN THE ORGANISATION**

A table of the means and standard deviation for the two variables depicts the level of job satisfaction and burnout.

**Table 5.5: Means and standard deviation table (job satisfaction and burnout)**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>std Dev</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
Job satisfaction	139	171,388	15,769	23823	130,000	193,000
Burnout	139	2,736	0,772	380,428	1,047	5,857

Based on the above table, one may conclude that the participants experienced a high level of job satisfaction as measured by the Smith et al, (1969) JDI (the mean of 171,388 is between 150 and 210 and considered to be high) (Leiter & Maslach, 2005). The burnout scores on the other hand, should be analysed more closely to check the frequency distribution of scores and percentages. Those are depicted in table 5.6.

**Table 5.6: Burnout frequencies and percentages**

Burnout score	Frequency	Percentage
1 (0-2)	20	14,39
2 (2-3)	80	57,55
3 (3-4)	31	22,30
4 (4-5)	5	3,60
5 and above	3	2,16

A breakdown of the burnout score also shows that the general score is low. About a third (27%) of the participants have a score higher than 3 and are therefore suffering from burnout. The above table also shows that 6% would favourably need some kind of intervention. This could also suggest that the organisation is managing the levels of burnout among the staff adequately.

The number of participants experiencing burnout is not necessarily high. However, the fact that 22.3% of participants are placed on the border of burnout and experiencing significant burnout or being in a bad state needs to be carefully considered. Of concern is the fact that the number could escalate if no proper interventions are forthcoming. A total of 22,3% of the respondents appear to be doing well, and very few (3.6%) are exhibiting minor symptoms of burnout and need to examine their worklife and make changes. The following section explores the correlation between job satisfaction and burnout.

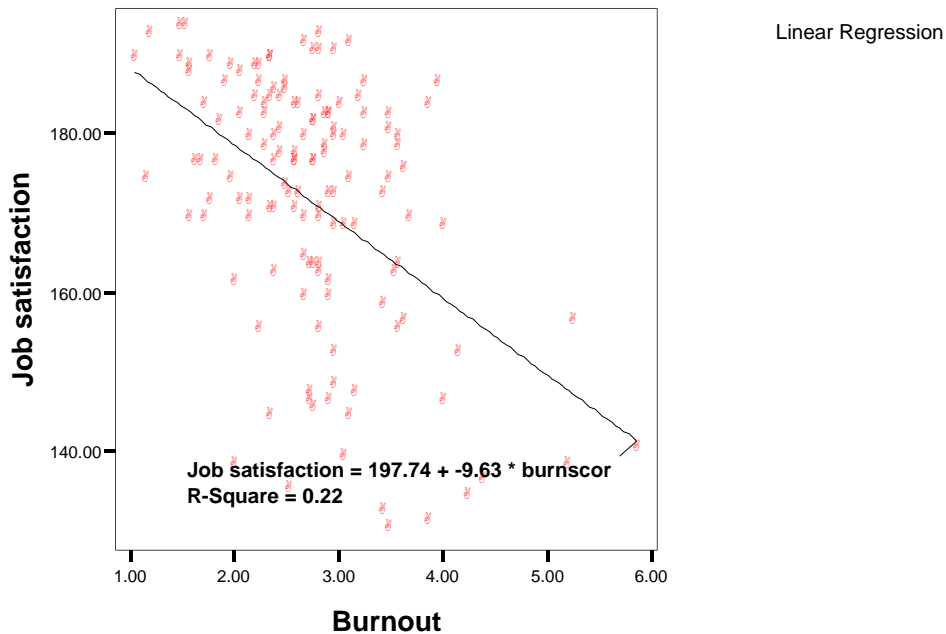
### **5.5.1 Correlation between job satisfaction and burnout**

The relationship between job satisfaction and burnout will be explained by the Pearson correlation between job satisfaction and burnout. This is intended to establish whether job satisfaction, as measured by the Smith et al, (1969) JDI is a predictor of burnout as measured by the Pines (1981) BI.

**Table 5.7: Pearson correlation coefficients (Job satisfaction and burnout)**

Pearson correlation	Burnout score	Job satisfaction
Burnout score	1,00000	-0,47179 p<0001
Job satisfaction	-0,47179 p<0001	1,00000

There is a significant correlation between the independent variable (job satisfaction) and dependent variable (burnout). In principle one may conclude that the higher the level of job satisfaction the lower the level of burnout hence there is an inverse relationship between the two variables. This finding is also depicted in figure 5.1 below.



**Figure 5.1 : Linear regression: job satisfaction and burnout**

The key aspect of this finding is that the correlation between the two variables is not that high (0,22), which confirms earlier research by Stout and Williams (1983).

The level of job satisfaction may not be the only factor accounting for the levels of burnout. Some components of job satisfaction such as promotion may have more influence than others. George (2000) suggests that the nature of the job may influence the behaviour of the job holder or job incumbent. Other related factors that could significantly influence the levels of burnout include, job commitment, motivation, job design and organisational design. It is clear however, that job satisfaction is one of the predictors of burnout and cannot be ignored.

### **5.5.2 Relationship between the components of job satisfaction and burnout**

The Pearson correlation and scatter analysis were used to investigate the relationship between the components of job satisfaction and burnout. The Pearson correlation is used where the variables were quantitative, whereas the scatter analysis focused on the level of spread of individual responses (Ferguson, 1976). The scatter analysis will only be presented for job content and promotion, since the finding shows some relationship with the dependent variable (burnout).

**Table 5.8: Pearson correlation coefficient: relationship between components of job satisfaction and burnout**

<b>Js components</b>	<b>Job content</b>	<b>Supervision</b>	<b>Co-workers</b>	<b>Pay</b>	<b>Promotion</b>
Burnout	-0,561 0,001*	-0,267 0,015*	-0,286 0,006*	-0,266 0,015*	-0,488 0,001*

\*p<0,01

It is clear from table 5.8 that all the correlations are highly significant ( $p < 0,01$ ).

On the basis of the table one may conclude that a moderate relationship exists between burnout and job content. The scores seem to suggest that if medical sales representatives are satisfied with the job content, there is little chances that they will experience burnout. The other moderate inverse relationship is depicted between promotion and burnout. This depiction seem to suggest that employees for whom there is a possibility of promotion based on their efforts, are unlikely to experience burnout because their energies are mobilised towards what may be lie ahead. The section below explores the nature of the relationship between components of job satisfaction and burnout.

### 5.5.2.1 Job content and burnout

The following linear regression analysis clarifies the above findings:

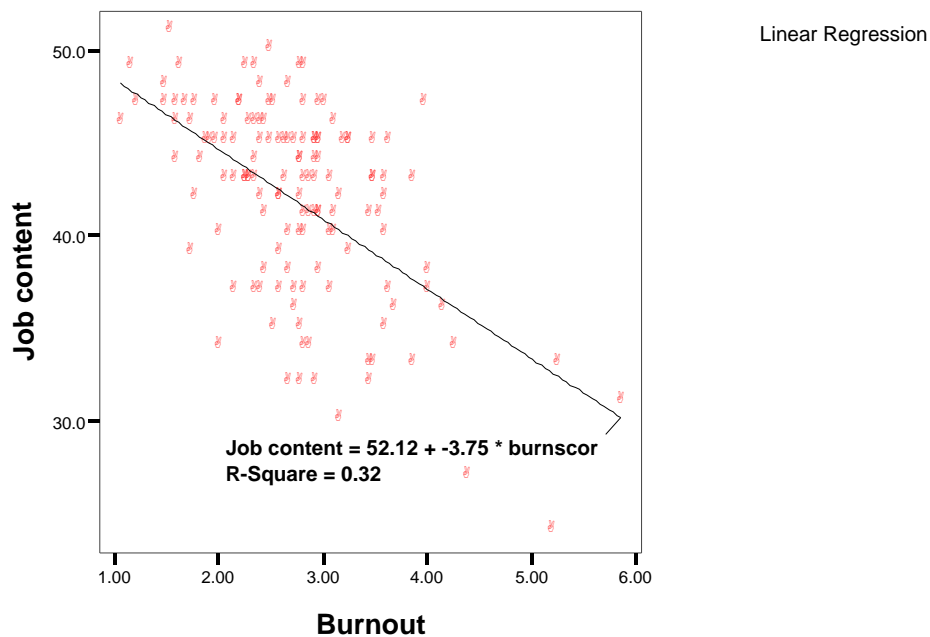


Figure 5.2: Linear regression: Job content and burnout

Based on the scatter analysis, job content is a predictor of burnout (R Square = 0, 32). The results suggest a significant inverse correlation of -0,561 between job content and burnout (table 5.8). The findings thus suggest that if medical salespersons are generally satisfied with their job content, they may not experience burnout.

Other studies have concluded that if people enjoy the job content, they may work too hard and do too much, and this could lead to exhaustion and ultimately cynicism when their focused efforts do not yield the expected results (Leiter et al, 2005). The expected results may be in a form of pay, promotion or recognition. The findings of this study, however do not suggest that if one is dissatisfied with one's job, burnout will result. Longitudinal studies with repeated measures may be necessary to shed some light on this issue.

#### **5.5.2.2 Supervision and burnout**

The Pearson correlation of  $-0.267$  suggests a negative and weak correlation between burnout and supervision. This weak correlation may suggest that the level of influence that different level of supervision have on medical sales representatives do not necessarily translate into burnout.

This finding can be validated by the fact that burnout relies on a number of other situational and personal factors. It is also dependent on the level of dealing with stress and probably the level of emotional intelligence and personality characteristics (Leiter et al, 2005).

#### **5.2.2.3 Co-workers and burnout**

The finding suggests a negative but weak correlation of  $-0.28621$  between co-workers and burnout. This may also suggest that if employees know their job, they might not necessarily need support from peers. The job of medical sales representatives tends to be lonely and employees may adapt to the job environment (Kudushin & Harkness, 2002).



#### **5.5.2.4 Pay and burnout**

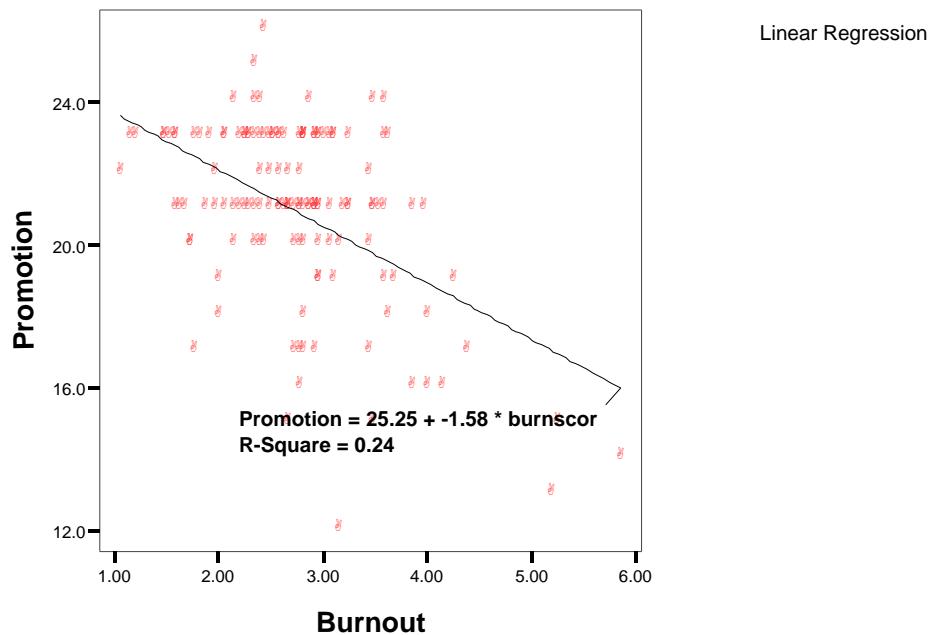
The findings concluded that there is a weak correlation (0,286) between the two variables. This finding is congruent with those of Pugh (1991), who suggested that a mismatch in rewards for working people might not necessarily lead to burnout. He also concluded that the lack of intrinsic reward (such as pride in doing something of importance and doing it well) may also be a critical part of burnout levels because lack of reward is associated with feelings of inefficiency.

According to Pauw (1991), burnout among sales people may not only be caused by insufficient financial rewards, for example when people do not receive the salary or benefits commensurate with their achievements, that the remuneration model is unsatisfactory, but also lacks social rewards, say, when one's hard work is ignored and not appreciated by others.

Leiter et al, (2005) also concluded that there is no correlation between pay and burnout, however sales persons needs to be paid appropriately because poor pay structures have a negative effect on employees.

### 5.5.2.5 Promotion and burnout

The following diagram depicts the relationship between promotion and burnout:



**Figure 5.3 Linear regression promotion and burnout**

The result suggests a significant inverse correlation of  $-0.489$  between promotion and burnout (table 5.8). Based on the scatter analysis promotion is a predictor of burnout (R-square = 0.24). Promotion may be a significant factor because the lack of promotion may fuel unfairness, for example, if an employee feels he or she deserves a promotion, and is not getting one, he or she might start perceiving the organisation as unfair (Angerer, 2003).

According to Leiter et al, (2005), lack of fairness exacerbates burnout in two ways; first by the experience of unfair treatment is emotionally upsetting and exhausting; and second by unfairness fuels a deep sense of cynicism in the workplace.

Since the work of medical sales representatives tends to be routine, the need for promotion may also reflect a need for a change of environment. This could also be evident because promotions may have affected only a few representatives. Because of the absence of promotions, performing representatives could remain in the same positions for a long time until they start experiencing a sense of cynism about the workplace.

As in figure 5.3, the overall finding on the relationship between job satisfaction and burnout is that some components of job satisfaction (job content and promotion) may be valid predictors of burnout within the Sales representatives in this study. The key aspect of this finding is that the correlation between the two variables is not that high, which confirms earlier research by Stout and Williams (1983). In conclusion, it can be stated that a significant correlation does exist between job content and promotion and burnout.

## **5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter discussed the empirical results of the study and also presented and interpreted the findings. Chapter 6 deals with the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of the study.

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this chapter is to draw the conclusions regarding this study, to discuss the limitations thereof and to make recommendations based on the findings of the study.

### **6.2 CONCLUSIONS**

The study focused on two main aims namely, the specific aims of the literature review and the specific aims of the empirical study.

#### **6.2.1 Literature review**

The specific aims of the literature review were as follows:

- to define the concept of job satisfaction
- to define the concept of burnout;
- to determine the theoretical relationship between job satisfaction and burnout

Job satisfaction and burnout were defined in chapters 2 and 3 respectively. Job satisfaction was defined as an attitude that individuals have towards their jobs. It results from their perception of their jobs and the degree to which there is a good fit between the individual or his or her needs and the organisation. For the purpose of this study burnout was defined as an individual experience that is specific to the work context, occurring because of a mismatch between the job and the person. It unfolds in a gradual process in which a person, in response to prolonged stress and physical, mental and emotional strain, detaches himself or herself from work and other meaningful relationships. Herewith, part of the specific aim of defining job satisfaction and burnout was achieved.

Job satisfaction was also defined in terms of its dimensions. It was concluded that job satisfaction is multidimensional because it stems from several sources such as pay, work and opportunities for promotion, supervision and co-workers.

Burnout was explained on the basis of the dimensions of emotional, physical and mental exhaustion. The literature review concluded that the higher the responded measures on the symptoms of emotional, physical and mental exhaustion, the higher the level of burnout will be. Herewith, the second specific aim of the study was achieved.

The integration of the dimensions of job satisfaction and of burnout in chapter 3 has showed that there is a theoretical relationship between the two variables. Herewith, the third specific aim of this study namely to determine the theoretical relationship between job satisfaction and burnout was achieved.

### **6.2.2 Empirical study**

The specific aims of the empirical study are as follows:

- to determine the level of job satisfaction and burnout in medical sales representatives
- to determine whether job satisfaction predicts the level of burnout in medical sales representatives
- to formulate recommendations on the management of job satisfaction and burnout in a pharmaceutical company

Through the empirical study, information was obtained regarding the job satisfaction of salespersons and their burnout levels. The conclusions drawn for the literature review and empirical study will now be discussed.

Four hypotheses were proposed. Firstly, it was hypothesised that biographic variables predict job satisfaction. The analysis of variance reveals that biographical variable overall does not predict job satisfaction. Thus,  $H_0$  is not rejected.

This confirms research findings by Johns (1992) that biographical variables have been shown to relate to job satisfaction, although the relationships are weak and variable. Christensen (1997) suggests that the main factor relating to the above finding is that biographical variables are influenced by a number of social, political, economic, physiological dynamics that vary from one person to the next.

Secondly, it was hypothesised that biographical variables predict burnout. The analysis of variance reveals that the biographical variables as a whole do not predict burnout. Position was found to influence the levels of burnout, but one needs to take cognisance of the fact that positions encompass broad categories and some may have few participants.  $H_0$  is thus not rejected.

Some studies confirmed a weak correlation between biographical variables and burnout (Shirom, 1989; Brown, 1992). However one should bear in mind that this study focussed on the overall prediction of the biographical variables of burnout.

Thirdly, it was hypothesised that job satisfaction (job content, supervision, co-workers, pay and position) predicts burnout. The Pearson correlation suggests that there is a correlation between job satisfaction and burnout. The findings also suggest an inverse relationship between job satisfaction that is, the higher the level of job satisfaction, the lower the level of burnout. It should also be noted that there is a split between the components of job satisfaction and the way they predict burnout. The correlation between the two variables is however not strong.  $H_0$  is therefore rejected.

The results can be summarised as follows:

- The results suggest that if medical sales representatives are satisfied with their job content, they will hardly experience burnout.
- The results also suggest a significant but weak correlation between supervision and burnout.
- The findings suggest a significant but weak correlation between co-workers and burnout.
- The findings suggest a significant but weak correlation between pay and burnout.
- The results suggest a significant and moderate correlation between promotion and burnout.

The overall conclusion is that some components of job satisfaction, mainly job content and promotion, could predict levels of burnout. The other components, namely supervision, co-workers and pay, do not predict burnout. In general therefore, the null hypotheses are also rejected because, some components of job satisfaction do predict the levels of burnout.

The above findings confirm the findings of Chernisis, (1980), Pauw, (1991), Pugh, (1991) and Pons at al (1998) who suggests that there are certain variations on how the components of job satisfaction predict burnout.

Fourthly, it was hypothesised that there is a significant correlation between job satisfaction and burnout. The Pearson correlation suggests that some level of correlation between job satisfaction and burnout does exist. The findings also suggest an inverse relationship between job satisfaction that is, the higher the level of job satisfaction the lower the level of burnout. It should also be noted that there is a split between the components of job satisfaction and the way in which they predict burnout hence a weak correlation between the two variables.  $H_0$  is therefore rejected.

This finding is confirmed by earlier research by Stout and Williams (1983) who concluded that some components of job satisfaction (job content and promotion) could be valid predictors of job satisfaction. They also concluded that job satisfaction is a weak predictor of burnout because burnout is also affected by other organisational factors such as job commitment and organisational design. Hence, the research questions were answered and the aims of the study achieved.

Job satisfaction does not necessarily have a strong relationship with burnout per se. However, two components of job satisfaction combined with other factors could influence burnout. Further research is necessary to explain and explore those variables and their influence on burnout in more detail. It may also be concluded that the influence of job satisfaction on burnout will be as important as all other significant factors in the relationship, as highlighted above. Therefore job satisfaction has some influence on the levels of burnout, but it is not the only factor that accounts for the level of burnout. In point of fact, some components (supervision and co-workers) of job satisfaction eg do not even have any significant correlation with burnout.

One may therefore conclude from the above that an organisation can not really afford to operate with low levels of job satisfaction or high levels of burnout. This chapter will therefore conclude with suggestions on how the organisation could enhance the level of job satisfaction and programmes to deal with the levels of burnout.

The main aim of this study, namely to answer the research question, "What is the influence of job satisfaction on burnout among medical sales representatives?" was therefore achieved. The levels of burnout and job satisfaction were established, and the role of biographical data explored. The components of job satisfaction and the way in which they relate to burnout were also determined.



### **6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The limitations of the study are indicated below:

#### **6.3.1 Limitations of the literature review**

The literature dealing with the concepts is somewhat outdated with few recent sources. There is little literature relating specifically to the job satisfaction of medical sales representatives, more specifically in the South African context. The same applies to burnout.

#### **6.3.2 Limitations of the empirical study**

- The sample was extracted from one generic pharmaceutical organisation and is possibly not be a true representation of the entire pharmaceutical industry. The conditions of service, however, are similar and the type of work generally the same.
- One of the main limitations of the study was that multiple regressions of job satisfaction components and burnout were not performed. This was because there were too many categorical variables with a large number of levels and not enough respondents. Another reason is that the levels/categories were not balanced for example, there were only three trainee representatives and 97 general representatives (table 5.2).
- Another limitation was that the control for outliers was not done. The numbers of outliers were low and could not affect the behaviour of the sample.

- The structuring of the biographical detail of age was open to greater interpretation that is, one could elect to tick a block of people between the ages of 18 and 25 or 25 and 30.

However, it became clear in the analysis that age did not influence the levels of job satisfaction or burnout.

- The Pines et al, (1981) BI and the Smith et al, (1969) JDI are standardised instruments for conditions abroad. Norms therefore need to be developed and validated for the South African context.
- The BI and JDI were administered in English to a sample that did not all have English as their first language. The instrument would need to be translated into the first language of the sample under investigation and validated.

## **6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The findings of this study do suggest that job content and promotion as components of job satisfaction are strong predictors of burnout. The aim of this section is therefore to discuss recommendations associated with both job satisfaction and burnout. The first part of this section will address the recommendations for job satisfaction and the second part on those for job content.

### **6.4.1 Recommendations based on the management of promotion**

Recommendations based on the management of promotion will be discussed under the co-determination model and the promotion policy.

#### **6.4.1.1 Codetermination model**

It is suggested that the current consultation structures be redefined to be more representative of the constituency of the organisation. More critical is the incorporation of sales representatives, input into governance structures. The advantages of codetermining organisational processes are widely noted (Davar, 1992; George, 2000; Kadushin & Egan, 2001).

The manner in which salespersons can progress in the organisation needs to be clear to all salespersons (Griffiths, 2003). This recommendation is also in line with the thinking of Beck, (1994), Davar, (1992), Dubinsky, (2004), Grobler at al, (2002) and Wealleans, (2003).

#### **6.4.1.2 Promotion policy**

It is proposed that the organisation should consistently evaluate the components of job satisfaction components. It is therefore suggested that these components should be addressed in a manner that satisfies employees, for example, the company need to ensure that a promotion policy is in place that offers employees excellent chances for promotions.

This could generate the development of a dual-career planning methodology which ensures that sales representatives who have ambitions of being managers have an opportunity to achieve them and that professional salespersons are also recognised from a pay perspective. In principle, an well experienced and top performing salesperson should be in a position to be paid more than upcoming managers (Dibble, 1999).

#### 6.4.2 Recommendations based on the management of job content

The job characteristics model can be used to enhance job content. Robbins et al, (2003) propose five core dimensions for enhance a job:

**(1) Skill variety.** This is the degree to which the job requires a variety of different activities to enable a worker to use a number different skills and talents. Sales representatives for examples may be required to sell (selling skills), market products (marketing skills) and write reports (writing and communication skills).

**(2) Task identity.** This has to do with the degree to which the job requires completion of a whole and identifiable piece of work. Sales representatives can document the whole marketing mix instead of merely selling products.

**(3) Task significance.** This concerns the degree to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people. Sales representatives need to understand and own the impact of their medical products in the lives of communities to the extent that they feel they fulfil a critical role in the very survival of the community.

**(4) Autonomy.** This is the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence and discretion for the individual to make him or her schedule the work and determine the procedures to be used in performing the job. Sales representatives often work on their own and therefore need to be empowered to make critical operational decisions in order to advance their sales.

**(5) Feedback.** This concerns the degree to which performing the activities required for the job results in the individual obtaining direct and clear information about the effectiveness of his or her performance. Sales representatives need consistent feedback to keep them committed and motivated to their job properly.

### **6.4.3 Recommendations to counter burnout**

Since job satisfaction is generally not a strong predictor of burnout, it is recommended that the management of job satisfaction, specifically components of job satisfaction, may not be sufficient to counter burnout. It is thus recommended that a holistic approach should be followed with specific interventions aimed at countering burnout. Such interventions could include didactic stress management, self-monitoring, promotion of a healthy lifestyle and integrated organisational programmes (Reinhold, 1997).

## **6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The following recommendations for future research are suggested:

- Job satisfaction and burnout in the pharmaceutical industry have not been studied intensively in the South African context, hence the need for future research in this area.
- A South African questionnaire in the different official language should be developed.
- A large sample should be used to conduct a factor analysis on the different dimensions of the variables.
- The different dimensions of burnout should be investigated.

## **6.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter dealt with the final phase of and steps in the research design. The results were reported, with the specific purpose of integrating them with the aims of the research, both from a theoretical and empirical point of view.

The aims of this study were achieved, its limitations outlined and recommendations formulated. Recommendations for further research were also made.

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