

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BURNOUT AND WORK ENGAGEMENT
AMONGST EMPLOYEES WITHIN A PHARMACEUTICAL DISTRIBUTION
INDUSTRY**

by

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I declare that **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BURNOUT AND WORK ENGAGEMENT AMONGST EMPLOYEES WITHIN A PHARMACEUTICAL DISTRIBUTION INDUSTRY** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or have quoted from have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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15 April 2015
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SUMMARY

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BURNOUT AND WORK ENGAGEMENT AMONGST EMPLOYEES WITHIN A PHARMACEUTICAL DISTRIBUTION INDUSTRY

by

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DEGREE: MCOM (Industrial and Organisational Psychology)

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between burnout and work engagement among employees in the pharmaceutical distribution industry. The research conducted on these concepts was geared towards adding to the knowledge base in the field of industrial and organisational psychology, to enable the current organisation from which the sample was chosen and other organisations in South Africa to focus on the effect that burnout has on employees, which directly affects the company. A quantitative survey using primary data was conducted on a convenience sample (N = 204) of full-time employees in a South African pharmaceutical distribution company. The Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey model (**MBI-GS**) and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (**UWES**) model were used to gather data.

The work engagement-burnout continuum has received a great deal of research attention (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003; Schutte, Toppinen, Kalimo, & Schaufeli, 2000) that has produced contradicting results. One viewpoint regards the core constructs of work engagement and burnout as opposite poles of two continua (vigour-exhaustion and dedication-cynicism), labelled *energy* and *identification*, respectively (González-Romá, Schaufeli, Bakker, & Lloret, 2006). Work engagement is "characterized by a high level of energy and strong identification with one's work", while burnout is "characterized by the opposite: A low level of energy combined with poor identification with one's work" (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003, p. 5; Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter, & Taris, 2008). Hence work

engagement and burnout can be recognised as inseparable and co-dependent constructs that share more or less 10 to 25% of their variance and are moderately negatively related (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002).

The second viewpoint regards work engagement and burnout as being strongly related, but fundamentally different in their separation in the work experience. They are therefore not opposite poles of a continuum (Denton, Newton, & Bower, 2008; Huhtala & Parzefall, 2007; Rothmann & Joubert, 2007; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli et al., 2002). *Work engagement* is defined as a "positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004, p. 295). *Burnout*, however, is defined by Maslach and Jackson (1981, p. 99) as a "syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs frequently amongst individuals who do 'people-work' of some kind".

The statistical results of this study confirmed the hypothesis. It was found that there is a significant relationship between burnout and work engagement. Burnout is indeed negatively related to work engagement in the contact centre. However, a definitive relationship between burnout and work engagement in the distribution centre was not established.

Keywords: Burnout; Work engagement, Maslach Burnout Inventory - General Survey (MBI-GS), Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), Emotional exhaustion, Depersonalisation, Reduced personal accomplishment, Vigour, Dedication, Absorption, Identification

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO AND OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH	14
1.1 INTRODUCTION	14
1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH	14
1.2.1 Stress	17
1.2.2 Burnout	17
1.2.3 Work engagement	19
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT	20
1.3.1 General research question	22
1.3.2 Specific research questions	22
1.4 AIMS OF THE RESEACH	22
1.4.1 General aim	22
1.4.2 Specific aims	22
1.4.3 Specific aims of the empirical study	23
1.5 THE PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE	23
1.5.1 Relevant paradigms	23
1.5.1.1 Burnout: humanistic paradigm	23
1.5.1.2 Positive psychology	24
1.5.2 Meta-theoretical statements	24
1.5.2.1 Industrial psychology	24
1.5.2.2 Occupational mental health	25
1.5.3 Theoretical models	25
1.5.4 Methodological assumptions	26
1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN	26
1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	27
1.7.1 Phase 1: Literature review	27
1.7.2 Phase 2: Empirical study	27
1.8 CHAPTER LAYOUT	28
1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY	28
CHAPTER 2: BURNOUT	29

2.1	CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS	29
2.1.1	History of the concept of burnout	29
2.1.2	Definition of burnout	31
2.1.3	Antecedents of burnout	35
2.1.3.1	Situational factors	35
2.1.3.2	Individual factors	37
2.1.4	Causes of burnout	38
2.1.4.1	Individual causes	38
2.1.5	Dimensions of burnout	41
2.1.5.1	Emotional exhaustion	41
2.1.5.2	Depersonalisation	43
2.1.5.3	Reduced personal accomplishment	45
2.2	MODELS OF BURNOUT	45
2.2.1	Perlman and Hartman's model of burnout	46
2.2.2	Carroll and White's model of burnout	48
2.2.3	Maslach and Jackson's model of burnout	49
2.3	THE DYNAMICS OF BURNOUT	51
2.3.1	A clarification of the burnout and stress concepts	51
2.3.1.1	Viewing burnout in terms of the general adaptation syndrome	51
2.3.1.2	Viewing burnout in terms of the stress-strain-coping model	53
2.3.1.3	Viewing burnout in terms of a conservative resource model	53
2.4	BURNOUT AS A PROCESS	54
2.4.1	Idealistic enthusiasm	54
2.4.2	Stagnation	55
2.4.3	Frustration	55
2.4.4	Apathy	55
2.5	CRITICAL REVIEW OF BURNOUT	55
2.6	PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF BURNOUT	58
2.6.1	Factors that could lead to burnout	59

2.6.1.1	Work overload	59
2.6.1.2	Monitoring and surveillance of employees	59
2.6.1.3	Competing management goals	60
2.6.1.4	Upward career movement	60
2.6.1.5	Lack of skill variety	60
2.6.1.6	Emotional labour	61
2.6.2	Burnout and work engagement	62
2.6.3	The importance of burnout for organisations	63
2.7	BURNOUT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT	64
2.7.1	Burnout in call centres	65
2.7.2	Coping strategies in the pharmaceutical community	66
2.7.3	The relationships between job demands, job resources, burnout, and engagement of management staff at a platinum mine in the North West province	67
2.7.4	Burnout in the insurance industry: the psychometric properties of the MBI-GS and the UWES for employees in an insurance company in South Africa: Assessing the relationship between burnout and work engagement	69
2.7.5	Job characteristics, optimism, burnout and ill health of support staff in a higher education institution in South Africa	71
2.8	CONSEQUENCES OF BURNOUT	73
2.8.1	Health-related outcomes	73
2.9	CHAPTER SUMMARY	75
CHAPTER 3: WORK ENGAGEMENT		76
3.1	PARADIGMATIC AND CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATION	76
3.1.1	Paradigmatic foundation	76
3.1.1.1	Positive psychology	76
3.1.2	Conceptual foundation	77
3.1.2.1	Definition of work engagement	79
3.1.2.2	Work engagement facets	82
3.1.3	Antecedents of engagement	86
3.1.3.1	Situational factors	86
3.1.3.2	Individual factors	88

3.2 THE WORK ENGAGEMENT MODEL	90
3.2.1 Work engagement, organisational commitment and job satisfaction	90
3.2.2 Work engagement in relation to burnout	91
3.3 THE UTRECHT WORK ENGAGEMENT MODEL	93
3.4 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF WORK ENGAGEMENT	95
3.5 CONSEQUENCES OF ENGAGEMENT	98
3.5.1 Motivational outcomes	98
3.5.2 Job-related outcomes	99
3.6 THEORETICAL INTEGRATION OF BURNOUT AND WORK INTEGRATION	101
3.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY	103
CHAPTER 4: EMPIRICAL STUDY	104
4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN	104
4.2 DETERMINATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION AND SAMPLE	104
4.2.1 Population	104
4.2.2 Sample	105
4.3 CHOOSING AND JUSTIFYING THE PSYCHOMETRIC BATTERY	108
4.3.1 The MBI-GS	109
4.3.1.1 Theoretical basis for the development of the MBI-GS	109
4.3.1.2 Rationale for the MBI-GS	110
4.3.1.3 Scales of the MBI-GS	111
4.3.1.4 Administration of the MBI-GS	112
4.3.1.5 Scoring and interpretation of the MBI-GS	112
4.3.1.6 Reliability and validity of the MBI-GS	113
4.3.1.7 Justification for the selection of the MBI-GS	113
4.3.2 The UWES	114
4.3.2.1 Theoretical basis for the development of the UWES	114

4.3.2.2	Rationale for the UWES	114
4.3.2.3	Scales of the UWES	115
4.3.2.4	Administration of the UWES	116
4.3.2.5	Scoring and interpretation of the UWES	116
4.3.2.6	Reliability and validity of the UWES	117
4.3.2.7	Justification for the selection of the UWES	118
4.3.3	The biographical/demographic questionnaire	118
4.3.4	Limitations of the psychometric battery	118
4.3.5	Ethical issues	119
4.4	ADMINISTRATION OF THE PSYCHOMETRIC BATTERY	120
4.5	STATISTICAL DATA PROCESSING	120
4.5.1	Descriptive statistics	120
4.5.2	Internal consistency reliability analysis of the MBI-GS and UWES	121
4.5.3	Correlation analysis	121
4.5.4	Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient	121
4.5.5	Inferential statistics	122
4.5.6	Step-wise multiple regressions	122
4.5.7	Test of differences between mean scores (Mann-Whitney U test)	123
4.5.8	Statistical significance	123
4.6	FORMULATION OF THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESES	123
4.7	CHAPTER SUMMARY	124
CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH RESULTS		125
5.1	DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS	125
5.1.1	Reporting of means and standard deviations	125
5.1.2	Interpretation of means and standard deviations for the MBI-GS	126
5.2	EXPLANATORY STATISTICS	127

5.2.1 Reporting of the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients for the dimensions of burnout (MBI-GS) and work engagement (UWES)	127
5.2.2 Interpretation of the Pearson product-moment correlation of work engagement (UWES) and burnout (MBI-GS)	129
5.3 INFERENTIAL STATISTICS	131
5.3.1 Stepwise multiple regression analysis between burnout and work engagement	132
5.3.2 Interpretation of multiple stepwise regressions with burnout as a predictor of work engagement	134
5.3.3 Reporting on the independent test of differences between age and gender groups	135
5.4 INTEGRATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS	136
5.4.1 Biographical profile of the sample	136
5.4.2 Descriptive statistics: Interpretation of results	137
5.4.2.1 Burnout profile	137
5.4.2.2 Work engagement profile	137
5.4.3 Empirical research aim 1: Interpretation of the correlation results	138
5.4.3.1 Relationship between burnout and work engagement variables	138
5.4.4 Empirical research aim 2: Interpretation of the stepwise regressions	140
5.4.4.1 Exhaustion and professional efficacy burnout variables as predictors of vigour	140
5.4.4.2 Exhaustion and the professional efficacy burnout variables as predictors of dedication	140
5.4.4.3 Exhaustion and professional efficacy burnout variables as predictors of absorption	141
5.4.5 Empirical research aim 3: Interpretation of the tests for significant mean difference results	141
5.4.6 Conclusions relating to the research hypotheses	142

5.5	CHAPTER SUMMARY	143
	CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	144
6.1	CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO THE DEFINED AIMS	144
6.1.1	Conclusions relating to the literature review	144
6.1.1.1	Conceptualising burnout	144
6.1.1.2	Conclusion relating to the construct of burnout	145
6.1.1.3	Conceptualising work engagement	146
6.1.1.4	Conclusions relating to the construct of work engagement	146
6.1.1.5	Determining the theoretical relationship between burnout and work engagement	147
6.1.2	Conclusions relating to the empirical study	147
6.1.2.1	Research aim 1	148
6.1.2.2	Research aim 2	149
6.1.2.3	Research aim 3	150
6.2	LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY	151
6.2.1	Limitations of the literature review	151
6.2.2	Limitations of the empirical study	151
6.3	RECOMMENDATIONS	152
6.3.1	Industrial and organisational psychologists in the field of burnout and work engagement	152
6.3.2	Future research	153
6.3	INTEGRATION OF THE STUDY	154
6.5	CHAPTER SUMMARY	156
	REFERENCES	157
	INTERNET SOURCES	200
	ANNEXURE A	201

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: A taxonomy of well-being at work	15
Figure 3.1: The engagement model	86
Figure 4.1: Gender distribution	106
Figure 4.2: Race distribution	107
Figure 4.3: Age distribution	108

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Distribution sample according to gender	105
Table 4.2: Distribution of sample according to race	106
Table 4.3: Distribution of sample according to age category	107
Table 5.1: Descriptive statistics on the MBI-GS (N = 204)	125
Table 5.2: Descriptive statistics for the UWES (N = 204)	126
Table 5.3: Pearson product-moment intercorrelation analysis between MBI-GS and UWES dimensions (N = 204)	128
Table 5.4: Summary of the correlations between burnout variables and work engagement variables	131
Table 5.5: Significant stepwise multiple regression results: Burnout as a predictor of work engagement	133
Table 5.6: Summary of the burnout variables that acted as significant predictors of work engagement variables	134
Table 5.7: Results of Mann-Whitney U test: Significant mean differences between females and males regarding work engagement and burnout	136
Table 5.8: Summary of conclusions relating to the research hypotheses	142

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO AND OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This dissertation focused on the relationship between burnout and work engagement among employees within the pharmaceutical distribution industry. This chapter deals with the background to and motivation for the study, the problem statement, the aims, paradigm perspective, and the research design and method.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

At times, work requires effort and is associated with lack of freedom and negative feelings and thus contributes to illness. Research has also indicated a relationship between stress and absenteeism and between stress and labour turnover (Leiter, Bakker, & Maslach 2014; Mostert, Rothmann, Mostert, & Nell, 2008). Conversely, at times, work gives energy, enables development and generates positive feelings and has a therapeutic effect (Rothmann, 2003). Work thus seems to lead to illness and health (Van den Heuvel, Demerouti, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2013). Mostert et al. (2008) further found job overload to be a major contributor to symptoms of psychological ill health, increased levels of stress and reduced commitment to the organisation, which negatively influence overall job performance and turnover intention. Van den Berg, Manias, and Burger (2008) found that employees' attitudes towards the organisation and the organisation's commitment to individuals made the most significant contributions to employees' levels of vigour and absorption. High demands or stressors relating to job insecurity, client-related factors, work-home interference and physical resources impacted negatively on the levels of vigour and dedication. The same demands or stressors, in conjunction with poor remuneration, also resulted in lower levels of absorption. Mostert et al. (2008) further reported findings indicating that stressors such as job content (autonomy) might result in lower commitment towards the organisation. From a pathogenic as well as a fortigenic perspective, burnout and work engagement are specific focus areas for research and intervention (Maslac, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2009). Burnout is a metaphor that is commonly used to describe a state or process of mental exhaustion (Leiter et al., 2014). Engagement is defined as an energetic state in which the employee is

dedicated to excellent performance at work and is confident of his or her effectiveness (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010; Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74). Engaged employees are typically characterised by the willingness to take the initiative and self-direct their lives; they generate their own positive feedback and thus encourage themselves; they are also engaged outside of their employment; their values and norms are in agreement with those of the organisation for which they work; they do become fatigued, but this is intrinsically linked to an overall sense of satisfaction; they may also become "burnt out", but are able to extricate themselves from the situation; they are not enslaved to their job, and they tend to also pursue outside interests (Van den Berg et al., 2008; Gorgievski, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2010). Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) developed a model of well-being at work which makes it possible to focus on burnout and engagement. The model is illustrated in figure 1.1.

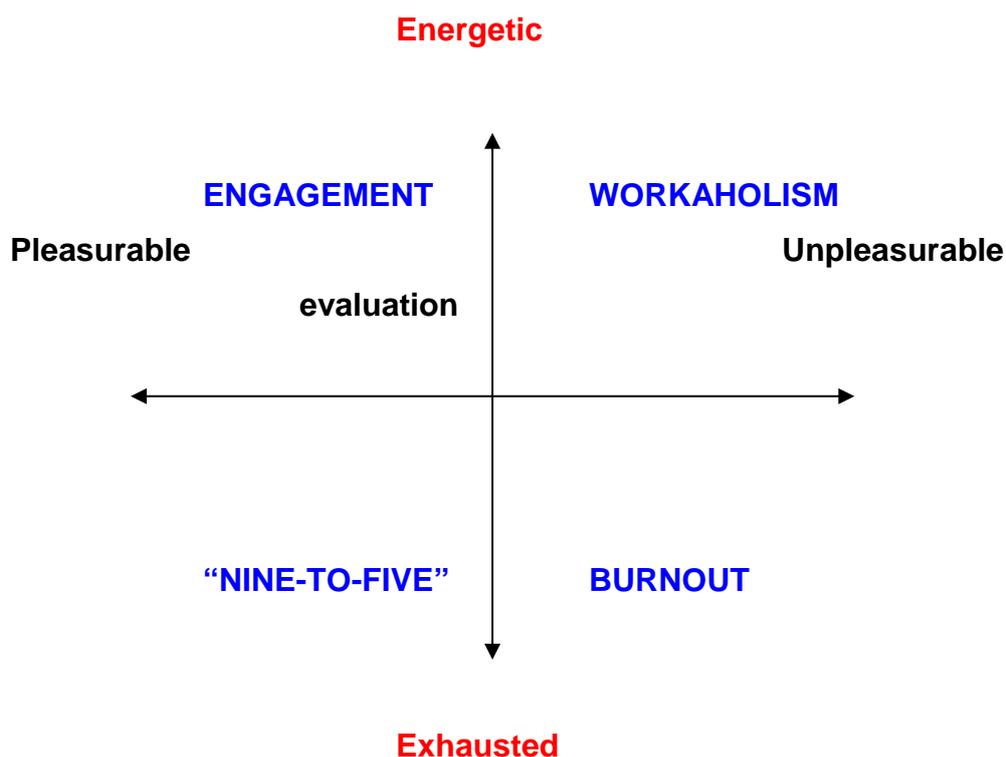


Figure 1.1: A taxonomy of well-being at work

Bakker et al. (2010) distinguish between two dimensions that can be used to classify four types of well-being at work. The horizontal axis represents the extent of pleasure at work (i.e. pleasurable versus unpleasurable). The vertical dimension

relates to the mobilisation of energy. This taxonomy makes it possible to distinguish between engagement and burnout, but also workaholism and a type of work experience called “nine-to-five”. According to Gorgievski et al. (2010), research on burnout shows that some employees, regardless of high job demands and long working hours, are not burnt out. Instead, they seem to find pleasure in working hard and dealing with job demands. They may be seen as workaholics, that is, if the perspective is one of focusing on human deficiencies (instead of on strengths). Hence the question arises whether it is not possible that there are engaged employees who show energy, dedication and absorption in their work, for example, employees who show behaviour that is the opposite of burnout (Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2014).

Staff members who were at one point optimistic and enthusiastic may become detached and fatigued and cynical, which is known as burnout that relates to professional exhaustion. It is an accepted fact that extreme levels of workplace burnout and stress can drastically decrease employee productivity (Dodge & D'Analeze, 2012).

Employers have to realise that burnout is a reality among all generational groups, and it is thus essential to take the time and necessary means to investigate it. Employers have a responsibility to their employees, which is directly linked to the well-being of the company because burnout can directly affect the company's overall performance. Burnout has become a widespread condition, and even stress-related suicides are not unheard of. The word “stress” is used to refer to many different experiences caused by diverse situations. It is sometimes described as a psychological phenomenon, and sometimes as a physiological state. In fact, attempting to separate the two is misguided: Like all emotions, stress has both a psychological and a physiological component. Stress is not some special syndrome, but the result of an intense emotional state that persists for an extended period of time (Mortillaro & Scherer, 2014).

1.2.1 Stress

Stress is a psychological and physiological response to events that upset our personal balance in some way. These events or demands are known as stressors. The stress faced by professional workers is substantial. For many professionals, it is intrinsic to the job itself, where competing demands and pressures cannot be escaped. The sheer volume of work can also be overwhelming at times. It can develop into a living nightmare of running faster and faster to stay in the same place, feeling undervalued, feeling unable to say “no” to any demand, but not working productively on anything. It is a term that causes considerable confusion, however, because it is defined in a variety of ways and means different things to different people. In the practice of psychology, four general theoretical approaches to defining stress can be identified (O’Driscoll & Brough, 2003; Thiel & Dretsch, 2011). Across all four approaches, stress broadly refers to events or demands which are known as stressors. Exposure to chronic or acute stressors (i.e. some form of environmental stimulus or event) leads to a strain response (i.e. the person’s physical and psychological reaction). In a work environment, occupational stress refers “to any affect-laden negative experience that is caused by an imbalance between job demands and the response capability of the workers. When job demands are too high to cope with, stress reactions are likely to occur” (Thiel & Dretsch, 2011; Alarcon, 2009; Bakker, Gonzalez-Roma, Lloret, & Schaufeli, 2006; Langelaan, Bakker, Schaufeli, & Van Dooren, 2006; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998, p.8).

Burnout is generally considered to be a special type of occupational stress that results from prolonged exposure to excessive job demands (specifically interpersonal demands at work). It is distinguishable from stress, in that it represents a set of responses to chronic work demands (Thiel & Dretsch, 2011; O’Driscoll & Brough, 2003; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).

1.2.2 Burnout

Burnout is commonly defined as a prolonged response or “psychological syndrome” in response to chronic interpersonal stressors on the job (Maslach et al., 2001). Burnout can result when people give too much, for too long, and receive too few

benefits/rewards in return. In this way, burnout can be viewed as a state of exhaustion that results from a long-term imbalance between investments and outcomes (Maslach, 1982; Maslach et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998; Alarcon, 2009).

Burnout was first proposed as a psychological syndrome in the early 1970s. Christina Maslach (1982) independently commenced studying the ways in which people working in stressful jobs cope with their emotional arousal. In her interviews with healthcare workers, Maslach (Maslach & Jackson, 1984; Maslach & Leiter, 2008) identified three key themes. Firstly, many workers reported feeling emotionally exhausted and drained of all feelings. Secondly, they reported negative perceptions and feelings about their patients. Thirdly, they reported experiencing a crisis in professional competence as a result of their emotional turmoil. Maslach and her colleagues subsequently adopted the term “burnout” to describe her observations (Maslach & Jackson, 1984; Maslach & Leiter, 2008).

Maslach describes burnout as comprising three interrelated but distinct components, namely exhaustion, cynicism and reduced efficacy. Exhaustion refers to the basic stress component of burnout, representing a lack of energy and feelings of being over-extended and depleted of emotional and physical resources. This might be viewed as a form of “compassion fatigue”, which coexists with feelings of frustration or tension when workers realise that they might not be able to give as much of themselves to their work as they have in the past. Cynicism refers to the depersonalisation aspect of burnout. It represents feelings of detachment and unresponsiveness in relation to the job. Cynicism may be manifested when treating clients as objects rather than people, displaying emotional callousness, and/or being cynical towards co-workers, clients and/or the organisation. Reduced efficacy refers to feelings of incompetence, a reduced ability to do the job and lack of accomplishment. In this way, reduced efficacy represents the self-evaluation dimensions of burnout (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Maslach et al., 2001; Alarcon, 2007). Research on the work engagement concept has taken two related but different paths (Storm, 2002). Maslach and Leiter (1997) describe work engagement as being characterised by energy, involvement and efficacy, which are regarded as the direct opposites of the three burnout dimensions, namely exhaustion, cynicism

and lack of professional efficacy, respectively. Maslach and Leiter (1997) indicate that focusing on work engagement, means looking at the energy, involvement and effectiveness that employees bring to and develop through their jobs. They believe that a focus on work engagement builds more effective organisations.

1.2.3 Work engagement

With an increasing emphasis on positive psychology (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003) in research literature, the concept of organisational engagement was advanced (Kahn, 1990; Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Rothbard, 2001). Organisational engagement is assumed to represent the opposite of burnout. Two distinct positions exist on the exact nature of the relationship between engagement and burnout. The first position views burnout as an erosion of engagement and the two concepts constitute the opposite pole of a continuum of work-related well-being. In this way burnout constitutes the negative pole, and engagement the positive pole. Given Maslach's conceptualisation of the three dimensions of burnout, this position assumes that engagement represents the opposite of three corresponding aspects of burnout, namely energy, involvement and efficacy. Maslach and Leiter (1997) proposed that the opposite scoring pattern on three aspects of burnout (as measured by the MBI) implies engagement. According to this rationale, low scores on the emotional exhaustion and cynicism scales, combined with a high score on the professional efficacy scale of the MBI, would suggest higher levels of engagement.

The alternative position on work engagement views it as a distinct construct. Schaufeli et al. (2002) partly agree with Maslach and Leiter's (1997) description, but define and operationalise work engagement as an independent construct. Schaufeli et al. (2002) thus consider burnout and work engagement to be opposite concepts that should be measured independently using different instruments. As Schaufeli et al. (2002, p. 75) explain:

Contrary to Maslach and Leiter (2007) we do not feel that engagement is adequately measured by the opposite profile of MBI scores. Although we concur that, conceptually speaking, engagement is the positive antithesis of burnout, we acknowledge that the measurement of both concepts, and hence

its structure, differs. As a consequence, engagement is operationalised in its right.

Schaufeli et al. (2002) have subsequently proposed an amended conceptualisation of work engagement, measured by a distinct scale. This definition and scale are adopted in the present study. Specifically, Schaufeli and Bakker (2003, p.4) define work engagement as "... a positive fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption. Rather than a momentary and specific state, engagement refers to a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behaviour."

According to Schaufeli and According to Schaufeli and Bakker (2003), vigour (exhaustion) and dedication (cynicism) are related to burnout. Vigour refers to the activation dimension of well-being, while dedication refers to identification with work. However, absorption and profession efficacy seem to be less related than the other dimension, but both dimensions might also be regarded as components of work engagement.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

According to Ashford (1988, p. 20), there is no apparent reason why some people have the ability to cope and manage certain situations and others are not able to do this under similar conditions.

In the pharmaceutical industry, employees have to constantly be on their guard to ensure that stock is not damaged or stolen, or expires, to ensure that the company minimises financial losses. Employees have to ensure that damaged or expired stock is not sent to their clients, as this stock could be distributed to sick patients, and serious health dilemmas could arise, while the distribution centre could have its licence revoked by the Department of Health for unsafe and illegal practices.

According to Jackson, Rothmann, and Van de Vijver (2006), empirical studies have confirmed that burnout is related to health problems and turnover intentions, and that

it mediates the relationship between job demands and health problems. Employees work under a tremendous amount of stress because of serious responsibilities, and are often booked off sick and with most, employment is eventually terminated. With each incident, polygraphs tests/lie detector tests are used to investigate the incident under question. One of the many examples of this occurred when the drug Rohypnol, known as the “date rape drug,” was delivered to the distribution centre. Upon checking the boxes at the receiving department, the receiving clerk discovered that the box had been tampered with and that ten containers of Rohypnol were missing from the box. All staff who had access to the boxes were immediately sent for polygraph testing. The culprit was caught and summarily dismissed. As a result of staff being dismissed for theft and gross negligence of stock, as well as staff resignations, there is a high turnover in the industry.

There are a number of reasons why the pharmaceutical distribution company should be concerned with the levels of stress among its employees. *Firstly*, all corporations have an obligation to their employees to ensure that their well-being is looked after, because stress and burnout can have a detrimental effect on employee well-being. Research has also indicated a relationship between stress and absenteeism and between stress and labour turnover (Coetzer & Rothmann, 2007; Mostert et al., 2008).

Secondly, stress and burnout can have detrimental effects on the performance of employees in the pharmaceutical distribution company. Both stress and burnout have been associated with resignations, employee workplace motivation, job performance, learning and development and absenteeism (Leiter et al., 2014; Dodge & D'Analeze, 2012).

The general research question that required further investigation is set out below.

1.3.1 General research question

Can the relationship between burnout and work engagement among employees in a pharmaceutical distribution industry be determined?

1.3.2 Specific research questions

Arising out of the literature review, the following specific research questions were addressed in this research study:

- What does burnout mean and what constructs are involved?
- What does work engagement mean and what constructs are involved?
- Is there a theoretical relationship between burnout and work engagement?

In terms of the empirical study, the following specific research questions were addressed in this research study:

- What are the levels of burnout and work engagement among employees?
- Can burnout act as a predictor of work engagement among employees?
- What recommendations can be made for future research and for the management of burnout and work engagement in the pharmaceutical distribution industry?

1.4 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

1.4.1 General aim

The general aim of this study was to determine the relationship between burnout and work engagement among employees in the pharmaceutical distribution industry.

1.4.2 Specific aims

The specific aims of the literature review were formulated as follows:

- to define the concept of burnout
- to define the concept of work engagement
- to determine the theoretical relationship between burnout and work engagement

1.4.3 Specific aims of the empirical study

The specific aims of the empirical investigation were as follows:

- to determine the level of burnout and work engagement among employees
- to determine whether burnout predicts the level of work engagement among employees
- to formulate recommendations on the management of burnout and work engagement in the pharmaceutical distribution industry

1.5 THE PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE

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

1.5.1 Relevant paradigms

The literature review on burnout and work engagement in this study will be presented according to the humanistic (Lambie, 2011) and positivist paradigm (Taylor & Medina, 2013).

1.5.1.1 Burnout: humanistic paradigm

The literature on burnout is based on the humanistic paradigm (every organism has an inherent growth potential or self-actualising tendency) (Lambie, 2011) with specific reference to its dynamic nature. Codrington and Grant-Marshall (2011) highlight the fact that each generation strives towards self-actualising tendencies, but

respective generational approaches are different. This study was thus conducted from the humanistic perspective.

1.5.1.2 Positive psychology

Work engagement is based on the positivist paradigm of exploring social reality, which is based on the philosophical ideas of the French philosopher, August Comte (Comte, 1865), who emphasised observation and reason as a means of understanding human behaviour. According to Comte, true knowledge is based on experience of senses and can be obtained by observation and experiment. Positivistic thinkers adopt his scientific method as a means of knowledge generation. Hence, it has to be understood within the framework of the principles and assumptions of science. The positivist paradigm systematises the knowledge generation process with the help of quantification, which is essential to enhance precision in the description of parameters and the discernment of the relationship between them. Because positivism assumes an objective world, it often searches for facts conceived in terms of specified correlations and associations between variables. Hence the positivist focus on experimental and quantitative methods used to test and verify hypotheses has been superseded or complemented to some extent by an interest in using qualitative methods to gather broader information outside of readily measured variables. In this study, quantitative research was conducted by utilising questionnaires (Cohen et al., 2011).

1.5.2 Meta-theoretical statements

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

1.5.2.1 Industrial psychology

Industrial psychology is the scientific study of the relationship between humans and the world of work. In brief, industrial psychology is concerned with the scientific structuring of organisations and of work in order to improve the productivity and quality of life of people at work, applying techniques and the principles of psychology

(Cascio & Aguinis, 2008). Industrial psychology is the scientific application of psychological knowledge and research to the work environment (Cascio & Aguinis, 2008). Similar to its parent discipline (psychology), there are two sides of industrial psychology, namely science and practice (Cascio & Aguinis, 2008). Industrial psychology is an academic discipline advancing scientific knowledge about people at work, on the one hand, and it is concerned with applying scientific knowledge to solving real problems in the work environment, on the other. Since the domain of industrial psychology covers factors that influence work behaviour, such as family responsibilities and cultural diversity, one must guard against restricting its application and benefits only to the boundaries of the traditional workplace (Cascio & Aguinis, 2008; Landy & Conte, 2007).

1.5.2.2 Occupational mental health

Occupational mental health is a specialised field to the extent that it is a separate branch of industrial psychology. As an applied field of clinical and abnormal psychology, it deals with the maladjustment or adjustment of employees in the work or organisational context (Creek & Lougher, 2011).

1.5.3 Theoretical models

Maslach (Leiter et al., 2014) describes burnout as being composed of three interrelated but distinct components, and for the purpose of this study, burnout was conceptualised according to its three key dimensions, namely exhaustion, cynicism and detachment from the job (Leiter et al., 2014). The Maslach Burnout Indicator General Survey (MBI-GS) (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996) and the Utrecht Work Engagement scale (UWES) (Schaufeli et al., 2002) were used as measuring instruments in this study.

Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) contend that work engagement was conceptualised according to its multidimensional elements, namely energy, involvement and efficacy. To measure work engagement, the 17-item UWES (Schaufeli et al., 2002) was utilised.

1.5.4 Methodological assumptions

According to Groenewald (2004), research methods vary in terms of the tasks performed from methods and techniques of sampling, to data collection methods, and methods of data analysis. However, the selection and application of these methods always depends on the aims and objectives of the study, the nature of the phenomenon being investigated and the underlying theory or expectations of the researcher. Research methods and techniques thus involve a variety of assumptions (Groenewald, 2004). The current study was exploratory, and it employed a quantitative approach. The central hypothesis was formulated as follows: burnout is a predictor of work engagement. It was a quantitative study, with the researcher being a master's student in industrial psychology and the second person being the individual employed in a pharmaceutical distribution industry. The unit of analysis was the individual employee.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design involved a literature review and an empirical investigation to determine the predictive value of burnout for work engagement. A cross-sectional survey design was used to describe the collected information on the population (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1997). The data were analysed further through the use of descriptive and inferential statistics. In this study, burnout was the independent variable and work engagement the dependent variable. The study was also confined to the individual level of analysis.

Reliability and validity in this study were ensured through the following:

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

External validity and reliability were further ensured by the random selection of the sample to be representative of the total population of employees in the pharmaceutical distribution industry.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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

1.7.1 Phase 1: Literature review

The literature review consisted of the following three steps:

- Step 1: Burnout was defined.
- Step 2: Work engagement was defined.
- Step 3: The theoretical relationship between burnout and work engagement was determined.

1.7.2 Phase 2: Empirical study

The empirical study consisted of the following steps:

- Step 1: A random sample of 204 participants was selected from a population of 350 employees.
- Step 2: The MBI-GS and UWES were discussed and justified as instruments to access burnout and work engagement.
- Step 3: The MBI-GS and UWES were administered to the sample of 204 participants.
- Step 4: The research hypothesis was formulated.
- Step 5: The data were analysed using correlation and regression analysis, and the results were reported and interpreted.
- Step 6: The research findings were integrated.
- Step 7: The limitations and conclusions of the research were discussed.

Step 8: Recommendations were made for the management of burnout and work engagement and topics for future research discussed.

1.8 CHAPTER LAYOUT

The layout of this dissertation is as follows:

Chapter 1	:	Background to and overview of the research
Chapter 2	:	Burnout
Chapter 3	:	Work engagement
Chapter 4	:	Empirical study
Chapter 5	:	Research results
Chapter 6	:	Conclusions, limitations and recommendations

1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter focused on the formulation of the background to the research problem. This was followed by a discussion of the details of the research questions, literature and empirical aims of the research. The foundations for the research design and research method followed the paradigm perspective. The chapter ended with a brief outline of the chapters in the dissertation.

Chapter 2 will focus on the burnout phenomenon.

CHAPTER 2: BURNOUT

The aim of this chapter is to conceptualise and integrate the existing literature on burnout, with special emphasis on burnout in the pharmaceutical distribution workplace. The conceptual foundations of burnout will first be presented, followed by discussion of the models of burnout. The dynamics of burnout, critical review and practical application of burnout are explained. Burnout in the South African context is discussed next as well as the relevance of burnout in the pharmaceutical company. The chapter will conclude with an integration of the literature findings.

2.1 CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

2.1.1 History of the concept of burnout

Although individual characteristics and coping strategies play a vital role in the amount of burnout an individual might experience, a number of employment practices occurring in organisations tend to promote the development of the syndrome. Among these practices are limited input by employees into decision making, disproportionate workloads among employees with similar job descriptions, the inability of individuals to achieve career goals (such as promotion and recognition), poor communication between administrators and employees, inadequate staff development for maintaining skills and personal development, dysfunctional support systems, de-emphasis on relaxation programmes and inadequate matching of personal characteristics to job demands (Gorgievski et al., 2010).

Freudenberger (1974) coined the term “burnout” to describe a particular state of emotional depletion, loss of motivation and engagement and physical exhaustion. Working as a psychiatrist in an alternative healthcare agency, Freudenberger (1989, p. 1) observed, “that over time, we began to note significant changes in mood, attitude, motivation and personality among the volunteers”. The concept was first brought to professional and public awareness in 1973 (Freudenberger, 1974).

Burnout first emerged as a social problem, not as a scholarly construct and as a result it was studied from an emotional arousal perspective. It was first seen as occurring in the “helping” professions such as nursing, law enforcement, education and others, owing to the high workplace demands and shortages of personnel in these professions (Maslach et al., 2014), but it is now seen as a widespread issue. Hence the concept of burnout that was initially closely linked to human services where employees do “people” work of some kind has been expanded to all other professions and occupational groups. People working in helping professions feel a loss of idealism and extreme fatigue. These issues prompted research in the field, leading to the development of the Maslach Burnout Inventory Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS) (Maslach & Jackson, 1981) which measures burnout in human service professions.

During the pioneering phase, the initial conception of burnout was shaped by pragmatic rather than academic concerns, the work was exploratory and the goal was to articulate the burnout phenomenon (Maslach & Schaufeli, 1993; Maslach et al., 2001). In the second empirical phase, burnout research became more systematic and quantitative in nature, which was characterised by empirical research and theoretical development. Larger study samples were used and the focus shifted to the assessment of burnout, utilising the questionnaire and survey methodology (Maslach et al., 2001).

Maslach (1978), a social psychology researcher, was studying the ways people cope with emotional arousal in a work context and was especially concerned with cognitive strategies such as “detached concern” (the medical profession’s ideal of blending compassion with emotional distance) and “dehumanisation is self-defence” (the process of protecting oneself from overwhelming emotional feelings by responding to other people more as objects than people in the medical profession) (Schaufeli, Enzmann, & Girault, 1993). From this interest, Maslach (1982a) soon discovered that both the emotional arousal and the cognitive strategies had important implications for people’s professional identity, job and coping behaviour.

Central to Maslach’s (1978) view and Freudenberger’s (1974) view, which are still accepted as the most popular perspectives, is the emotional and demanding nature

of the professional-recipient relationship as a root cause of burnout (Van Dierendonck & Schaufeli, 1994; Maslach et al., 2014). According to Farber (1983a, p. 8), the clinical approaches of Maslach (1982) and Pines (1988) complement each other well. The findings, based on each perspective, are mutually corroborative and have generated a wealth of data on and insights into the phenomenon of burnout.

2.1.2 Definition of burnout

There are various definitions of burnout. While each has contributed to the understanding of the burnout phenomenon, a lack of clarity and consensus has been the greatest limitation in the advancement of sound empirical testing at the theoretical and methodological levels. According to Beemsterboer and Baum (1984, p. 97), the understanding of burnout is hindered by the lack of a single operational definition and a clear set of criteria, it has become a catch-all expression which includes a variety of conditions and symptoms ranging from influenza to depression. Starrin, Larsson, and Styrborne, (1990, p. 84) state the following: “[I]t is possibly easier to agree on a common description of burnout than a common definition of it.”

The most frequently cited definition of burnout comes from Maslach and Jackson’s (1986, p. 1) tripartite definition of burnout, which is accepted across the literature as the most comprehensive and was used for the purposes of this study.

Barkhuizen, (2005), Jackson and Rothmann, (2005), and Maslach et al. (2001) define burnout as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do “people work” of some kind. Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998, p. 36) also identified exhaustion as a core indicator of burnout and a sense of reduced effectiveness as an accompanying symptom, but added three additional general symptoms, namely distress (affective, cognitive, physical and behavioural), decreased motivation and dysfunctional attitudes and behaviours at work. They define burnout as “a persistent, negative, work-related state of mind in ‘normal’ individuals that is primarily characterised by exhaustion, which is accompanied by distress, a sense of reduced effectiveness, decreased motivation, and the development of dysfunctional attitudes and behaviours at work”.

Burnout is a popular term for mental or physical energy depletion after a period of chronic, unrelieved job-related stress, characterised sometimes by physical illness. Mosby's *Medical dictionary* (2014) indicates that the person suffering from burnout may lose concern or respect for other people and often has cynical, dehumanised perceptions of people, labelling them in a derogatory manner. Causes of burnout peculiar to the nursing profession often include the following: stressful, even dangerous, work environments; lack of support; lack of respectful relationships in the healthcare team; low pay scales compared with physicians' salaries; shift changes and long working hours; understaffing of hospitals; pressure from the responsibility of providing continuous high levels of care over long periods; and frustration and disillusionment resulting from the difference between job realities and job expectations.

Although Maslach and Jackson (1986, p. 1), Barkhuizen, (2005), Jackson and Rothmann, (2005) and Maslach et al. (2001), define burnout as "... a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs among individuals who do people work of some kind", researchers currently acknowledge that employees in almost any job can develop burnout (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). The concept of burnout is defined as a crisis in one's relationship with work in general and not necessarily as a crisis in one's relationship with people at work (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996).

The popular definitions that have contributed to the understanding of burnout assert the following:

- Burnout is a process that begins with excessive and prolonged levels of job tension, whereby the stress produces strain in the worker (feelings of tension, irritability and fatigue). The process is completed when workers defensively cope with the job stress by psychologically detaching themselves from the job and becoming apathetic, cynical and rigid (Cherniss, 1995, in Berlin, Ray, Nichols, & Perritt, 1987).
- The burnout process is a "state of physical and emotional depletion resulting from conditions of work and the striving to reach some unrealistic expectation

imposed by oneself or by the values of society” (Freudenberger & Richelson, 1980, in Farber 1983a, p. 2).

- Burnout is “a progressive loss of idealism, energy and purpose experiences by people in the helping professions as a result of their work conditions” (Edelwich & Brodsky, 1980, p. 166, in Beemsterboer & Baum, 1984).
- Burnout is “a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion caused by a long-term involvement in situations that are emotionally demanding” (Pines & Aronson, 1988, pp. 11-13; Bianchi, Truchot, Laurent, Brisson, & Schonfeld, 2014). Is burnout solely job related?
- Burnout has been consistently related to workplace demands such as emotional labour (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002).
- A syndrome of emotional exhaustion, cynicism (depersonalisation) of others, and feelings of reduced efficacy (personal accomplishment) prevail with burnout (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005). It is a condition that is on the rise among workers in the 21st century.
- Legassie et al. (2008) define burnout as having a high score in all three burnout domains of the Maslach burnout inventory (MBI), namely emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and low personal accomplishment. Ultimately, burnout is a complex, continuous, and heterogeneous construct that manifests itself differently in different individuals. Emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and inefficacy are symptoms of the syndrome. These symptoms can manifest in differing degrees resulting in burnout being best considered a continuum instead of a dichotomous variable.
- Maslach and Jackson define burnout as a syndrome characterised by emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and lack of personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion refers to feelings of being emotionally drained by one’s contact with other people, and it is the central strain dimension of burnout. Depersonalisation refers to a negative or excessively detached response towards these people, who are the recipients of one’s service. Finally, reduced personal accomplishment refers to a decline in one’s feelings of competence and successful achievement at work (Maslach & Leiter, 2008).

The above definitions vary in terms of scope and precision, yet each has uniquely contributed to the understanding of burnout. Maslach (1982a, p. 31) explains this as follows: "Some definitions are limited while others are more wide-ranging. Some are precise while others are global. Some refer to a purely psychological condition while others include actual behaviours. Some describe a state or a syndrome while others talk of a process. Some make references to causes, others to effects, some emphasise the person variables and others environment variables."

Despite this, on a definition level, the different definitions do share certain similarities in the key features of the phenomenon. There is general agreement that burnout (Carroll & White, 1982; Jackson, 1982 in Freudenberger, 1989, p. 3; Maslach, 1982a, 1982b; Ratliff, 1988, p. 147; Schaufelli et al., 1993; Starrin et al., 1990, p. 86; Maslach & Jackson, 2008; Maslach et al., 2014)

- occurs at an individual or agency level
- is an internal psychological experience involving feelings, attitudes, motives and expectations
- concerns problems, distress, discomfort and dysfunction
- is perceived by the individual as a negative experience
- manifests itself in symptoms in "normal" people who did not suffer from psychopathology before
- results in negative consequences
- leads to decreased effectiveness and work performance

Burnout is purported to be the erosion of energy, identification and efficacy at work (Maslach & Jackson, 2008). This erosion can be seen in the three steps of the burnout process, namely emotional exhaustion, cynicism and reduced personal accomplishment, all of which are modestly correlated with one another (Thomas et al., 2014), and are discussed below.

2.1.3 Antecedents of burnout

Because burnout and work engagement may have significant consequences for individual employees and organisations at large, many studies have focused on the antecedents of both concepts. What working conditions should be targeted to prevent burnout and foster work engagement? Why are some individuals more prone to burnout or engagement than others? What job resources buffer the impact of job demands on burnout, and what resources foster work engagement? Traditionally, scholars have classified the antecedents of burnout and work engagement in two general categories, namely situational factors (e.g. work overload, job autonomy); and individual factors (e.g. neuroticism, self-efficacy) (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Maslach et al., 2001).

2.1.3.1 Situational factors

Lee and Ashforth's (1996) meta-analysis showed that job demands were more important predictors of burnout than (lack of) job resources. Job demands are aspects of the job that require sustained physical, emotional or cognitive effort (Demerouti, Bakker, De Jonge et al., 2001). It is therefore not surprising that job demands are associated with physiological (elevated blood pressure, increased hormonal activity, increased heart rate) and psychological costs (e.g. fatigue, psychological need thwarting). After prolonged exposure to high job demands, employees may become chronically exhausted and distance themselves psychologically from their work. In other words, they may start to experience burnout (Bakker et al., 2005).

Lee and Ashforth (1996) found that particular job demands were predictive of burnout (exhaustion and depersonalisation). The most important job demands were role ambiguity, role conflict, role stress, stressful events, workload, and work pressure. Although their meta-analysis was restricted to human services providers (e.g. teachers, nurses, counsellors, police officers and social workers), the data also included the supervisors and managers of the service providers. Lee & Ashforth, 1996, p. 129) argued that job demands are perceived as losses because "meeting such demands requires the investment of valued resources". A more recent meta-

analysis by Alarcon (2009) confirmed the crucial role that job demands play in the prediction of burnout. Using between 37 and 86 different samples from all types of occupations (thus not limited to human services), he found that role conflict, workload and role ambiguity were significant predictors of burnout, particularly of exhaustion and cynicism.

Job resources are those physical, psychological, social or organisational aspects of the job that help to either achieve work goals, reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs, or stimulate personal growth, learning and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Research over the past decade has shown that job resources are less strongly related to burnout than job demands are. Nevertheless, job resources have a consistent negative relationship with burnout, particularly with the cynicism component. When workers thus have insufficient opportunities for development, do not receive regular feedback and cannot work on a variety of tasks, they report higher levels of cynicism.

Further, job resources qualify the relationship between job demands and burnout. Bakker et al. (2005a), in their study of the employees in a large higher education institution, found that the combination of high demands and low job resources significantly added to the prediction of burnout (exhaustion and cynicism). Specifically, they found that work overload, emotional demands, physical demands and work-home interference did not result in high levels of burnout if employees experienced autonomy, received feedback, had social support or had a high-quality relationship with their supervisors. Psychologically speaking, different processes may have been responsible for these interaction effects. For example, autonomy may have helped in coping with job demands because employees could decide for themselves when to respond to their demands, whereas high-quality relationships with supervisors may have buffered the impact of job demands because employees received instrumental help and emotional support (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Taken together, these findings indicate that job resources prevent the development of negative attitudes and play a buffering role in the relationship between job demands and burnout.

2.1.3.2 Individual factors

Individual factors refer to individual differences or personal characteristics that are relatively stable over situations and time. Although the current literature indicates the possibility that stressful aspects of the work environment are more important predictors of burnout than personality, it is necessary for researchers to consider individual variations (Pick & Leiter, 1991). Indeed, quite a few studies have indicated the possibility that personality plays a key role in the development of burnout. Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) counted more than 100 burnout studies in the literature that included one or two constructs from a long list of lower-level personality variables. Examples of these personality variables are hardiness, locus of control, type A behaviour, self-esteem and achievement motivation.

Alarcon et al. (2009) argue that personality may influence burnout through the impact of both the perceived and the objective nature of one's work environment. Firstly, personality may predispose employees to perceive their work environments favourably, regardless of the objective nature of their work (Brunborg, 2008). For example, whereas individuals with low emotional stability may view a high workload or a complex work assignment as threatening, individuals with high emotional stability may view the same job demands as challenges. Secondly, personality may influence the objective nature of one's work environment (Judge et al., 2001). Because of their ability to easily adapt, those who are emotionally stable and extroverted may self-select into enriched job environments. By contrast, neurotic or introverted employees may feel stressed by challenging jobs and thus pursue routine work (Alarcon et al., 2009). A third possibility is that certain personalities are better able than others to cope with their job demands. For example, extroverts may be better able to cope with emotionally challenging situations, because they seek out social stimulation and opportunities to engage with others.

The meta-analysis of Alarcon et al. (2009) shows that personality is indeed reliably related to burnout. More specifically, these authors found that four of the Big Five factors, namely emotional stability, extroversion, conscientiousness, and agreeableness, are consistently negatively related to each of the three dimensions of burnout. The exception is openness to experience, which was positively related only

to personal accomplishment. Emotional stability was the most important predictor of exhaustion and depersonalisation, whereas extroversion was the most important predictor of personal accomplishment.

Furthermore, Alarcon et al. (2009) found evidence of a relationship between lower-order personality factors and burnout. Specifically, they found that self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control, positive affectivity, negative affectivity, optimism, proactive personality, and hardiness each had a significant relationship with burnout. This indicates that more malleable individual differences also play a role in the development of burnout. People with favourable scores on these individual factors believe they have control over their (work) environment and can therefore deal better with their job demands.

2.1.4 Causes of burnout

Similar to the general theory of burnout, there is a lack of consensus about what actually produces burnout (Schaufeli et al., 1993; Thomas et al., 2014). Initially, the main focus of burnout study revolved around the job factors and personal factors. These factors were initially studied in isolation. Today, theorists have realised that burnout should rather be seen as a combination of work demands and one's personal coping resources (Maslach et al., 2014; Thomas et al., 2014). This interactive approach to burnout has shifted the focus of blaming individuals to understanding the individual in a situational context. The subsections below contain a compilation of some major themes that are known to cause burnout.

2.1.4.1 Individual causes

Certain characteristics of an individual are shown to contribute to an explanation of why some individuals are more prone to burning out (Pines & Aronson, 1988; Thomas et al., 2014). Below is a discussion of demographic, intrapersonal and interpersonal factors in burnout.

a. *Age*

There is mixed evidence on age and burnout. Younger individuals consistently report higher levels of burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1981), but other studies have found that more experienced employees reported lower levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Anderson & Iwanicki, 1984; Maslach, 1982b). It is assumed that older professionals are more experienced, stable and mature, and probably have a more balanced perspective on life, and this should render them less prone to burnout (Maslach, 1982b).

b. *Gender*

While some reports have found no significant relationship between gender and burnout, other findings indicate that men and women often report differences in levels of burnout (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Greenglass, Burke, & Konarski, 1998).

Maslach (1982a as cited in Starrin et al., 1990, p. 88) believes that although men and woman are generally similar in their experience of burnout, there are some important differences. Women are known to experience more frequent and more intensive emotional exhaustion, while men have a more depersonalised attitude towards the people they work with. These differences may reflect the traditional male and female sex role differences, whereby women are socialised to be more emotionally oriented, more sociable and more sensitive than men, who are supposed to be more rational, tough and emotionally insensitive (Ratcliff & Baum, 1990). This is further complicated by labour-market segregation in terms of sex roles, which often leaves women more susceptible to becoming emotionally exhausted (Greenglass et al., 1998).

c. *Marital status*

There is a consistent finding that married individuals report lower levels of burnout than single individuals (Maslach, 1982a; Pines, 1988). Furthermore, research indicates that workers with young children exhibit less “emotional exhaustion” and “depersonalisation” than workers without young children, suggesting that children may provide a buffer against losing one’s personal touch with patients. Families are often a source of emotional support and those with families are often older, more

mature adults with realistic goals (Brownell & Dooley, 1981, in Farber, 1983, p. 17; Lemkau et al., 1994, p. 220; Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

d. Occupation

According to Farber (1983a), this concept of burnout has been used broadly to describe dysphoric feelings that may occur in almost any setting. Traditionally, burnout was restricted to the human services professions. Today, however, the borders have been extended to other types of personal-related domains like parent burnout and marriage burnout.

Burnout is exemplified by the following five characteristics (Maslach et al., 2001):

- (1) There is a lack of energy such as mental or emotional exhaustion, fatigue and depression.
- (2) The emphasis of burnout is on mental and behavioural symptoms more than physical ones.
- (3) Burnout and its symptoms are work related.
- (4) The symptoms manifest themselves in people who do not suffer from psychopathology.
- (5) There is a decrease in performance and effectiveness at work, because of negative attitudes and behaviours associated with burnout.

Burnout implies a rather long temporal process since it is based on the fact that the person has been working for a while and is experiencing a chronic misfit between self and work. Maslach and Leiter (1997) formulated a model that focuses on the degree of match or mismatch between the person and six domains of his or her job environment, namely work overload, lack of contact, external rewards, breakdown of community, absence of fairness and conflicting values (Maslach, 1998; Maslach et al., 2008). This model is outlined below.

- **Work overload** occurs when job demands exceed human limits, that is, when individuals have to do too much in too little time with too few resources.

- **Lack of contact** occurs when individuals have little contact over the work they do, either because of rigid policies and tight monitoring, or because of chaotic job conditions. Insufficient reward involves a lack of appropriate rewards for the work people do.
- **Both external rewards** (e.g. salary and benefits) and **internal rewards** (pride in doing something of importance) could result in a mismatch.
- **Breakdown of community** occurs when people lose a sense of positive connection with others in the workplace. Chronic and unresolved conflicts with others on the job also result in breakdown of community.
- **Absence of fairness** occurs when there is a lack of a system of fair procedures which maintain mutual respect in the workplace. Unfairness can occur when there is inequity of workload or pay, or when evaluations and promotions are handled inappropriately.
- **Value conflict** occurs when there is a mismatch between the requirements of a job and people's principles. The greater the gap or mismatch between the person and the job, the greater the likelihood of burnout is. Conversely, the greater the match, the greater the likelihood of engagement with work is. Research is needed to test the fit of the model of Maslach and Leiter (1997) in the South African context. Also, this model does not differentiate between factors which contribute to burnout and work engagement, because the two concepts are regarded as opposites by Maslach (1998). Storm and Rothmann (2003a, 2003b) and Naudé and Rothmann (2003) found that different sets of causal factors play a role in burnout and work engagement, respectively.

2.1.5 Dimensions of burnout

2.1.5.1 Emotional exhaustion

The first step in burnout is emotional exhaustion (Bakker et al., 2006; Leiter & Maslach, 1988; Maslach, et al., 2008). Emotional exhaustion consists of a feeling of not being able to give any more emotionally to the job because the employee has nothing more to give (Maslach & Goldberg, 1998; Maslach et al., 2008; Schaufeli et al., 2002a; Schaufeli, Martínez, Marques-Pinto et al., 2002b). Emotional exhaustion

is considered to be the most important of the three components. It is characterised by a lack of energy and a feeling that one's emotional resources are used up (Bakker et al., 2006). This may coexist with feelings of frustration and tension. Some think that emotional exhaustion is feelings of being emotionally over-extended and drained by one's contact with other people. This emotional exhaustion can manifest itself in physical characteristics such as waking up just as tired as when going to bed or lacking required energy to take on another task or face-to-face encounter. Emotional exhaustion was found to be a strong predictor of both work engagement and turnover intentions. When individuals experience higher levels of emotional exhaustion, they are more likely to leave their jobs, and positive correlations have also been found between emotional exhaustion and turnover intentions (Maslach et al., 2008). Several studies reviewed by Burke and Richardsen (2006) found that turnover intention was significantly related to burnout. Emotional exhaustion is characterised by a lack of emotional energy and a perception that emotional resources are depleted (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Emotional exhaustion is the response to chronic stressors in the workplace such as work overload. These stressors are constant over time and put pressure on people, causing emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion is the step of burnout that most researchers purport spans across jobs, because it is the most consistent aspect of burnout. Emotional exhaustion is the only construct that is present in all the samples from previous research, regardless of profession (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Emotional exhaustion is the depletion of the energy construct (Bakker et al, 2006). It is the lack of emotional energy, not physical energy. People are not physically fatigued from performing a strenuous job such as manual labour; instead, it is the feeling of being emotionally drained from the lack of resources to deal with demands and stressors. This lack of energy, seen as a further loss of resources, will lead to maladaptive coping such as depersonalisation.

Exhaustion is a necessary but not sufficient criterion for burnout (Maslach, 1998). The notion of exhaustion presupposes a prior state of high arousal or overload rather than one of low arousal or underload, which implies that burnout is not a response to tedious, boring or monotonous work (Rothmann, 2003). However, exhaustion fails to capture a critical aspect of the relationship people have with their work (Rothmann, 2003). Chronic exhaustion can lead people to distance themselves emotionally and

cognitively from their work, so that they are less involved with or responsive to the needs of other people or the demands of the task (Rothmann, 2003). According to Maslach (1998), distancing is such an immediate reaction to exhaustion that a strong relationship from exhaustion to depersonalisation or cynicism is consistently found in burnout research. Furthermore, a work situation with chronic, overwhelming demands that contribute to exhaustion or cynicism is likely to erode an individual's sense of accomplishment or effectiveness. Also, it is difficult to gain a sense of accomplishment when feeling exhausted or when helping people towards whom one is hostile. In some situations the lack of efficacy seems to arise more clearly from a lack of relevant resources, while exhaustion and cynicism appear from the presence of work overload and social conflict (Maslach, 1998).

2.1.5.2 Depersonalisation

Originally, the second step in the burnout process was depersonalisation (Maslach et al., 2008). Depersonalisation is an attempt to distance from the job and clients by actively ignoring the client's unique and engaging qualities. Depersonalisation can lead to dehumanisation, treating people as objects. Depersonalisation is seen as a form of coping because it distances workers from the job and clients. Human services professions require provider to care about the individuals receiving their services, or at least to display the appropriate emotions (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Henderson, 2001). Human service workers who depersonalise at their job are attempting to block negative emotions, to reduce emotional exhaustion and regain resources, thus increasing energy. Cynicism was introduced as a substitute depersonalisation in non-human service fields (Leiter & Schaufeli, 1996). Cynicism is a broader construct, including interactions with co-workers (Maslach et al., 2001). Cynicism is negativism and acting selfishly or callously. Cynicism can be directed towards people, work, or situations. An example of cynicism towards people would be thinking everyone at work is fake or out to hurt you.

Cynicism in work would be exemplified by thoughts of work as meaningless. Situational cynicism can involve thinking cynically about the workplace but not the work, such as thinking other hospitals are better than the one they work in. Depersonalisation is a type of cynicism because people act callously towards others

and treat them as objects, and they perceive the job as insignificant or not worth doing well. Depersonalisation and cynicism are both types of distance coping. Distancing is a form of coping that enables people to mentally disengage from the stressful situation (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). It occurs as a coping mechanism to emotional exhaustion, to disengage the person from the work, preventing further emotional exhaustion (Maslach, 2003; Maslach & Goldberg, 1998; Maslach et al., 2008). People attempt to cope with emotional exhaustion by becoming emotionally detached using distancing. They may become emotionally detached, but may also start to become callous and negative (Maslach et al., 2001; Maslach et al., 2014).

Distancing is not an effective coping mechanism in most situations (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Maslach et al., 2014). People with little or no control over the situation, such as hospice patients, may engage in distancing because there is nothing they can do to exert control over the situation. Distancing is maladaptive when people do have control over the situation, because they may not engage in any problem-focused coping, thus not eliminating the stressor (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Maslach et al., 2014). Distance coping may be a response to stressors characterised by high demands and low resources (Hobfoll, 1989; Maslach et al., 2014). People may perceive distance coping as an effective means to disassociate with demands or stressors. However, they lose more resources than are preserved owing to a possible lowered sense of identification or engagement that can result in lower morale, impaired social functioning and possible damage to health (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). These consequences then lead to further resource loss (Hobfoll, 1989). The distancing that occurs in burnout is an erosion of identification with work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli et al., 2002b). People no longer relate to the job. As distancing occurs they become callous and negative about the job and perhaps the profession. People experience an erosion of identification with work, or no longer associate themselves with the job or profession. They may not perceive the work as meaningful to their self-worth. The relationship previously held with work has dissipated, and people may not take pride in their work.

2.1.5.3 Reduced personal accomplishment

Reduced personal accomplishment is the third step in the burnout process (Leiter & Maslach, 1988). In burnout, people feel a diminished sense of personal accomplishment, such as the perception that they cannot perform the job adequately. The perceived reduction in performance in human service professions stems from being emotionally exhausted and depersonalising (Maslach et al., 2008). A recognised part of the job is caring about and helping others, but if people are depersonalising they will perceive they are not doing an adequate job. Reduced personal accomplishment is a decrease in one's perceived professional efficacy (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). This feeling of decreased efficacy is exemplified in human service and customer service fields such as nursing and call centre work. In human services and customer service professions, people may feel they should not be feeling the lack of emotional energy experienced in the emotional exhaustion and cynicism phases of burnout. The emotional dissonance that occurs from believing that they should not feel the lack of emotional energy and should not be engaging in distancing leads to more stressors and emotional exhaustion, leading to fewer resources. This process starts the spiral towards greater burnout and eventual turnover because of the lack of resources (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll et al., 1990).

2.2 MODELS OF BURNOUT

According to Perlman and Hartman (1981, p. 11), models of burnout serve the key functions of structuring burnout research, providing a basis for variables to study and attempt to predict who will burnout.

Over the years, different theorists have advocated various models, emphasising different aspects of the burnout phenomenon. Harrison (1983), for instance, proposes a social competence model of burnout, focusing on the fundamental need of workers to perceive themselves as competent in their roles. Fisher (1983) employs a psychodynamic perspective to explain the burnout syndrome, pointing out specific characterological structures, tendencies and resistances of burnt-out workers. Heifezt and Bersani (1983) suggest that burnout among human service workers is best conceptualised in a cybernetic model, emphasising the critical role of

feedback in professionals' pursuit of client growth and their own professional development. Other theorists have advanced the deficit model of burnout, which suggests that burnout is caused not by the presence of job stressors, but rather by the absence of job motivators. Hence models of burnout have progressed from focus on intrapsychic features and discrete environmental stressors, to complex conceptual formulations that emphasise the role of mediation processes and the interactive nature of individual, organisational and social variables (Farber, 1983a, p. 245).

According to Paine (1982, p. 15), for a model to be comprehensive, it must incorporate the following seven levels of analysis: individual work groups or teams, organisational subunits, entire organisations, industries, professions, countries and cultures. Three comprehensive models formulated by Perlman and Hartman (1981), Carroll and White (1982) and Maslach and Jackson (1981) attempt to incorporate these levels of analysis, and have gained wide recognition and acceptance in assuming a transactional perspective of burnout. Whilst not identical, these models converge various views into a more dynamic and systematic perspective as they consider the interaction of multiple factors resulting in the burnout effect.

2.2.1 Perlman and Hartman's model of burnout

The interactional perspective of burnout has its roots in the transactional conceptualisation of stress. This model, which images the transactional stress model, emphasises the interaction between individual, organisational and societal factors in understanding burnout.

According to Perlman and Hartman (1981), burnout is the result of a complex transaction between individual needs and resources and differing demands in the individual's immediate environment. Their model has a cognitive/perceptual focus which identifies personal and organisational variables and which may be related to burnout. Perlman and Hartman (1981, p. 12) claim that their model is broad and includes almost all variables that have been studied in burnout research. Based on content analysis and a synthesis of all the definitions of burnout, Perlman and Hartman (1981, p. 6) propose a definition of burnout comprising its underlying prime

dimensions. This leads to a definition of burnout as a response to chronic emotional stress with following three main components:

- emotional and/ physical exhaustion
- lowered job productivity
- over-depersonalisation

In this model, the three dimensions of burnout reflect the following three major symptom categories of stress: physiological (focusing on physical symptoms [physical exhaustion]); affective-cognitive (focusing on attitudes and feelings [emotional exhaustion, over-depersonalisation]); and behavioural factors (focusing on symptomatic behaviours [over-depersonalisation, lowered job productivity]).

According to this model, individual characteristics, and work and social environments are important for the perception and impact of stress (burnout) with effective or ineffective coping influencing this.

The model contains four stages:

- Stage 1 involves the degree to which a situation is conducive to stress. Stress results and depends on the person's skills and abilities to meet the perceived or real demands. Perlman and Hartman (1981, p. 12) add that stress is likely an inadequate fit that exists between the personal and work environment.
- Stage 2 involves the perceived stress and is dependent on a person's background and personality, as well as role and organisational variables. This stage has salutogenic implications because many situations conducive to stress do not necessarily result in people perceiving themselves as stressed.
- Stage 3 represents the three major categories of response to stress which could be physiological, affective/cognitive or behavioural.
- Stage 4 depicts the outcomes of stress. Burnout, as a multi-faceted experience of chronic, emotional stress is placed in this stage.

The above four stages, represent the interaction of multiple factors in the explanation of the burnout phenomenon.

2.2.2 Carroll and White's model of burnout

Ecology concerns the interrelationships of organisms and their environments or ecosystems (Carroll & White, 1982, p. 41). This perspective advocates that in order to understand the multiple and complex roots of burnout, we have to focus on the person, his or her ecosystems and the reciprocal impact each has on the other. According to these authors, burnout occurs whenever a person with inadequate stress management and need-gratifying skills must work in a stressful and need-frustrating work environment. The dynamic interaction between personal variables (e.g. poor physical and emotional health) and environmental variables (e.g. poor supervision, excessive case load), which also includes the influence of other ecosystems (e.g. family), generates burnout. According to Carroll and White (1982), this interaction can be expressed by the following:

$$BO = f(P \times E)$$

Carroll and White (1982, p. 47) depict the individual's work environment and larger life space as containing the following two key components:

- P = the person. It is important to note that anything and everything can influence a person's work performance and must therefore be considered and evaluated. Carroll and White (1982, p. 48) mention physical and mental health status, the amount of education and training completed, and the person's coping skills, frustration tolerance, goals, needs, interests and values as some of the variables affecting him or her.
- E = environmental components. A person's total environment is made up of the following four environments:
 - Microsystems, which refer to the smallest organised ecosystem within which the person performs most of his or her work (e.g. the office, the home or the assembly-line station).

- Meso-systems, which refer to the next highest level of organisation of the work environment. This includes all the micro-systems that together form a larger whole (e.g. all the offices and departments of the organisation).
- Exo-systems, which involve those non-work elements of the larger environment that directly and frequently impact on the worker and his or her company's or institution's operations (e.g. surrounding community, legislators, regulatory agencies, his or her family).
- Macro-systems, which encompass all the other elements affecting the individual's life beyond the exo-system. These elements are more distant and global in nature. Carroll and White (1982, p. 48) assert that the influence of the macro-system is often experienced more indirectly, although not necessarily less powerfully than the other three components of the life space, and include factors such as high interest rates, high unemployment, racial and sexual prejudice, and natural disasters.

This model, according to Carroll and White (1982, p. 47), reflects the complex, dynamic interactive, reciprocal impact of personal and environmental variables that result in burnout. The emphasis of this model is on the uniqueness of burnout phenomenon, as this model reveals that no two individuals can possibly experience burnout in quite the same way. The model also has implications for a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of burnout. In this regard, the ecological approach to burnout requires that interventions be multi-faceted and be aimed at individual and environmental issues.

2.2.3 Maslach and Jackson's model of burnout

Theorists have moved away from viewing burnout in a unidimensional context, as updated research findings lend support to conceptualising burnout as a multi-dimensional construct, which, when measured, cannot be summed into an overall burnout "score" (Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Perlman & Hartman, 1981, p. 6). This multidimensional view of burnout reiterates that burnout should not be viewed as a static state, but rather as a dynamic process. Based on years of exploratory research in a variety of "people-orientated" professions, Maslach and Jackson (1981)

developed a three-component model of burnout, which is presently accepted as the most comprehensive model in research testing.

Further to their operational tri-component definition of burnout, these authors have developed a diagnostic instrument, the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). This is a standardised questionnaire used in individual assessment of burnout and has sound psychometric properties (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). The MBI was utilised in this research study.

The first dimension in this model is emotional exhaustion and can also be described as a wearing out, loss of energy, depletion, debilitation and fatigue (Maslach, 1982a, p. 32). This exhaustion in burnout refers to feelings of being emotionally overextended and is more emotional and psychological in nature than physical.

The second dimension is depersonalisation, which when broadly defined, refers to a negative shift in response to others and involves negative or inappropriate attitudes towards the recipients of one's service or care, loss of idealism and irritability (Maslach, 1982a). Reduced personal accomplishment, the third dimension, refers to a decline in one's feelings of competence and successful achievement of one's work (Maslach, 1982a).

In Leiter and Maslach's (1988) process model of burnout, emotional exhaustion occurs in the first stage of the burnout process and in response to excessive chronic work demands. This, in turn, brings about negative attitudes towards recipients (depersonalisation) as an attempt to gain emotional distance from them as a way of coping with exhaustion (Maslach, 1982). This, in turn, diminishes the worker's sense of personal accomplishment as work loses its meaning (reduced personal accomplishment) (Van Dierendonck & Schaufeli, 1994).

Studies (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; De Rijk, Le Blanc, & Schaufeli, 1998; Lee & Ashforth, 1996, p. 124) challenge the sequential development model and propose a mixed sequential and parallel development model. Research now indicates that both emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment develop either independently or in parallel with each other. Instead of following from each other, these dimensions

are reactions to different aspects of the work environment in human service work. These theorists also argue that personal accomplishment reflects a personality characteristic akin to self-efficacy, rather than a genuine component of burnout reaction.

The presentation of the above three models indicates that burnout is a complex multifaceted phenomenon and should be understood accordingly. The Maslach and Jackson model of burnout was utilised for the purposes of this research.

2.3 THE DYNAMICS OF BURNOUT

Professional burnout is a multidimensional phenomenon involving several individual and environmental variables in a complex interactive process (Rawnsley, 1989, p. 52). The sections below examine some conceptual complexities of the burnout process.

2.3.1 A clarification of the burnout and stress concepts

Burnout has come to be understood as a response set to stress and is often confused with and used interchangeably with the concept of stress. The explanations below attempt to clarify this.

2.3.1.1 Viewing burnout in terms of the general adaptation syndrome

According to Schaufeli et al. (1993, p. 9), a relative distinction between burnout and stress can be made with respect to time. If burnout represents a perceived substantial imbalance between demands and response capability in conditions where failure to meet demands is experienced as having importance consequences (McGrath, 1976; Starrin et al., 1990, p. 87), then burnout can be considered prolonged job stress, that is, demands at the workplace that tax or exceed an individual's resources. This is in keeping with the work of Seyle (1976), a pioneer in stress research. Seyle (1976) advocates that exposure to a stressor leads to the general adaptation syndrome consisting of the following three phases: alarm, resistance and exhaustion. For Seyle (1976), stress occurs when there is a

substantial imbalance (perceived or real) between environmental demands and the individual's response capability. In the final stage, the prolonged exposure to stress causes the physiological resources of the organism to become depleted, resulting in irreversible damage or burnout in this case. Similarly, building on Seyle's conceptualisation (1976), the transactional model of occupational stress defines work stress as the psychological state that is, or represents, an imbalance or mismatch between peoples' perceptions of the demands on them (relevant to work) and their ability to cope with those demands (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984b). Hence when applying this principle, for burnout to occur, there has to be a breakdown in the adaptation to job stress.

Furthermore Schaufeli et al. (1993, p. 10) add that "stress and burnout cannot be distinguished on the basis of their symptoms, but on the basis of the process". Other theorists also support the notion that burnout is a stress reaction (Perlman & Hartman, 1981, p. 10; Rogers, 1987, p. 105).

The transactional view of stress also highlights the crucial role of appraisal in coping. The process of appraisal takes into account the resources and supports available to the person for coping, the constraints placed on coping and on the person's contact with the situation. Appraisals of his or her situation may drive coping behaviour and other more general responses, the success of which feed back into those appraisal processes. According to Cox and Leiter (1992), in addition to any consideration of its situational antecedents or cognitive and perceptual elements, the state of stress is often defined by the person's experience of negative emotion, unpleasantness and general discomfort, and in the slightly longer term by changes in general well-being. Feeling worn out, and possibly uptight and tense, may result not only from the experience of stress, but also from the effects of attempts at coping. At the same time, such feeling feeds back and partly determines the experience of and response to stress. Burnout is thus a response to stress.

Applying this interactive view of stress, the burnout concept can be seen to be a particular slice across the stress process. According to Cox, Kuk, and Leiter (in Schaufeli, 1993, p. 188), burnout is in the sense of this argument, a mixed bag of an

appraisal outcome, an aspect of well-being and a coping strategy, but one that “hangs together” strongly for the helping professional.

2.3.1.2 Viewing burnout in terms of the stress-strain-coping model

The dimensional model of burnout can be understood in terms of the stress-strain-coping framework (Payne & Firth-Cozens, 1987). To illustrate this similarity, the causes of burnout, such as role conflict and caseload, constitute the sources of stress. Emotional exhaustion corresponds with the notion of strain because it has been linked to tension, anxiety, fatigue, insomnia and so on. Depersonalisation corresponds to the notion of coping, since through depersonalisation, the individual attempts to protect or defend himself or herself from further depleting his or her resources, and hence treats others as objects instead of people. Reduced personal accomplishment can be regarded as an outcome of the stress-strain-coping process. Personal accomplishment represents an aspect of self-efficacy and is thus linked to adjustment to demanding situations (Bandura, 1986 in Lee & Ashforth, 1990, p. 744).

2.3.1.3 Viewing burnout in terms of a conservative resource model

The conservation of resource theory of stress provides another framework for understanding how such correlates are related to burnout (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll & Freedy, 1993 in Lee & Ashforth, 1996, p. 123; Maslach et al., 2014). This perspective suggests that burnout occurs when certain valued resources are lost, are inadequate to meet demands or do not yield the anticipated returns. For example, the major demands of work refer to factors such as role stress, workload and lack of autonomy. The main resources include factors like social support, recognition and opportunities for career development (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Burke & Richardsen, 1993, in Lee & Ashforth, 1996, p. 123; Maslach et al., 2014).

In encounters, the key decision for individuals is the number of resources they need to invest to meet demands and to protect themselves from further resource depletion. Strain occurs when the individual feels that he or she no longer has sufficient emotional resources to handle the interpersonal stressors and may adopt

the defensive strategy of withdrawal (instead of engagement) through depersonalisation. The theory also proposes that certain behavioural and attitudinal outcomes are likely to occur as a result of resource loss, and the most common one in helping professions is known as burnout (Hobfoll, 1989).

From the above explanations, it can be accepted that burnout and stress are conceptually different and that burnout is a product of the outcome of the stress process.

2.4 BURNOUT AS A PROCESS

The burnout process is continuous. Burnout is not experienced as an intermittent process in which people have to experience a certain threshold of emotional exhaustion and then start to depersonalise to a certain threshold and then feel a sense of reduced personal accomplishment. Instead, people may feel a small amount of emotional exhaustion, resulting in a small extent of depersonalisation, which then leads to a small amount of reduced personal accomplishment. The reduced personal accomplishment then leads to more emotional exhaustion, continuing the burnout spiral. People who experience burnout will continually burn out, increasing in emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment until eventual turnover. This is a spiral into burnout, which slowly erodes energy, identification and efficacy.

While burnout is part of the stress process, this discussion is an attempt to reveal that burnout, in itself, is a process rather than a discrete event. It is a final step in a progression of unsuccessful attempts to cope with a variety of negative stressful situations (Lemkau et al., 1994, p. 682). Simply put, burnout should be viewed as a process that is initiated by stress and that develops over time. Bailey (1985, cited in Ellis, 1996, p. 295) proposes the four stages of burnout discussed below.

2.4.1 Idealistic enthusiasm

This is characterised by high energy, high ideals and a keen motivation to achieve goals. This stage starts to give way towards the end of the first year of employment.

2.4.2 Stagnation

Here the employee starts to slow down and energy levels become depleted. He or she begins to experience disappointment and personal needs are no longer satisfied entirely by the job. The honeymoon is thus over.

2.4.3 Frustration

The individual continually finds that he or she is unable to achieve the goals to which he or she aspired and was taught to pursue. He or she becomes frustrated at not being able to satisfy the needs of patients and himself or herself. Patients and clients turn into enemies and are seen as bothersome.

2.4.4 Apathy

This is a sign of impoverished coping. A protective shell develops and the individual starts to live defensively. This stage is also characterised by cynicism and disillusionment.

These stages are a guide, since there is still disagreement about the number and sequencing of the components of the burnout process.

2.5 CRITICAL REVIEW OF BURNOUT

According to Jackson et al. (2006) and Maslach et al. (2014), empirical studies have confirmed that burnout is related to health problems and turnover intentions, and that it mediates the relationship between job demands and health problems. Also, engagement mediates the relationship between job resources and turnover intentions. Although burnout was originally conceptualised in the context of the helping professions (Rothmann, 2002), it was more recently expanded to all types of professions and occupational groups. Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998, p. 36) define burnout as "a persistent, negative, work-related state of mind in normal individuals that is primarily characterized by exhaustion, which is accompanied by distress, a sense of reduced effectiveness, decreased motivation, and the development of

dysfunctional attitudes and behaviours at work". Cynicism entails a general indifferent, callous or cynical attitude towards work. To cope with excessive job demands and feelings of exhaustion, the individual psychologically withdraws from the work (mental distancing) (Maslach et al., 2001). Professional efficacy refers to an individual's negative self-evaluation of competence, achievement and productiveness, as well as feelings of insufficiency (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996).

Professional efficacy is the weakest burnout dimension in terms of significant relationships with other variables, and is often referred to as the "least specific" or "unnecessary" dimension of burnout (Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Schaufeli, 2003). Several authors argue that professional efficacy reflects a personality characteristic rather than a genuine burnout dimension (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Shirom, 1989). Seiler and Pearson (1984-5) note that the consequences of dysfunctional stress (burnout) include two forms of withdrawal: the employee may resign (physical withdrawal) or the employee may remain in employment but continue to do the bare minimum (psychological withdrawal). According to Maslach et al. (1996) and Dodge and D'Analeze (2012), burnout is a result of job demands and lack of job resources can lead to negative outcomes such as physical illness, staff turnover and absenteeism. Research has linked burnout to a variety of mental and physical health problems (Lee & Ashforth, 1990), increased absenteeism (Leiter & Harvie, 1998), and decreased quality and quantity of work performance (Blix, Cruise, Mitchell, & Blix, 1994; Dodge & D'Analeze, 2012). Eventually, individuals may leave their jobs or professions as a culmination of burnout (Jackson & Simpson, 2001; Watts, Cox & Wright et al., 1991).

Empirical studies have revealed that some individuals do not develop burnout, regardless of high job demands and long working hours. On the contrary, they seem to find pleasure in working hard and dealing with job demands (Nelson & Simmons, 2003; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2001). This discovery saw the emergence of theoretical and empirical studies on the concept of engagement. Initially, engagement was regarded as the direct opposite of burnout (Rothmann, 2002). However, Schaufeli et al. (2002a; 2002b) operationalised engagement as a construct in its own right. Research on engagement has adopted a positive psychology perspective that

focuses on psychological health and well-being rather than on psychological ill health, as is the case with burnout (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Subsequent research expanded the focus to occupations that included contact with people, but for which the contact fell short of this more extensive relationship such as computer programming. Some studies ultimately utilise occupations for which contact with people is 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, such as 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, Isic, & Bechtoldt, 2001).

Another approach has been to look at the prevalence of burnout for different occupations. For example, comparisons were 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 (i.e. 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 et al., 2001).

The above suggests that there are important characteristics of these occupations that affect workers' experience of burnout (Deale & Pones, 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 in 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).

2.6 PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF BURNOUT

Issues of employee wellbeing have never been more important than now (Cropanzano & Wright, 2001; Dodge & D'Analeze 2012; Maslach et al., 2014). Research relating to the happiness of employees is necessary, not only because of the happy-productive worker thesis, but also because of claims that many people are unhappy (Myers & Diener, 1997). Subjective well-being is a vital indicator of the well-being of individuals (Kahn & Juster, 2002). Well-being can be considered in terms of different life roles, such as marriage, family, work and housing. Work represents a significant context for studying the well-being of individuals, especially because it provides a source of income that impacts on various life roles, and because it demands a significant part of individuals' time and energy. Work also ranks high among the determinants of life satisfaction (Leiter et al., 2014)

Unfortunately, work-related well-being has often been narrowly operationalised as job satisfaction. As a result, Daniels (2000) suggested that affective well-being should be assessed. Affective well-being is regarded as multidimensional and captures subtleties in experiences at work. Job satisfaction, occupational stress, burnout and work engagement are important dimensions of the affective work-related well-being of employees (Cropanzano & Wright, 2001).

2.6.1 Factors that could lead to burnout

Work overload, monitoring and surveillance of employees, competing management goals, lack of upward career movement, lack of skill variety and emotional labour will be discussed in the sections below.

2.6.1.1 Work overload

There is a well-established link between heavy work demand in the form of work overload and the development of burnout (Maslach et al., 2001; Maslach et al., 2014). Work overload is directly related to the development of emotional exhaustion (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Some of the more common aspects of work overload involve high levels of client contact (high frequency of contact), not being able to take leave, perceived high target levels, time pressure, pressure to reduce wrap-up sales, and continuous versus alternating demands (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Deery, Iverson, & Walsh, 2002; Deery & Kinnie, 2004; Holman, 2004; Singh, 2000; Taylor, Hyman, Mulvey, et al., 2002; Zapf et al., 2003; Maslach et al., 2014).

2.6.1.2 Monitoring and surveillance of employees

Monitoring and surveillance of employees are seen as highly prominent and invasive in organisations (Deery et al., 2004; Holdsworth & Cartwright, 2003; Holman, 2004; Taylor et al., 2002). Excessive long-term monitoring can have a negative effect on employees. Electronic performance monitoring is closely associated with stress (Holdsworth & Cartwright, 2003; Wallace, Eagleson, & Waldersee, 2000). It causes employees to become depressed and develop higher levels of anxiety, which may in turn cause them to devote more of their cognitive resources to dealing with the anxiety. Employee monitoring is therefore also linked to higher levels of emotional exhaustion, specifically in the case of employees who dislike having their performance scrutinised continuously (Holman, 2004).

2.6.1.3 Competing management goals

Competing management goals are seen as a source of stress by call centre employees (Deery & Kinnie, 2004). This conflict finds its expression in dual goal demands when management, on the one hand, focuses on and espouses quality service and high levels of customer satisfaction, while demanding high levels of customer processing and throughput, on the other. It is therefore postulated that conflicting management goals are positively associated with the development of burnout (Deery et al., 2002; Deery & Kinnie, 2004; Holman, 2004; Wallace et al., 2000).

2.6.1.4 Upward career movement

Upward career movement is seen as an organisational resource that acts as a buffer against the development of stress. A lack of upward career movement is a predictor of emotional exhaustion and if it is perceived to be present in organisations, it will be associated with lower levels of burnout (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Deery et al., 2002; Maslach et al., 2008; Leiter et al., 2014). When people experience greater upward career movement relative to their peers, it may serve as a form of feedback indicating that they are making a positive contribution to the organisation in the form of valued accomplishments. Promotions are also associated with reduced client contact, which removes one of the necessary conditions for the development of emotional exhaustion by reducing the frequency and intensity of client interaction (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Maslach et al., 2001).

2.6.1.5 Lack of skill variety

The characteristics of work that contribute to the assembly line perception are as follows: conversations are forced to be brief; the work is often viewed as unskilled work because it involves a low level of complexity; customer service representatives have no opportunity to use their skills and abilities; and the division of labour only allows a customer service representative to do a small part of the work before it is passed on to the back office where specialists deal with the queries. The work, lastly, is seen as monotonous, as customer service representatives are required to perform

the same activity over and over again. Experienced monotony is one of the most frequently cited reasons why employees resign (Frenkel, Tam, & Korczynski, 1998; Grebner, Semmer, & Faso, 2003; Taylor & Bain, 1999; Taylor et al., 2002; Wallace et al., 2000; Zapf et al., 2003). Research has indicated that a lack of complexity and low utilisation of qualifications and skills are related to low levels of affective engagement, while experienced monotony, low variety and low levels of complexity predict employees' intentions to quit (Grebner et al., 2003).

2.6.1.6 Emotional labour

Working in the service industry involves the performance of emotionally taxing labour. Providing the particular service requires the employee's frequent and competent interaction with customers needing some form of service. Such high levels of social interaction involve the performance of emotional labour (Erickson & Wharton, 1997). Service employees engaged in emotional labour deal directly with the customers of their organisations and are in frequent face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact with them (Kruml & Geddes, 2000). Service organisations try to direct and control the quality of service interactions so that employees will create a positive emotional state in the recipient of the service. This requires that the behaviour of employees conforms to organisationally established norms (Morris & Feldman, 1996). Emotional labour can thus be defined as the expression of appropriate emotions, as defined by the organisation, during interactions with customers. Employees are expected to express socially desired emotions, to appear happy and eager to serve the customer, to display positive emotions and to suppress negative emotions (Deery et al., 2002; Maslach et al., 2001). This can be seen as a type of job demand (Zapf et al., 2003). The important factor in the development of burnout is the emotional dissonance component of emotional labour. Emotional dissonance develops when employees display positive emotions but feel quite differently within themselves. It makes them feel inauthentic (Deery et al., 2004; Lewig & Dollard, 2003; Zapf et al., 2003). Customer service representatives specifically, are more prone to burnout because they mostly perform emotional labour and occupy boundary-spanning roles in representing the organisation to the customer (Singh & Goolsby, 1994).

2.6.2 Burnout and work engagement

In the next section, the relationship between burnout and work engagement will be discussed.

Work engagement is viewed as a psychological state that will define and influence an employee's relationship with his or her organisation (Meyer, 2001a). This defined relationship will determine decisions to stay with or leave the organisation. Work engagement has been defined in many ways, but one of the more influential perspectives comes from the work of Meyer and Allen (2001), who conceptualise work engagement as consisting of three components, namely affective engagement, continuance engagement and normative engagement (Meyer, 2001a; Somers, 1995). Affective engagement refers to the emotional attachment of an employee to the organisation (Meyer, 2001b). Intuitive reasoning would suggest that emotional exhaustion, which is an effective response from people towards their working environment, would influence their emotional attachment to their organisation. It was found that emotional exhaustion tends to erode work engagement (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Work engagement is a function of the characteristics of the job and the work environment rather than a function of personal characteristics (Meyer, 2001b).

The work environment in which employees currently function demands more of them than it did in any previous period. Employees in pharmaceutical companies have to cope with the demands that arise from fulfilling various roles, as well as with increased pressures such as managed healthcare and primary healthcare. Tracking and addressing their effectiveness in coping with new demands and stimulating their growth in areas that could possibly impact on the standard of pharmaceutical services is therefore of paramount importance (Gupchup, Singhal, Dole, et al., 1998). One area that should be researched in this regard is burnout. Burnout has been recognised as a serious threat, particularly for employees who work with people (Van Dierendonck, Schaufeli, & Buunk, 1993). It is the end result of consistently unsuccessful attempts at mediating stressors in the environment on the part of the individual (Levert, Lucas, & Ortlepp, 2000). Research over the past two decades has shown that burnout is not only related to negative outcomes for the individual, including depression, a sense of failure, fatigue and loss of motivation, but

also to negative outcomes for the organisation, including absenteeism, turnover rates and lowered productivity (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). According to Levert et al. (2000), burnout workers show a lack of engagement and are less capable of providing adequate services, especially along dimensions of decision making and initiating involvement with clients (Maslach, 1982b). According to Sammut (1997), burnt-out workers are also too depleted to give of themselves in a creative, cooperative fashion. In the literature, high levels of burnout are associated with ineffective coping strategies (Rowe, 1997) and low degrees of burnout with more constructive coping strategies (Maslach & Jackson, 1982). Rowe (1997) also demonstrated the importance of teaching individuals with limited coping skills to alter the way in which they currently address problems. Alsoofi, Al-Heeti, and Alwashli (2000) found a significant correlation between ways of coping and burnout, while De Rijk et al. (1998) argue that utilising active coping strategies buffers the effects of job stressors on negative job-related outcomes like burnout. On the presumption that personality traits are related to coping strategies and burnout, the five-factor model (FFM) of personality traits was used as a theoretical framework in this study. Research has found that five factors provide a useful typology or taxonomy for classifying them and are labelled the “Big Five” (McCrae & Costa, 1987; McCrae & John, 1992). The five-factor personality traits include neuroticism, extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness (McCrae & Costa, 1987). Burnout, personality traits and coping could be seen as a metaphor commonly used to describe a state or process of mental exhaustion, similar to the smothering of a fire or the extinguishing of a candle (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). Probably the most frequently cited definition of burnout comes from Maslach and Jackson (1986, p. 1): “Burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do ‘people work’ of some kind.”

2.6.3 The importance of burnout for organisations

According to O'Malley, (2000) organisations are not immune from the negative consequences of making use of employees to achieve their objectives. Organisations cannot therefore ignore the effects of their demands on people

(Dodge & D'Analeze, 2012). 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 (Egan & Kadushin, 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 non-innovative employees. General organisational performance could also be affected (Deale & Pones, 1998).
- Employees with low energy levels and withdrawal symptoms cannot 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 (Deale & Pones, 1998). The general performance of an organisation with the above type 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.

2.7 BURNOUT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Burnout in the pharmaceutical sector as well as burnout in other industries will be focused on next in order to provide a holistic view of burnout in South Africa.

2.7.1 Burnout in call centres

In recent studies, several key factors were identified that are commonly associated with burnout, low work engagement and turnover intention among customer service representatives. These are work overload, monitoring and surveillance of employees, competing management goals, upward career movement, lack of skill variety and emotional labour (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Deery et al., 2002; Deery & Kinnie, 2004; Holman, 2004; Singh, 2000; Zapf et al., 2003). Since the effectiveness and health of customer care representatives are of the utmost importance in order to deliver quality service, burnout and affective work engagement should be investigated. It is essential to determine burnout and work engagement of customer service representatives and antecedents thereof and to search for variables that lessen the impact of these stressors. Given the above, the lack of empirical research that systematically investigates burnout, work engagement and turnover intention in call centres in South Africa is a concern.

In the service industry, call centres have become a popular method of service delivery, mostly because of financial benefits (cost savings implications) to the organisations that make use of them. Call centres eliminate the need for extensive, and expensive, branch networks with face-to-face service interaction. A large proportion of service work is now done through call centres, which explains why increasing numbers of people are employed in these centres (Deery & Kinnie, 2004). Comparable growth, both in the number of call centres and people who work in them, has also been reported in the UK, where it is estimated that 2.3% of the total workforce is employed in call centres (Taylor & Bain, 1999). Approximately 3% of the USA's and 1% of the European workforce are employed in call centres (Deery & Kinnie, 2004). A similar pattern of call centre growth is seen in South Africa. It is estimated that there are approximately 250 call centres in this country, with an estimated growth of 20% per annum. In South Africa, as in the rest of the world, call centres are fast replacing the traditional service channel of branch infrastructures in the financial services sector, which accounts for approximately 35% of all call centres in South Africa (Briggs, 1998). In the service economy, specifically in call centres, a special type of service employee needs to be mentioned. They are referred to as customer service representatives (Holdsworth & Cartwright, 2003).

They occupy boundary-spanning roles in representing the organisation to the customer and mostly perform emotional labour. In other words, this is a form of emotional regulation in which employees are expected to display certain emotions as part of their job, and to promote organisational goals (Grandey, 2000). Customer service representatives are highly susceptible to elevated levels of stress and burnout, more so than in any other work environment. The work of a customer service representative is seen as one of the ten most stressful jobs in the present-day world economy (Holdsworth & Cartwright, 2003; Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004; Singh & Goolsby, 1994).

2.7.2 Coping strategies in the pharmaceutical community

Active coping strategies are associated with emotional stability, extroversion, openness to experience and conscientiousness, while passive coping strategies are associated with neuroticism, low agreeableness and low conscientiousness. Emotional stability, extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness are associated with lower emotional exhaustion, lower depersonalisation and higher personal accomplishment. Constructive coping strategies are associated with personal accomplishment. Further research is necessary to better understand the antecedents and correlates of burnout in South African organisations. The relationship between coping and burnout should be interpreted carefully for two reasons. Firstly, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) argue that coping is a state (a situation-specific response) rather than a personality trait. Hence correlations between ways of coping and burnout could indicate that burnout is related to particular situations that are perceived as being stressful, which in turn stimulate a person to cope in a particular way. Secondly, withdrawal from work or from clients, which closely resembles avoidance coping, has been regarded as a core symptom of burnout (Cherniss, 1980). Depersonalisation is also characterised by behaviour that includes mental or behavioural withdrawal (Maslach, 1982a). Accordingly, avoidance coping and burnout overlap conceptually.

It is recommended that firstly, managers and employees become aware of the causes and symptoms of burnout. This could help them become aware of their own and others' emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and low personal

accomplishment, enabling them to intervene before the effects of burnout are too serious.

Secondly, individuals could be selected who have constructive coping strategies and are not too neurotic, but who are more open, agreeable and conscientious. However, before individuals can be selected on the basis of these characteristics, more research is required, especially because these characteristics have not been studied in a selection context.

Thirdly, the pharmacy group could consider practices to prevent or cope with stress and burnout, such as the implementation of programmes directed at the stimulation of personal growth, coping and effective stress management. Future research needs to explore the underlying mechanisms of personality that produce different coping preferences. Future research also needs to focus on improving the construct validity and measurement of role stressors in some job environments, such as pharmacies. The relationship between burnout, personality traits and coping strategies should be investigated in a wider variety of organisations, using larger samples.

2.7.3 The relationships between job demands, job resources, burnout and engagement of management staff at a platinum mine in the North West Province

Results revealed that exhaustion was predicted by workload, job insecurity and a lack of resources, while cynicism was predicted by lack of organisational support and advancement opportunities. Vigour was predicted by organisational support. Dedication was predicted by organisational support and high workload. Engagement was predicted by organisational support. Globalisation and continued international pressure on organisations to perform better with fewer resources are reflected in the changing psychological contracts between employers and employees. Employees are expected to give more in terms of time, effort, skills and flexibility, while job security, career opportunities and lifetime employment are diminishing (Maslach et al., 2001). South Africa and its mining industry are not excluded from these pressures and impacts. The need to improve the country's productivity is reflected in its poor ranking (49th of 60 countries) in the World Competitiveness Yearbook.

The South African mining industry produces 90% of the world's platinum group metals among other minerals. Its contribution to the country's economic activity and productivity is beyond dispute (Gastrow, 2001). The key differentiator of competitive advantage in the new world economy is the organisation's employees (Minervini, Meyer, & Rourke, 2003). However, employees have to cope with increasing demands from various and diverse roles and organisational stakeholders, often with limited resources (Minervini et al., 2003). Monitoring and improving employee effectiveness in coping with multiple new demands, stimulating their growth and enhancing their well-being as well as their organisational performance have become paramount. In this regard, burnout and engagement are specific research areas (Maslach et al., 2001). Ivancevich and Matteson (1999) believe that managers are responsible for the effectiveness of individuals, groups and organisations. Du Brin (1990) reports that managers who suffer from burnout, harm organisational effectiveness because they spread it to their subordinates. Burnout can thus be "contagious" and perpetuates itself through informal interactions on the job. Rothmann (2002) reports that burnout leads to low morale, job dissatisfaction, staff turnover and absenteeism, and that it can bring about deterioration in the quality of service rendered by staff. From these findings it can be deduced that managers can impact directly or indirectly on employee effectiveness and organisational outcomes such as turnover.

2.7.4 Burnout in the insurance industry: the psychometric properties of the MBI-GS and the UWES for employees in an insurance company in South Africa: Assessing the relationship between burnout and work engagement

The insurance industry expanded considerably in the late 19th century (Chan, 2002), inducing acute competitiveness and rivalry between companies and employees (Lai, Chan, Ko, & Boey, 2000). This, together with the increased demands from current operating and economic conditions worldwide, has forced organisations to make rapid changes to their workforces. Everywhere organisations are downsizing, outsourcing and restructuring, ultimately impacting on employees' work demands and obligations (Kickul & Posig, 2001) and leaving them with feelings of stress, insecurity, misunderstanding, undervaluation and alienation. These rapid changes in organisations, along with the changes in information technology, make the situation

more complex for employees (Lindström, Leino, Seitsamo, & Tordtila, 1997). They are faced not only with increased workloads and pressures, but also with decreased job contact (Chan, 2002; Lai et al., 2000).

When the employee can no longer tolerate occupational pressures and feels totally overwhelmed by stress, he or she is likely to reach breaking point and experience burnout (Weisberg, 1994). Burnout and work engagement are vital components of affective work-related well-being. A lack of research in terms of burnout and work engagement of employees in the insurance industry in the South African context necessitates the current research. It is not only important to obtain valid and reliable measurements of burnout and work engagement in South Africa from an empirical point of view, but also to enable the individual measurement of burnout and work engagement in a valid and reliable manner in the insurance industry context in South Africa. According to Van de Vijver and Leung (1997), measurement equivalence should be computed for measuring instruments in any multicultural setting where employees from different cultural groups are compared in terms of a specific construct. Firstly, the results supported a three-dimensional factor structure of the MBI-GS, as has been consistently found across various samples, occupational groups and countries (Leiter & Schaufeli, 1996; Schaufeli et al., 2002a; Schutte et al., 2000; Storm, 2002; Taris et al., 2001). The three-dimensional factor structure of the UWES was also confirmed, a finding supported by research in different samples, groups and countries (Schaufeli et al., 2002b; Schaufeli et al., 2002a; Storm & Rothmann, 2003b).

Also, reliability analysis confirmed sufficient internal consistency of the subscales of the MBI-GS and the UWES. The construct equivalence of the scales for Afrikaans/African and English participants was confirmed. Based on both conceptual and empirical grounds, item 13 ("I just want to do my job and not be bothered") was eliminated from the original MBI-GS, resulting in a 15-item scale. In addition, these items had the highest modification indices. These findings suggest that the items may require either deletion or content modification, in which instance the latter should rather be considered. The particular items may be problematic because they do not correspond to the conceptual domain of the particular dimension. However, it

is more likely that they are somewhat ambiguous, or that they are either sample or country specific.

The deletion of items from the UWES for reasons of bias and model-fit improvement resulted in the sacrifice of model parsimony – in other words, relationships were eliminated which could be viewed as an erosion in meaning of the work engagement construct. Also, it is possible, owing to the sampling procedure (subgroup representation), that these findings could have been obtained by pure chance. Also, the problems of some of the items may be related to words that some of the participants could have found difficult to understand and/or interpret (e.g. vigorous, immersed and resilient). This resulted in the adjustment of the initial UWES questionnaire with the replacement of items 4, 9, 11 and 15 respectively with items that were written in a more familiar South African vocabulary. The prominent correlated errors in this study presented another problem. It is believed that this confusing state of affairs regarding the UWES does not reflect weaknesses inherent to the instrument, but is rather the result of more general factors. First, the UWES is a recently constructed measuring instrument. Relatively few studies have thus critically reviewed its psychometric properties. Secondly, the UWES is an instrument that was originally constructed from data based on samples of individuals in the Netherlands (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2001). Despite a few studies of the UWES in South Africa (e.g. Naudé, 2003; Storm & Rothmann, 2003b), more research on work engagement in different occupational settings in South Africa is required. In conclusion, the results of this study could serve as a standard for measuring burnout and work engagement levels of employees in an insurance company. The three-factor structure of the MBI-GS and the UWES is largely confirmed with acceptable internal consistency of its subscales of exhaustion, cynicism, professional efficacy, vigour, dedication and absorption.

2.7.5 Job characteristics, optimism, burnout and ill health of support staff in a higher education institution in South Africa

The objective of this study was to assess the relationships between job characteristics, dispositional optimism, burnout, and ill health among support staff in a higher education institution. A good fit was found for a model in which job demands

and a lack of job resources predicted burnout (exhaustion and cynicism), which leads to physical and psychological health problems. Dispositional optimism did not interact with job demands or a lack of job resources to affect exhaustion or cynicism, but had a direct effect on exhaustion and cynicism of participants.

The results of the study showed that job demands (overload) and a lack of job resources contributed to burnout. Burnout, in turn, mediated the effects of job demands and a lack of job resources on ill health. Dispositional optimism had a direct effect on exhaustion and cynicism. However, dispositional optimism did not interact with job demands or job resources in affecting exhaustion and cynicism. There is growing evidence that higher education institutions no longer provide the low-stress environment they once did (Gillespie, Walsh, Winefield, et al., 2001; Winefield, Gillespie, Stough, et al. 2002; Winefield & Jarrett, 2001). Higher education institutions face an overload of demands but have an undersupply of response capabilities, especially concerning finances (Viljoen & Rothmann, 2002).

According to Davis (1996), the main characteristics of a higher education institution as a work organisation are its two distinct social structures: (1) academic staff, and (2) non-academic administrative and support staff. The two constituencies rarely have similar jobs and supervisory structures, and this gives rise to significantly different employee problems and concerns. Support staff play an important role in the creation and development of knowledge and innovation in higher education institutions (Gillespie et al., 2001). The term "support staff" is used in this article to refer to all non-academic staff employed in the higher education sector, including staff in academic support, administrative support and technical areas. It appears that support personnel in higher education institutions experience different problems from academic staff members (Smewing & Cox, 1998). For example, it seems that many of the pressures on academic and senior support staff are passed on to secretarial and administrative employees, who are required to take on more duties and work for a greater number of people. This produces problems with regard to their control over workflow, deadlines and conflicting pressures. In addition, they are required to use new technology, sometimes without adequate training and often in circumstances where the people they work for do not understand the complexities of the tasks involved. For technical staff, there appears to be an increasing workload, yet many

feel that their knowledge and expertise are no longer recognised or utilised effectively. For managerial staff, there is increasing pressure to stay at work beyond normal office hours. Support staff at higher education institutions have been largely overlooked in recent literature when the issues of quality service, stress, and burnout have come under scrutiny (Pitman, 2000). This is not surprising, for the following reasons: Firstly, higher education institutions remain focused on teaching and research, with the administrative tasks existing to facilitate these aims. Secondly, most published studies have been done by academics, who focus on those areas that concern them most. The role of higher education support staff and their stress and burnout levels have thus largely been ignored. Banata and Kuh (1998, p. 41) have drawn attention to this oversight, stating the following: "A faculty cannot by itself accomplish the higher education institution's objectives for a student's intellectual and personal development; it needs the cooperation of others who work with students where students spend the majority of their time."

In recent studies, several key factors were identified that are commonly associated with stress and burnout among support staff and academic staff. These are work overload, time constraints, lack of promotion opportunities, inadequate recognition, inadequate salaries, changing job roles, inadequate management, inadequate resources and funding, and student interaction (Armour, Caffarella, Fuhrmann, et al., 1987; Blix et al., 1994; Gillespie et al., 2001; Winefield & Jarrett, 2001). Support staff indicated that occupational stress impacted on them both professionally and personally (Gillespie et al., 2001). Since the effectiveness and health of staff members at institutions of higher education are important in delivering quality service (by which the higher education institution is evaluated), burnout and ill health, and their causes, should be investigated. It is essential to identify the stressors that staff members experience and to search for variables that lessen the impact of these stressors.

2.8 CONSEQUENCES OF BURNOUT

When we think of burnout, what usually causes alarm is the wide range of associated negative consequences. Since burnout is a syndrome of chronic exhaustion and negative attitudes towards work, it can be expected that burnout influences people's functioning in the workplace in an unfavourable way. As noted by Maslach et al. (2001), the significance of burnout lies in its link to significant outcomes. By contrast, we expect engagement to be positively related to job performance and organisational outcomes. What are the most important consequences of burnout and engagement? Is engagement a better predictor of performance than burnout? These questions are answered in the next sections.

2.8.1 Health-related outcomes

Research has shown that employees who are chronically fatigued and cynical about their work report more psychological and physical health problems (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998; Shirom et al., 2005). Concerning psychological health problems, Ahola (2007) used a nationally representative sample of the Finnish working population including more than 3 000 employees. Burnout was related to an increased prevalence of depressive and anxiety disorders and alcohol dependence among male and female employees. Similarly, in their study among medical residents, Hillhouse et al. (2000) found that patient-related exhaustion predicted mood disturbance over a period of one year.

More recent research has provided additional evidence for a link between burnout and psychological health problems. In their three-wave, seven-year prospective study of almost 2 000 Finnish dentists, Hakanen and Schaufeli (2012) found that burnout predicted depressive symptoms and life dissatisfaction from time 1 to time 2 and from time 2 to time 3. Similarly, Toker and Biron (2012) conducted a three-wave longitudinal study among more than 1 500 employees. Latent difference score modelling indicated that an increase in burnout from time 1 to time 2 predicted an increase in depression from time 2 to time 3, and vice versa. In addition, physical activity attenuated these effects in a dose-response manner, so that the increase in burnout and depression was strongest among employees who did not engage in

physical activity and weakest among those engaging in high levels of physical activity.

Furthermore, in a large study among more than 3 500 Swedish health-care workers, Peterson et al. (2008) found that burnt-out employees could be discriminated from non-burnt-out employees (exhausted, disengaged, and healthy groups of employees) using a range of health indicators, namely self-perceived health, depression, anxiety, sleep disturbance, memory impairment and neck pain. Overall, there was an increase in severity over the four groups in self-rated health, anxiety, and depression, in the following order (from lowest to highest): non-burnt out, disengaged, exhausted and burnt out. This pattern of findings suggests that health impairment may be most strongly related to the exhaustion component of burnout.

Research has also demonstrated that burnout leads to poor physical health and increased sickness absence. Kim et al. (2011) conducted a study among social workers who were surveyed annually over a three-year period. Social workers with higher initial levels of burnout later reported more physical health complaints, including sleep disturbances, headaches, respiratory infections and gastrointestinal infections. Higher levels of burnout led to a faster rate of deterioration in physical health over a one-year period. In addition, burnout increases the risk of musculoskeletal problems among apparently healthy employees (Armon et al., 2010). The burnout syndrome has also been found to be an independent risk factor for infections (e.g. common cold) (Mohren et al., 2003) and Type 2 diabetes (Melamed et al., 2003).

2.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 2 focused on the burnout phenomenon with reference to conceptual foundations relating to the history of the concept “burnout”, definition of burnout, causes of burnout and the dimensions of burnout. The chapter further discussed the models of burnout with reference to three specific models, namely Perlman and Hartman's Model of Burnout, Carroll and White's Model of Burnout and Maslach and Jackson Model of Burnout, which this study relates to. The dynamics of burnout and the burnout process was discussed in great detail, followed by a discussion of the

critical review and practical application of burnout. The chapter concluded with a brief discussion of burnout in the South African context and relevance of burnout to the pharmaceutical company.

Work engagement will be discussed in **chapter 3**.

CHAPTER 3: WORK ENGAGEMENT

Research on the work engagement concept has taken two different but related paths. Maslach and Leiter (1997, p. 23) refer to burnout as “an erosion of engagement with the job”. Work that started out as important, meaningful and challenging becomes unpleasant, unfulfilling and meaningless. These authors assert that engagement is characterised by energy, involvement and efficacy, which are considered the direct opposites of the three burnout dimensions, namely exhaustion, cynicism and lack of professional efficacy, respectively, discussed in chapter 2. Hence they also assess engagement by the opposite pattern of scores on the three Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) dimensions. Low scores on exhaustion and cynicism, and high scores on efficacy are indicative of engagement. The following focus areas will be discussed in chapter 3: the paradigmatic and conceptual foundation; the work engagement model; the Utrecht work engagement model; practical implications of work engagement; and the theoretical integration of burnout and work engagement. The chapter concludes with a brief summary.

3.1 PARADIGMATIC AND CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATION

3.1.1 Paradigmatic foundation

The essence of this study, by paradigmatic consideration, represents that research in Humanities (Lambie, 2011) was conducted based on the positivism paradigm (Taylor & Medina, 2013).

3.1.1.1 Positive psychology

Positive psychology is associated with enhancing optimal human functioning. It specifically aims at focusing on the positive aspects of human behaviour instead of the negative. It incorporates well-being through the enhancement of human strength and resilience to achieve optimal functioning in one’s life (Bergh, 2009). Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000, p. 5) report that positive psychology at a subjective level is about well-being, contentment, satisfaction, hope, optimism, flow and happiness. At individual level it encapsulates love, courage, interpersonal skill, sensibility,

perseverance, forgiveness, originality, future mindedness, spirituality, high talent and wisdom (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 5). These authors add that the group level is about civic virtues, better citizenship, responsibility, nurturance altruism, civility, moderation, tolerance and, importantly, work ethics (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 5). Strümpfer (2005, p. 35) attempted to integrate the work of his predecessors by focusing on personal growth, the socialisation process and spirituality/religiousness. The basic behavioural assumptions of this paradigm purport that stress is universal, but that reaction, coping styles and general resistance resources differ from individual to individual (Cilliers & Coetzee, 2003). The fundamental question that arises is why (despite the same obstacles, setbacks, difficulties or limitations) do some individuals cope triumphantly while others struggle? This paradigm is applicable to this study because it seeks to understand optimal human functioning by examining different coping behaviours and styles in an attempt to gain insight into coping differences.

3.1.2 Conceptual foundation

The first mention of employee engagement appears in an *Academy of Management Journal* article, “Psychological Conditions of Personal Engagement and Disengagement at Work” (Kahn, 1990). In his article, Kahn explains the underpinnings and major influences on his thought, beginning with the classic sociology text, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Goffman, 1961). Kahn’s conceptualization of personal engagement and personal disengagement would be the only piece of empirical research on employee engagement until early 2001, when Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter (2001) focused on why employees develop job burnout. Conceptual in nature, Maslach et al. (2001) posited that employee engagement was the positive antithesis to burnout and defined employee engagement as “a persistent positive affective state characterized by high levels of activation and pleasure” (p. 417). Together, Kahn (1990) and Maslach et al. (2001) provided the two earliest theoretical frameworks for understanding employee engagement (Saks, 2006).

A study to empirically test Kahn’s (1990) conceptualization of engagement found that all three of Kahn’s (1990) original domains were “important in determining one’s engagement at work” (May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004, p. 30). This finding suggests the

framework Kahn (1990) used in his conceptualization is foundational for the scaffolding of the construct.

Harter et al. (2002) published one of the earliest and most definitive pieces of consulting literature on employee engagement. Using a research foundation pioneered by the late Donald O. Clifton as a part of the Gallup Strengths movement and popularized by the publication of *First Break All the Rules* (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999), Harter et al. (2002) pulled data from a meta-analysis of 7,939 business units across multiple fields of industry. In their conceptualization, employee engagement was defined as an “individual’s involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work” (Harter et al., 2002, p. 417). This definition added the expectation of an individuals’ satisfaction level and measured engagement on the business unit level, altering the way engagement had been previously viewed. Harter et al’s (2002) article was a catalyst for the rapid expansion of interest in the employee engagement construct since it was the first widely disseminated publication to suggest an employee engagement-profit linkage.

The first academic research to specifically conceptualize and test antecedents and consequences of employee engagement occurred in 2005 (Saks, 2006). Prior to Saks (2006), practitioner literature was the only body of work connecting employee engagement drivers to employee engagement consequences. Saks provided an important bridge between previous theories of employee engagement, practitioner literature, and the academic community.

In 2006, The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) commissioned a publication on employee engagement and commitment as an extension of the *Effective Practice Guidelines Series*. This report was hailed as a “clear, concise, and usable format” (Vance, 2006, p. v) for understanding employee engagement, hoping to make the concept of employee engagement more accessible to SHRM members. Two years after the SHRM study, The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) commissioned a study in association with Dale Carnegie Training to look at employee engagement (Czarnowsky, 2008). This study focused on the role of learning in the employee engagement construct, marking the first major research publication by ASTD on employee engagement and the first look into

the construct from a training perspective society to use a research driven framework to understand employee engagement.

Building significantly on the work of multiple scholars, Macey and Schneider (2008) pioneered conceptual research in the area of employee engagement. Conceptualizing that employee engagement develops from (a) trait engagement, (b) state engagement, and (c) behavioural engagement, they drew significant parallels from previous research and defined each as a separate engagement construct. From their perspective, employee engagement is defined by suggesting that “(a) job design attributes would directly affect trait engagement, (b) the presence of a transformational leader would directly affect state engagement, and (c) the presence of a transformational leader would directly affect trust levels and thus, indirectly affect the preceding state of engagement would build on the next, each developing a piece of the overall employee engagement construct. This contribution to the field, which built significantly on the work of Saks (2006), helped to clear the cluttered, scattered, and unfocused conceptual state of employee engagement by breaking the engagement construct into distinct parts.

3.1.2.1 Definition of work engagement

Work engagement as defined by Maslach and Leiter (1997) is an emotional response to the work itself, much like burnout. According to Schaufeli et al., (2002a), engagement can be defined as a positive, fulfilling and work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication (efficacy) and absorption. Work engagement has been described by Kahn (1990, p. 692-724) as the “harnessing of corporation members’ selves to their work roles”. Rather than a momentary and specific state, work engagement refers to a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual or behaviour. Coetzee and Roythorne-Jacobs (2007, p. 54) define work engagement as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working; the willingness to invest effort in one’s work; persistence even in the face of difficulties; feeling enthusiastic and proud about one’s job; feeling inspired and challenged by one’s job; and being happily immersed in one’s work.

Work engagement is also seen as the “persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual or behaviour” (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004, p. 294) and an “energetic state in which the employee is dedicated to excellent performance at work and is confident of his or her effectiveness” (Schutte et al., 2000, p. 54). Khan (1990, p. 694) defines work engagement as “the harnessing of organisation members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances”.

Engaged employees have an energetic and affective connection with their work activities and see themselves as able to deal completely with the demands of their jobs (Schaufeli et al., 2002a; Markos & Sridevi, 2010).

The above definitions provide a fairly composite view of work engagement. They indicate that work engagement is a positivistic, mentally enduring state that fosters resilience, inspiration, happiness or confidence. Work engagement comprises three concepts, namely vigour, dedication and absorption. According to Saks (2006), individuals with high levels of work engagement are more likely to experience job satisfaction, organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour. Individuals who score high on vigour, dedication and absorption are regarded as having high levels of work engagement; conversely, individuals who score low on these three components are viewed as having lower levels of work engagement. For the purpose of this study, the following definition (a combination of Schaufeli et al.’s, (2002b) and Schaufeli et al.’s, (2002a) work) states that it is characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption, and infuses employees with energy, affective expression and confidence to face any demands.

Work engagement is another significant construct that seeks to explain the mindset of some people who operate with high levels of energy and have enduring mental resilience (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2007). Work engagement is commonly described as the opposite of burnout (Bosman, Rothmann, & Buitendach, 2005b). Engaged individuals exhibit ownership and responsibility for their work, are excited and enthusiastic about their jobs, persevere to give their best even when faced with obstacles, and their jobs inspire and challenge them. Also, they love to be absorbed

in their work (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2007; Markos & Sridevi, 2010). Work engagement is also referred to as a positive work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). Rothman (2003, p. 19) sees work engagement as a “persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focussed on any particular object, event, individual or behaviour” and is characterised by energy, involvement and efficacy. Koyuncu, Burk, and Fiksenbaum (2006) add that engaged workers exhibit vigour that is characterised by having more energy, being positive about their work and feeling that they are doing their jobs effectively. In addition, they demonstrate their dedication through enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge (Bosman et al., 2005b). Engaged individuals enjoy their work to the point of absorption where they become unaware of time and cannot tear themselves away from their work (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Organisational leaders have started to recognise the benefits of having engaged employees and are realising that they are key to a thriving organisation, as opposed to technology, innovation or products (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). In view of this, more organisations are opting to capitalise on human assets by seeking to understand concepts such as optimism, trust and engagement (Koyuncu et al., 2006). The assumption is that if organisational leaders understand positive employee behaviours, attitudes and emotions, it can enhance their employees’ performance, production, work satisfaction and can contribute significantly to retaining talent.

Work commitment refers to the extent to which individuals belong, identify with and are committed to the goals of the organisation (Kinicki & Kreitner, 2006; Karatepe & Ngeche, 2012). Allen and Meyer (1993) identify three significant themes of commitment: Affective attachment, perceived cost association and obligation. These themes are referred to as affective: continuance revolves around the extent to which the individuals identifies with the organisation, continuance commitment is related to the individual’s need to continue to work and normative commitment demonstrates societal norms concerning what the individual’s commitment should be (Bosman, Buitendach, & Laba, 2005a). Employees with strong affective commitment stay with the organisation because they want to; those with strong continuance commitment remain because they need to; and those with strong normative commitment stay because they feel that they ought to (Allen & Meyer, 1993). According to Lok and

Crawford (2004), when employees are dissatisfied, they become less committed and seek opportunities to leave or emotionally withdraw from the organisation.

In the past, numerous exhaustive studies focused on job dissatisfaction, absenteeism, job insecurity, burnout and stress (Koyuncu, Burk, & Fiksenbaum, 2006; Rothmann, 2003). Today the focus on the negative is changing dramatically and more researchers are emerging to explore the positive, optimistic perspectives of research and practice. Studies on job satisfaction (Lok & Crawford, 2004), organisational commitment (Rothmann, 2003), engagement (Koyuncu et al., 2006) and other positive constructs are receiving increasing attention in research, because of the value they provide in terms of understanding employees and implementing interventions to resolve key issues relating to an organisation's most valuable asset, namely human capital.

3.1.2.2 Work engagement facets

As shown by Rothmann (2003), work engagement (Kahn, 1990) and the dependent variable in this research can be described as the harnessing of the individual's attitude to his or her work roles by focusing on three fundamental engagement facets or characteristics, that is, absorption, dedication and vigour. More recently, identification has been included as a fourth facet, describing an individual's alignment of values and objectives with a particular corporation (Guest, 2009).

According to Schaufeli and Bakker (2001), the core facets of work engagement are vigour and dedication, with absorption being more of a relevant facet. Guest (2009) has suggested the inclusion of identification as a fourth facet. While the identification facet is not recognised widely and is far less studied in the context of work engagement, it is a critical facet because it focuses on the individual's alignment characteristics with those of the corporation.

It is important to understand the facets of engagement to understand its drivers. According to Fleck (2007, cited in Guest, 2009), the four factors of engagement cover the full spectrum of the cognitive, emotional and physical aspects of the psychological investment.

Kahn (1990) describes work engagement as the relationship that an individual has with the work that he or she does. Other researchers such as Rothbard (2001), Schaufeli et al. (2002a; 2002b) and Schaufeli and Salanova (2007) have studied the impact that engagement has on the performance of a corporation by honing in on the facets of engagement as originally identified by Kahn (1990).

a. Vigour

Vigour is the first step in the process of engagement. It is characterised by an individual's high level of energy and mental resilience while in the work environment performing work tasks, even in the face of difficulty at times (Schaufeli et al., 2002a; 2002b). Vigour is conceptualised as the opposite of emotional exhaustion, because both measures the latent energy construct (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Vigour has been consistently negatively correlated with emotional exhaustion (Gonzalez-Roma, Schaufeli, & Bakker, 2006; Hakanen, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2006; Langelaan, Bakker, & Van Dooren, 2006; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli et al., 2002a; Schaufeli et al., 2002b).

Vigour and dedication are at directly opposing poles to cynicism and exhaustion, which are the two core symptoms of burnout. Sonnentag and Niessen (2008) and Shirom (2004) indicate that vigour is an effective facet that refers to an individual's experience of energy and aliveness. Sonnentag and Niessen (2008) argue that vigour stimulates creative, proactive and other forms of extra-role behaviour at work. Individuals with higher levels of vigour have a tendency to deal with stress better than individuals who do not have high levels of vigour. People feel motivated at work because of an abundance of resources (Hakanen et al., 2006). Unlike people experiencing emotional exhaustion, they have an abundance of resources for dealing with high demands at work. The vigour part of the UWES indicates whether people are high on the energy construct, whereas emotional exhaustion from the MBI measures whether people are low on the energy construct.

b. Dedication

The second step of engagement is dedication. It refers to the emotional side of work engagement and the willingness of people to expend considerable time and effort in doing something meaningful. Dedication is characterised by a sense of significance,

an individual taking pride in what he or she has done or does, being inspired, enthusiastic and thriving when confronted with work related challenges (Schaufeli et al., 2002a; 2002b). Dedication is directly linked to an individual's sense of identification with his or her role and with the organisation's values. Individuals who have a high level of Antonovsky's (1987) SOC appear to be engaged more often than individuals with a low SOC. Dedication is significantly negatively correlated with organisational commitment (Hakanen et al., 2006), and has consistently been correlated with the distancing found in burnout (Gonzalez-Roma et al., 2006; Hakanen et al., 2006; Langelaan et al., 2006; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli et al., 2002a; Schaufeli et al., 2002b). Resources help to promote dedication because people have enough means to complete a task. The consistent completion of tasks, abundance of resources and high energy at work lead to dedication, which is identification with the work. Dedication is conceptualised as high levels of identification with the job (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2001; Schaufeli et al., 2002b). Whereas in burnout people attempt to not identify with the work on account of their emotional exhaustion, in engagement they highly relate themselves to their work.

c. Absorption

Absorption is the third step of engagement. It is characterised by an individual being deeply engrossed in his or her work, with full concentration, allowing little outside interference and experiencing difficulty in detaching himself or herself from work roles (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007). Absorption refers to the cognitive element where individuals are fully focused on something and experience a high level of concentration while performing a task. This includes being happily engrossed in one's work, so that time seems to pass quickly and one has difficulty detaching oneself from work (Coetzer & Rothmann, 2007). It appears that individuals who possess an internal locus of control have higher levels of absorption than individuals who have an external locus of control. More active employees have a tendency to be more engrossed in their contribution to the corporation and therefore appear to be more absorbed in their work function. Absorption is similar to the construct flow, the difference between the two constructs being that flow is experienced in short peak episodes, whereas absorption is experienced in persistent and encompassing episodes, such as when a person is at work (Csikszentmihalyi, Abuhamdeh, & Nakamura, 2005; Schaufeli et al., 2002b). Absorption is conceptualised as high

efficacy in the workplace. People who are absorbed become so efficacious at work they become immersed in the work.

Efficacy is the perception that one is doing good work and has control over the situation (Gecas, 1989). The latent efficacy construct does not have to do with the consequences of the work. Absorption is the self-perception that an employee is doing such good work and has so much control over the situation that he or she becomes immersed in the work for the sake of the work. Work engagement is a continuous process in that people do not have to reach some threshold of vigour, followed by a threshold of dedication, then absorption, resulting in work engagement. Instead they may feel some energy at work, which leads to a little dedication, which leads to some absorption, which in turn increases energy, starting the process over again. People will continually engage, thus strengthening the three latent constructs of energy, identification and efficacy, until some other source intervenes.

d. Identification

Identification (Fleck, 2007) was later included as a facet of work engagement and is included in this research study for the purpose of understanding its link to work engagement. Identification is about employees having a sense of feeling that they are part of the corporation and they can identify with and understand why the corporation is moving in a certain direction (Fleck, 2007). According to Kahn (1990), employees feel a strong sense of alignment between their values and the values of the corporation they were working for. This, in turn, strengthens the psychological contract between the individual and the corporation. The individual believes, supports and identifies with what the corporation is trying to achieve. According to Strümpfer and Mlonzi (2006), the very definition of organisational commitment, which is synonymous with engagement, refers to the relative strength of an individual's active identification with the corporation.

Figure 3.1 below depicts the engagement model and its relationship with the four construct

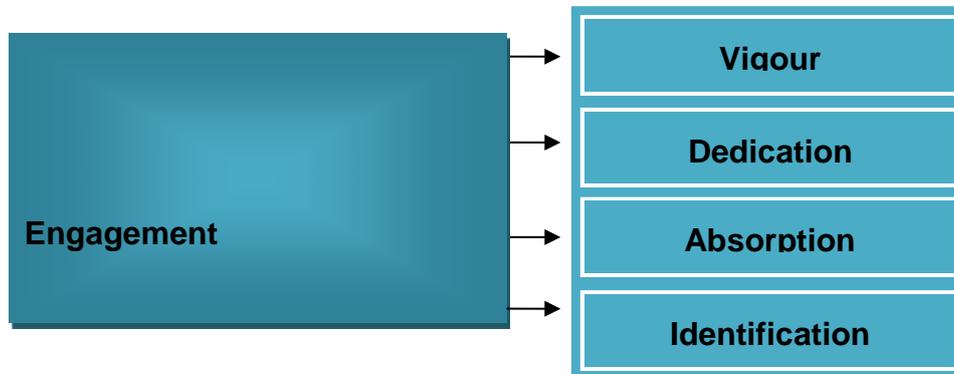


Figure 3.1: The engagement model

3.1.3 Antecedents of engagement

As noted in 2.1.3 above, because burnout and work engagement may have significant consequences for individual employees and organisations at large, many studies have focused on the antecedents of both concepts. The first academic research to specifically conceptualise and test antecedents and consequences of employee engagement occurred in 2005 (Saks, 2006). Saks provided an important bridge between previous theories of employee engagement, practitioner literature, and the academic community.

3.1.3.1 Situational factors

Whereas job demands are the most important predictors of burnout, job resources are the principal predictors of work engagement (Halbesleben, 2010; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). As elucidated previously, job resources are those aspects of the job that help to achieve work goals, reduce job demands or stimulate personal growth. Examples of job resources are social support from colleagues, supervisory coaching and performance feedback (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Interestingly, although

Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) also include job demands in their study, job resources are the exclusive predictors of work engagement. The effects of job resources on engagement have also been found in longitudinal research. Mauno et al. (2007), in a study among Finnish healthcare personnel, found that those employees with a higher level of job control in 2003 reported higher levels of vigour, dedication, and absorption in 2005.

A recent meta-analysis by Christian et al. (2011) confirmed that job resources are the most important predictors of employee work engagement. The job resources found to predict work engagement were task variety, task significance, autonomy, feedback, social support from colleagues, a high-quality relationship with the supervisor and transformational leadership. These job resources correlated more strongly with engagement than job demands such as physical demands, work conditions (health hazards, temperature and noise) and job complexity. Moreover, for two job resources, autonomy and social support, the authors found meta-analytical evidence for a positive lagged effect and for daily within-person effects. These meta-analytical findings echo those of Halbesleben (2010), who also found that job resources were positively related to work engagement. Although job demands were significantly negatively related to engagement, the relationship of job resources with engagement was much stronger than the relationship of job demands with engagement. Resources thus contribute to work engagement over time and also from day to day.

Hakanen et al. (2005) investigated how the combination of high job demands and high job resources impacted on work engagement in a sample of Finnish dentists. It was hypothesised that job resources (e.g. variability in the required professional skills and peer contacts) would be most beneficial in maintaining work engagement under conditions of high job demands (e.g. heavy workload and unfavorable physical environment). The dentists were split into two random groups in order to cross-validate the findings. A set of hierarchical regression analyses resulted in 17 out of 40 significant interactions (40%), showing, for example, that variability in professional skills boosted work engagement when qualitative workload was high, and mitigated the negative effect of qualitative workload on work engagement.

Bakker et al. (2007) reported conceptually similar findings in their study of Finnish teachers working in elementary, secondary and vocational schools. They found that job resources acted as buffers and diminished the negative relationship between pupil misbehaviour and work engagement. In addition, they found that job resources influenced work engagement especially when teachers were confronted with high levels of pupil misconduct. Supervisor support, innovativeness, appreciation and organisational climate were particularly important job resources that helped teachers cope with demanding interactions with students. Hence resources contribute to work engagement in interaction with high job demands as well. These effects have been found within time, over time and also from day to day.

3.1.3.2 Individual factors

Personality may play a significant role in work engagement (Albrecht, 2010; Macey & Schneider, 2008) because individuals with a specific personality profile may be better able to mobilise their job resources than individuals with a different profile. For example, extroverts show positive emotions, a high frequency and intensity of personal interactions, and a high need for stimulation. In addition, extroversion is generally associated with a tendency to be optimistic (Costa & McCrae, 1992). These characteristics may be particularly helpful for mobilising social support from colleagues and the supervisor and for asking for performance feedback. In addition, the extrovert's tendency to reappraise problems positively may help him or her to perceive job demands as challenges.

In their recent review of the literature on the link between individual factors and work engagement, Mäkikangas et al. (2013) showed that of the Big Five factors, emotional stability, extroversion and conscientiousness were consistently related to higher work engagement. In addition, several studies found a positive relationship between the lower-order individual factors (also called personal resources) (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007; 2009a) of self-efficacy, optimism and self-esteem, on the one hand, and work engagement, on the other. Moreover, other studies found evidence of a positive relationship between (1) core self-evaluations, positive affect and sense of

coherence; and (2) engagement.

Mäkikangas et al. (2013, p. 134) argue that individuals with high self-efficacy, optimism and high emotional stability have a particular way of dealing with reality: "Such people tend to interpret their environment basically as benign. For example, they expect things to go well, they accept setbacks and failures as normal, and not as indicative of their own lack of worthiness, and they tend to see life as something that can be influenced and acted upon." This suggests that individual differences determine whether the objective work situation will have an impact on work engagement.

In general, the findings of Mäkikangas et al. (2013) are consistent with and expand on two previous meta-analyses that included only a few individual factors. The meta-analysis of Halbesleben (2010) indicated that in addition to job resources, optimism and self-efficacy were positively related to work engagement. Christian et al. (2011) showed that conscientiousness, positive affect and proactive personality were all positively related to engagement. Proactive personality refers to the dispositional tendency to engage in proactive behaviour in a variety of situations (Bateman & Crant, 1993). Individuals with a proactive personality are inclined to intentionally change their circumstances, including their physical environment (Buss, 1987). They identify opportunities, take action and persevere until they bring about meaningful change (Crant, 1995).

Bakker et al. (2012b) investigated the mechanism explaining the relationship between proactive personality and work engagement. They argued and showed that employees with a proactive personality were most likely to craft their jobs, such employees increased their job resources (asked for feedback and support, increased their opportunities for development) and their job challenges (looked for new tasks, volunteered for projects). This job crafting, in turn, led to higher levels of engagement. Hence people who tend to change their environment are able to adjust their work demands and mobilise their job resources, and these resources facilitate their engagement with their jobs. Taken together, the empirical evidence suggests that both higher-order individual factors (i.e. emotional stability, extroversion,

conscientiousness and proactive personality) and lower-order individual factors (i.e. self-efficacy, optimism and self-esteem) are positively related to work engagement.

3.2 THE WORK ENGAGEMENT MODEL

According to Kahn (1990), individuals are engaged in their work tasks because they identify with the task and the values of the corporation. Kahn (1992) differentiates the concept of work engagement from a psychological presence by describing work engagement as behaviour that drives energy into an individual's work which manifests itself in psychological presence. Kahn (1992) describes work engagement as the behavioural drive into a mental state to be completely involved.

Rothbard (2001) inspired by Kahn (1990; 1992), had a slightly different perspective on work engagement by supporting the view that it is a two-dimensional motivational construct. On the one hand, it focuses on an individual's attention, which is described as the amount of time and effort that he or she places on his or her work role; on the other, it focuses on absorption which has been described as the intensity with which an individual executes his or her work role or activity. Work engagement includes an energy dimension at a high level and an identification dimension that has been characterised as a strong sense of identification or affiliation to work and the organisation as a whole (Bakker et al., 2008a; 2008b).

3.2.1 Work engagement, organisational commitment and job satisfaction

Work engagement is also distinct from other established constructs in organisational psychology, such as organisational commitment and job satisfaction (Maslach et al., 2001, pp. 397–422). It is important to differentiate between work engagement and commitment, job satisfaction and job involvement. Maslach and Goldberg (1998) conceptualise work engagement as different from organisational commitment, which is a focus on the organisation, whereas work engagement is a focus on the work itself. Job satisfaction is the “extent to which work is a source of need fulfilment and contentment, it does not entail a relationship with the work itself” (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 416). Similarly, job involvement does not fully encompass work engagement, because it does not include energy or efficacy in it (Maslach et al.,

2001).

Work engagement is seen as an emotional response to the work itself. Demands are an integral part of work engagement. Engaged people have moderate to high demands in the workplace. People who do not have any demands placed on them will not feel energetic, identified or efficacious with the job. A job such as nursing may have high demands, but people can feel energy from completion of tasks, identification as a nurse and efficacy because they perceive themselves doing a good job with the work.

Job satisfaction is a key research topic in industrial and organisational psychology. Warr (2007) regards job satisfaction as one important dimension of an individual's happiness at work. According to Rothmann (2008), job satisfaction is one component of work-related well-being that should be included in diagnostic studies of people's well-being in organisations. Engaged employees are typically characterised by the willingness to take the initiative and self-direct their lives; they generate their own positive feedback and so encourage themselves; they are also engaged outside of their employment; their values and norms are in agreement with those of the organisation for which they work; they do become fatigued, but it is intrinsically linked to an overall sense of satisfaction; they may also become "burnt out", but are able to extricate themselves from the situation; they are not enslaved to their job; and they tend to also pursue outside interests (Van den Berg et al., 2008).

3.2.2 Work engagement in relation to burnout

Work engagement is purported to be the strengthening of energy, identification and efficacy at work, as opposed to the erosion of these constructs. Work engagement mediates the relationship between job resources and turnover intention. However, Schaufeli et al. (2002a) have operationalised work engagement as a construct in its own right. Research on work engagement has adopted a positive psychology perspective that focuses on psychological health and well-being rather than on psychological ill health, as is the case with burnout (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). It is not focused on a specific object, event, individual or behaviour (Schaufeli et al., 2002a). According to Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), burnout and work

engagement are indicators of employees' wellness. Burnout and work engagement can thus be integrated as one model (Rothmann, 2002). According to Maslach et al. (2001), the study of work-related experiences should include the entire continuum of work-related experiences, ranging from negative (burnout) to positive (work engagement). However, burnout and work engagement are best measured with different instruments (Schaufeli et al., 2002a). The MBI-GS measures burnout across occupational settings, while the UWES measures work engagement more effectively (Schaufeli et al., 2002a). According to Schaufeli and Bakker (2001, pp. 229–253), research shows that even when exposed to high job demands and working long hours, some individuals do not show symptoms of burnout. On the contrary, they seem to find pleasure in working hard and dealing with stressors and high job demands. From a positive psychology perspective, Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000, pp. 5–14) describe such individuals as engaged in their work.

Burnout has been studied in many countries around the globe. The same, however, cannot be said of its antipode, work engagement, since theory development and research on engagement has only recently been introduced. Research on the work engagement concept has taken two different but related paths. Maslach and Leiter (1997, p. 23) have rephrased burnout as “an erosion of engagement with the job”. Work that started out as important, meaningful and challenging becomes unpleasant, unfulfilling and meaningless. According to these authors, work engagement is characterised by energy, involvement and efficacy, which are considered the direct opposites of the three burnout dimensions, namely exhaustion, cynicism and lack of professional efficacy, respectively.

They therefore also assess work engagement by the opposite pattern of scores on the three MBI dimensions: low scores on exhaustion and cynicism; and high scores on efficacy are indicative of engagement. Schaufeli and his colleagues partly agree with Maslach and Leiter's (1997) description, but take a different perspective and define and operationalise work engagement in its own right. Schaufeli et al. (2002a) consider burnout and engagement to be opposite concepts that should be measured independently with different instruments. Furthermore, burnout and work engagement may be considered two prototypes of employee well-being that are part of a more comprehensive taxonomy constituted by the two independent dimensions

of pleasure and activation (Watson & Tellegen, 1985). Activation ranges from exhaustion to vigour, while identification ranges from cynicism to dedication. According to this framework, burnout is characterised by a combination of exhaustion (low activation) and cynicism (low identification), whereas work engagement is characterised by vigour (high activation) and dedication (high identification). Maslach and Leiter (1997) suggest that the three dimensions of burnout have a bipolar character and that burnout and work engagement will show strong negative correlations. However, it is noted that a positive concept is measured by negative items (i.e. regarding exhaustion and cynicism).

Although Schaufeli and Bakker (2001) also regard burnout and work engagement as opposites, they believe that the two concepts should be measured independently. This makes it possible to investigate the relationship between burnout and work engagement empirically. Schaufeli and Bakker (2002) state that “feeling emotionally drained from one’s work ‘once a week’ does by no means exclude that in the same week one might feel bursting with energy”. According to Schaufeli and Bakker (2001), two dimensions of work engagement are logically related to burnout, namely vigour (exhaustion) and dedication (cynicism). Vigour refers to the activation dimension of well-being, while dedication refers to identification with work. However, absorption and professional efficacy seem to be less related than the other dimensions, but both dimensions might also be regarded as components of work engagement. Schaufeli and Bakker (2002) found that burnout and work engagement are negatively related, sharing between 10% and 25% of their variance. Storm (2002) reported a canonical correlation of 0.51 between burnout and work engagement. A moderately negative correlation ($r = -0.42$) was found between cynicism and dedication. Vigour correlated negatively with exhaustion ($r = -0.28$).

3.3 THE UTRECHT WORK ENGAGEMENT MODEL

The most often used scientifically derived measure of work engagement is the UWES (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010; Schaufeli, et al., 2002a, pp. 71–92). This model was developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002a). This instrument emerged after burnout researchers had become exhausted with their exclusive preoccupation with negative and illness-perpetuating results. They sought to find the positive, an antithesis of

burnout (Schaufeli et al., 2002a), that would focus on human strengths and optimal functioning instead of weakness and malfunctioning (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). This culminated in the construction of the UWES. Initially, the scale consisted of 24 items, but after much psychometric evaluation, seven unsound items were eliminated (Schaufeli et al., 2006). The scale measures the three dimensions of work engagement, namely vigour, dedication and absorption. The self-report questionnaire requires respondents to make a choice from a seven-point frequency rating scale that varies from 0 (never) to 6 (always). The alpha coefficients for the three subscales varied between 0.68 and 0.91. The reliability and factorial validity of the UWES have been proven to be effective (Schaufeli et al., 2002a, pp. 464–481; Schaufeli, et al., 2002b, pp. 71–92.) The instrument was developed in Spanish and English (Schaufeli et al., 2002b). Currently, the scale can be downloaded in several other languages (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Interest from many researchers who focus on positive psychology and psychological well-being, together with the general shift towards strength and health, has made the UWES an accepted psychometric tool that continues to enjoy much attention in academic research (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Strümpfer, 1995; Wissing & Van Eeden, 2002).

The rationale for the instrument is that it reflects the respondent's engagement to the organisation through scientifically formulated questions that indicate levels of vigour, dedication and absorption. As indicated previously, engaged workers are more likely to reflect higher levels of vigour and dedication and are immersed in their jobs (Storm & Rothmann, 2003). The instrument specifically seeks to reveal the positive, fulfilling, affective-cognitive work-related state of mind that is persistent and pervasive (Schaufeli et al., 2002b). The scale was chosen for this study because it reflects how people view, feel about and react to their jobs, and should therefore improve our understanding of employees' emotional and personal experience of their work. In comparison with sense of coherence and organisational commitment, this information is likely to reveal significant findings that will benefit the organisation through identifying levels of engagement, providing assistance where required, and aiming to improve and enhance it.

Contrary to individuals who suffer from burnout, engaged individuals characteristically have high levels of energy and an effective connection to work-

related activities and they believe in their ability to cope well with the demands of their jobs (Schaufeli et al., 2006). In terms of this, work engagement can be defined as a positive, fulfilling work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002b). This definition is not meant to refer to a momentary or specific state but is aimed at a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual or behaviour (Schaufeli et al., 2006).

The work engagement scale is therefore constructed to measure the following factors (Schaufeli et al., 2002b):

- Vigour is characterised by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, not being easily fatigued and persistence even in the face of difficulties.
- Dedication is characterised by deriving a sense of significance from one's work, and feeling inspired and challenged by it.
- Absorption is characterised by being totally and happily immersed in one's work and detaching oneself from difficulties. Time passes quickly and one forgets everything that is around one.

3.4 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF WORK ENGAGEMENT

In view of the foregoing, work engagement relates to the harnessing of organisation members' selves to their work roles in which they employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performance. Engaged employees become physically involved in their tasks, cognitively alert and emotionally connected to others when performing their job. In contrast, disengaged employees become disconnected from their jobs and hide their true identity, thoughts and feelings during role performance (Olivier & Rothmann, 2007; Markos & Sridevi, 2010). Organisational benefits gained from employee engagement have been known to include greater achievement of individual work goals or productivity (Schaufeli &

Bakker, 2004) and customer satisfaction and profitability. Engaged employees are typically characterised by the willingness to take the initiative and self-direct their lives; they generate their own positive feedback and so encourage themselves; they are also engaged outside of their employment; their values and norms are in agreement with those of the organisation for which they work; they do become fatigued, but this is intrinsically linked to an overall sense of satisfaction; they may also become "burnt out", but are able to extricate themselves from the situation; they are not enslaved to their job; and they tend to also pursue outside interests (Van den Berg et al., 2008; Halbesleben, 2010).

Work engagement helps individuals deal effectively with the demands of stressful work (Britt, Adler, & Bartone, 2001) and has been shown to be positively related to work commitment (Demerouti et al., 2001; Markos & Sridevi, 2010) and employee performance (Aktouf, 1992). Research by Van der Merwe, Basson, and Coetzee (2009) also suggests that employees employed on a temporary contract basis regard socially supportive networks and interactions with colleagues in the workplace as important motivational aspects. Exposure to a variety of job tasks and challenges that provide for the expression of one's creative abilities and allow one to develop the necessary skills may lead to higher job satisfaction and engagement for people in the exploration and establishment phases of their careers (Coetzee & Bergh, 2009). Corporations have shifted their focus towards work engagement (Philips, 2009). According to Austin (2009, cited in Philips, 2009), employees who are positively engaged tend to feel more positive about the future of the corporation and this has a positive impact on its future survival.

According to Rothmann et al. (2004), sense of coherence, which is a construct of salutogenesis, serves as a mediator between job stress and work engagement. Antonovsky (1979), who first coined the phrase salutogenesis, the parent concept of sense of coherence, suggested that there was something about the psychological state of certain individuals that made them flourish despite being constantly exposed to a stressful environment. According to Meisinger (2008), while it was enough of a challenge for corporations to find and keep employees who have the right skills, it was a different challenge to ensure that these individuals were engaged. Meisinger (2008) suggested that managers held the key to employee engagement, supported

by a new world engagement survey that showed that one out of every seven employees was fully engaged at work.

Perrin (2009) suggests that corporations have recognised that in order to ride the wave of difficult economic times, they need to ensure that employees are positively engaged with their work. He suggests that staff motivation schemes and incentives may not be enough to stimulate work engagement among employees and that there are in fact deeper underlying factors that determine an employee's level of work engagement. Perrin (2009) emphasises the importance of ensuring that employees remain engaged, particularly at a time when it is easy to dismiss an employee's level of engagement focus as a distraction, and that corporations should focus instead on what are considered to be more pressing business issues.

Antonovsky's (1979) salutogenic theory emphasised a focus on health promotion and disease prevention rather than the pathogenic origins of disease. While Antonovsky worked extensively in the medical field, studying the psychological behaviour of healthcare workers, researchers such as Strümpfer (1995), Strauser and Lustig (2003), Linley, Joseph, and Harrington, et al. (2006) have studied the salutogenic concept and its constructs focusing on various other sectors as well. The constructs of salutogenesis, which include sense of coherence (Antonovsky, 1987), learnt resourcefulness (Rosenbaum, 1980), locus of control (Rotter, 1975) and hardiness (Kobasa, 1982), are psychological resources that are available to individuals that ultimately determined their ability to engage with work and life challenges. According to Perrin (2009), managers in emerging market corporations need to clearly understand what the drivers of engagement are so that better, more effective, people-related decisions can be made. With this understanding, managers can make calculated decisions that result in a higher level of corporation commitment which, in turn, leads to a higher level of performance.

This research did not focus on profitability as an outcome of employee engagement but it is considered important to emphasise the observation that employee engagement drives bottom line results (Macey & Schneider, 2008). According to Thomas, Kelly, and Lillian (2006), who cite Judge and Bono (2001), Spector (1997) demonstrated that the relationship between locus of control and profitability has been

a slightly complex than what was later suggested by Macey and Schneider (2008), based on the fact that individuals with an internal locus of control have the tendency to leave their employers.

3.5 CONSEQUENCES OF WORK ENGAGEMENT

3.5.1 Motivational outcomes

Some studies have linked work engagement to better health, including healthy cardiac autonomic activity (Seppälä et al., 2012). One possible reason for a positive link between work engagement and health is that engaged workers are more inclined to engage in leisure activities that foster relaxation and psychological detachment from work, including sport and exercise, social activities and hobbies (Sonnentag et al., 2012; Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). However, most studies have focused on the motivational outcomes of work engagement (see also Albrecht, 2010).

The research evidence suggests that engaged employees experience more active, positive emotions than non-engaged employees. For example, Schaufeli and Van Rhenen (2006) found that engaged managers felt more inspired, energetic, cheerful and enthusiastic than non-engaged managers. Using a daily-diary design, Rodríguez-Muñoz et al. (2014) found that employees and their intimate partners at home were happier on the days the employees experienced high work engagement. Consistent with broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001), engaged workers seem to be more open to new experiences. They thus tend to explore their environments, becoming more creative. Indeed, Bakker and Xanthopoulou (2013) found that female school principals with higher levels of work engagement were rated by their teachers as more creative.

Engaged workers are also receptive to discovering novel lines of thought or action, which may result in higher active learning and proactive behaviour. As demonstrated by Bakker et al. (2012), work engagement is positively related to active learning, particularly for employees high in conscientiousness. Hence engaged employees are most willing to learn new things when they are also well organised, careful and hardworking. Furthermore, employees who are dedicated and enthusiastic about

their jobs are more likely to engage in proactive behaviours to keep those positive work situations and further improve them (Sonnentag, 2003). Specifically, in her diary study, Sonnentag (2003) found that daily work engagement was a significant predictor of daily personal initiative and daily pursuit of learning. Hakanen et al. (2012) went one step further by demonstrating a reciprocal, positive relationship between work engagement and personal initiative over time. More recently, Parker and colleagues proposed that work engagement, and the component of vigour in particular, broadens individuals' cognitive processes, stimulating several proactive behaviours such as job crafting (Parker et al., 2010; Parker & Griffin, 2011).

3.5.2 Job-related outcomes

On the basis of previous literature, Bakker (2009b) proposed that engaged employees perform better because (1) they experience positive emotions, which help them to look for new ideas and build resources; (2) they have better health, so they can devote all energy to their jobs; (3) they look for feedback and support in order to create new resources; and (4) they have the ability to transmit their engagement to colleagues, increasing team performance.

Evidence of the relationship between work engagement and performance was found in a study by Halbesleben and Wheeler (2008). These authors, working with a sample of 587 employees, found that work engagement at time 1 predicted not only higher self-reported in-role performance two months later, but also higher supervisor-rated and co-worker-rated in-role performance. Similar results have been found for extra-role performance. Seventeen supervisors rated nurses' extra-role performance ($N = 280$) working in different services in a Portuguese hospital (Salanova et al., 2011). Nurses were asked about their supervisors' transformational leadership as well. The results revealed that supervisors' transformational leadership was positively related to nurses' work engagement. Consequently, the supervisors provided higher ratings of extra-role performance. As proposed by Fredrickson, positive emotions are vehicles for social connection, making it more likely for an employee to approach people. This explains some differences between engaged and disengaged employees regarding extra-role behaviours. For instance, Bakker et al. (2004) demonstrated that engaged employees were more likely to show

organisational citizenship behaviours (as reported by their colleagues).

As noted by Demerouti and Cropanzano (2010), work engagement (and particularly vigour) enables employees to move on from thought to action, so that they achieve better performance. Moreover, in addition to searching for individual growth, engaged employees show higher levels of extra-role performance, that is, actions that go beyond their own job tasks and are beneficial for the organisation as a whole. In-role behaviours seem to be more adequately predicted by well-being indicators, such as exhaustion, that have to do with whether individuals can perform (Demerouti & Bakker, 2006). By contrast, extra-role performance seems to be better predicted by whether an individual is willing to perform (i.e. work engagement).

In a similar vein, Christian et al. (2011) suggest that engaged employees are likely to perform behaviours that help the social context of the organisation (i.e. organisational citizenship behaviours) because they are able to free up resources by performing their tasks efficiently, enabling them to pursue activities that are not part of their job descriptions. Specifically, these authors found that work engagement predicted both task (in-role) and contextual (extra-role) performance. The impact of work engagement on job performance has also been demonstrated using a weekly-diary study design (Bakker & Bal, 2010). As suggested by Bakker and Bal (2010), this approach may explain why even engaged employees have weeks during which they perform poorly.

Work engagement is a significant predictor of client satisfaction and organisational performance. Xanthopoulou et al. (2009), in their study of a fast-food company, found a positive relationship between daily work engagement and daily financial returns. Customer loyalty has also been considered as an objective outcome potentially related to work engagement. Findings support a positive relationship between work engagement and service climate, which in turn predicts customer loyalty (Salanova, Agut, & Peiro, 2005). Moreover, the literature suggests a positive relationship between employee work engagement and organisational performance. The meta-analysis conducted by Harter et al. (2002) showed that work engagement relates to higher profitability and customer satisfaction/loyalty. Given the substantial evidence linking engagement and positive organisational outcomes, Gruman and

Saks (2011) have suggested that in order to produce performance increments, management systems should foster employee work engagement.

3.6 THEORETICAL INTEGRATION OF BURNOUT AND WORK ENGAGEMENT

Burnout has been studied in many countries around the globe. The same, however, cannot be said of its antipode, work engagement, since theory development and research on engagement has only recently been introduced (cf. Schaufeli & Bakker, 2001, pp. 229-253; Maslach et al., 2001, pp. 397-422). Viewed from the positive perspective, the concept of burnout (which represents a negative psychological state) is supplemented and enlarged by its positive antithesis of work engagement (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 416). Burnout and work engagement are considered opposite concepts, with burnout described as the erosion of engagement that should be measured independently with different instruments (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Work engagement is characterised by efficacy, involvement and energy and burnout, being the direct opposite of work engagement is characterised by reduced professional efficacy, cynicism and exhaustion. Hence work engagement can theoretically be measured with the Maslach Burnout Inventory, with low scores on reduced personal efficacy, cynicism and exhaustion (Maslach & Leiter, 1997).

According to Maslach and Leiter (1997, p. 4), burnout energy turns into exhaustion, involvement turns into cynicism and efficacy turns into cynicism and ineffectiveness. They thus also assess work engagement by the opposite pattern of scores on the three MBI dimensions, low scores on exhaustion and cynicism and high scores on efficacy are indicative of engagement. In this regard, a study by Gonzalez-Roma et al. (2006, pp. 165–174) indicates that burnout and work engagement are indeed each other's opposite poles. More specifically, vigour and exhaustion span a continuum that is dubbed "energy", whereas dedication and cynicism similarly constitute the endpoints of a continuum that is labelled "identification". Hence work engagement is characterised by high levels of energy and identification, while burnout is characterised by low levels of energy and identification.

The theoretical rationale is that UWES work engagement is defined as the opposite

of burnout; and since burnout reflects both the incapacity (exhaustion) as well as the unwillingness (withdrawal) to perform at work (Schaufeli & Taris, 2005), it follows logically that work engagement is characterised by capability (energy or vigour) and willingness (involvement or dedication). Furthermore, empirical work seems to confirm the divergent role of the third dimension of work engagement, namely absorption (see Salanova, Llorens, & Cifre, 2003; Schaufeli, Taris, & Van Rhenen, 2008). The MBI should not be used as an alternative measure of work engagement. The point is that both questionnaires assume that burnout and work engagement are each other's perfect counterparts. This means that low scores on the MBI are considered to be equivalent with high scores on work engagement, and vice versa. From a psychological perspective, however, the assumption of a perfectly inverse relationship of burnout and work engagement is not feasible. In other words, not feeling burnt out does not necessarily mean that one feels engaged, and not feeling engaged does not necessarily mean that one is burnt out. In fact, engagement and burnout may co-occur, at least to some extent. Indeed, a recent meta-analysis showed that correlations between work engagement and burnout range from $-.24$ to $-.65$, depending on the dimensions involved (Halbesleben, 2010). Tellingly, this is much less than -1.0 , which would result when both were perfect counterparts. It follows that burnout and engagement should be measured independently, in the same way as for positive and negative affect (Segura & Gonzalez-Roma, 2003). When burnout and work engagement are assessed independently, intriguing research questions emerge which, by definition, cannot be investigated when both are assessed by the same instrument. For instance, do work engagement and burnout have different consequences and antecedents? Can the incremental validity of work engagement over and above burnout be demonstrated? The answer to both questions seems to be "yes", but that is another story (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2008; Schaufeli, 2009).

Thus far, the downside of work engagement has been under-researched. One of the most promising avenues is the relationship between work engagement and burnout. Of course, this relationship can only be studied when both are measured independently. Given the very nature of work engagement, which is primarily characterised by energy and identification, it is plausible to assume that energy may become exhausted and identification may turn into cynicism. In other words, under

specific conditions, work engagement may lead to burnout, for instance, when the balance of give and take is disturbed. A series of studies from the social exchange perspective showed that, over time, a lack of reciprocity may lead to burnout (Schaufeli, 2006). That is, when employees invest large amounts of effort and personal resources in their jobs without receiving appropriate outcomes (e.g. appreciation, the possibility to learn and develop and fringe benefits) they experience a lack of reciprocity and may therefore burn out. Because engaged employees, by definition drive a lot of personal energies (physical, emotional, and mental) into their work role (Kahn, 1990), their balance of give and take is likely to be disturbed, which means that they are in danger of burning out. Hence longitudinal research, using a social exchange perspective may explain why and how work engagement may turn into burnout.

Schaufeli and Bakker (2004, pp. 293-315) assert that in light of the fact that burnout and work engagement are considered to be opposite concepts, they should therefore be measured independently with different instruments.

3.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter focused on the paradigmatic foundation of work engagement with reference to positive psychology. The conceptual foundation was a focal point with an in-depth discussion of the definition of work engagement. The facets of work engagement, vigour, dedication, absorption and identification were discussed in great detail. The work engagement model with reference to work engagement, commitment, job satisfaction/job involvement was discussed as well as work engagement in relation to burnout. The UWES was explained because it is the model that was utilised in this research. The practical implications of work engagement and the theoretical integration of burnout and work engagement concluded this chapter on work engagement.

Chapter 4 focuses on the empirical study of this research.

CHAPTER 4: EMPIRICAL STUDY

In this chapter, the research design will be discussed, starting with the determination and description of the population, followed by the justification for the psychometric batteries, administration, data processing, the formulation of hypotheses and the conclusion.

4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design, according to Tustin, Ligthelm, and Martins et al. (2005, p. 82), is the plan that is followed to realise the research objectives or hypotheses. The research design represents the master plan that specifies the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing the required information. The research design for this study involved a literature review and an empirical investigation to determine the relationship between burnout and work engagement. A cross-sectional survey design was used to describe the collected information on the population (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1997).

4.2 DETERMINATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION AND SAMPLE

4.2.1 Population

According to Zikmund (2003), the population has to be a group of individuals who share a set of common characteristics. The population selected for this research were employees working at the head office of a pharmaceutical distribution company in South Africa. The fundamental commonality was that they were all exposed to the same organisational culture and work and job stress on a day-to-day basis, which included pre-employment and random polygraphs. The nature and level of pressure that were placed on individuals differed, depending on the nature of their roles, but this did not impact on the study because of the nature of burnout and work engagement.

4.2.2 Sample

A saturation surveying sampling technique was developed using one pharmaceutical distribution company. According to Chipp, Goldman, and Kleyn (2007), saturation sampling is a viable surveying process for e-mail research where all possible respondents on a list can be contacted. It is important to note that while a saturation sampling technique was employed, the responses were random. Access to alternative corporations, particularly in distribution, was extremely difficult in these uncertain economic times. Corporations were concerned about allowing an outsider access to their employees for fear that their employees would be poached and fear of them divulging information that could compromise the companies' ability to maintain a competitive edge. The chosen corporation's head office population was significant and adequate in terms of the number of employees, which made attaining the research project objective more achievable. In the pre-test phase, the questionnaire was sent to employees in the distribution centre, and 35 responses were received. The unchanged questionnaire was then sent to all employees who were based at the corporation's head office in the distribution centre and who had been graded according to the corporation's grading system. In total, 204 responses were received.

Table 4.1: Distribution of sample according to gender

Gender group	N	Frequency (%)	Frequency cum. (%)
Female	142	69.61	69.61
Male	62	30.39	100.00
Total	204	100.00	

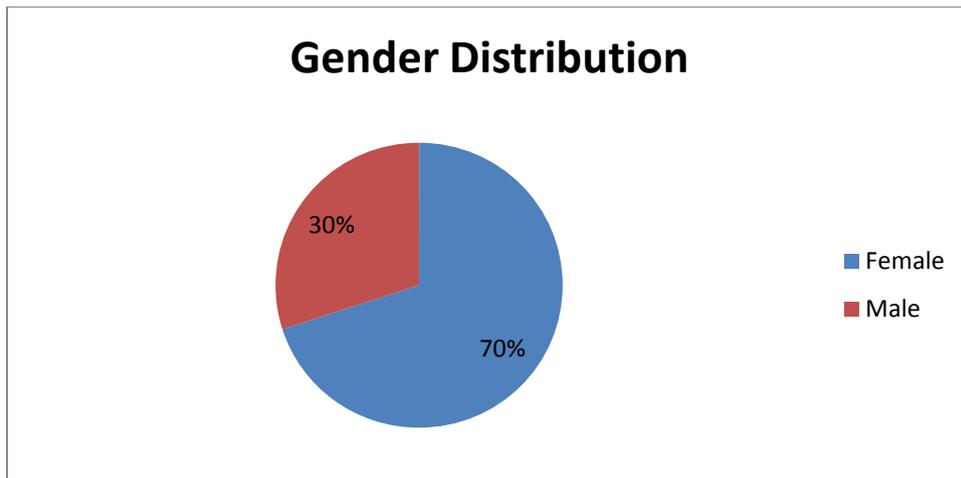


Figure 4.1: Gender distribution

The majority of the respondents were female at 69.61%.

Table 4.2: Distribution of sample according to race

Race	N	Frequency (%)	Frequency cum. (%)
African	116	56.98	56.86
Coloured	50	24.51	81.37
Indian	21	10.3	91.71
White	17	8.33	100.00
Total	204	100.00	

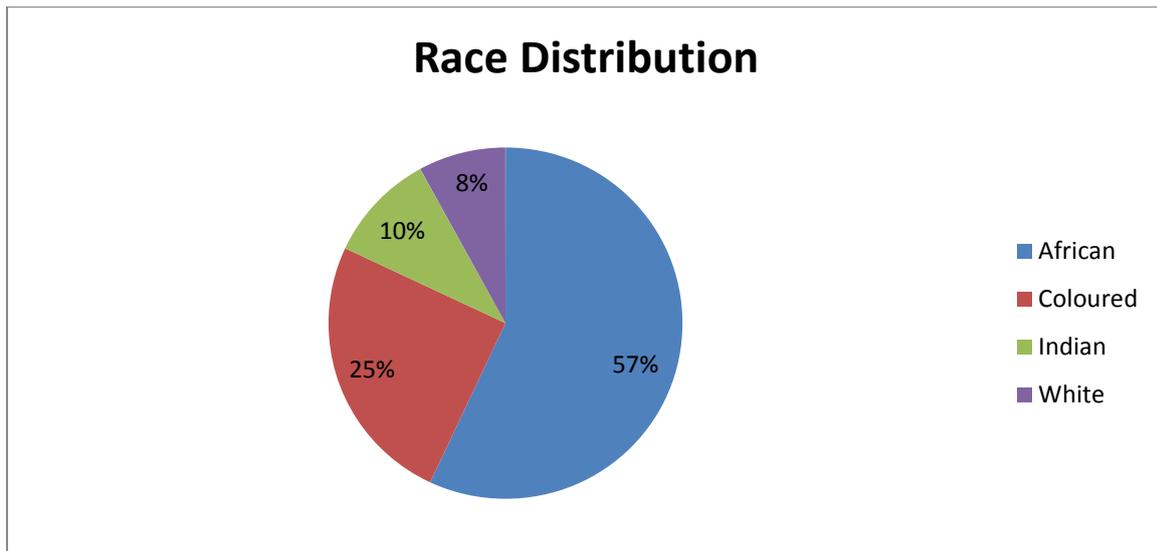


Figure 4.2: Race distribution

The majority of the respondents were African (56.86%).

Table 4.3: Distribution of sample according to age category

Age	N	Frequency (%)	Frequency cum. (%)
20 to 29 years	135	66.18	66.18
30 to 39 years	32	15.69	81.87
40 to 49 years	27	13.23	95.1
50 to 59 years	10	4.9	100.00
Total	204	100.00	

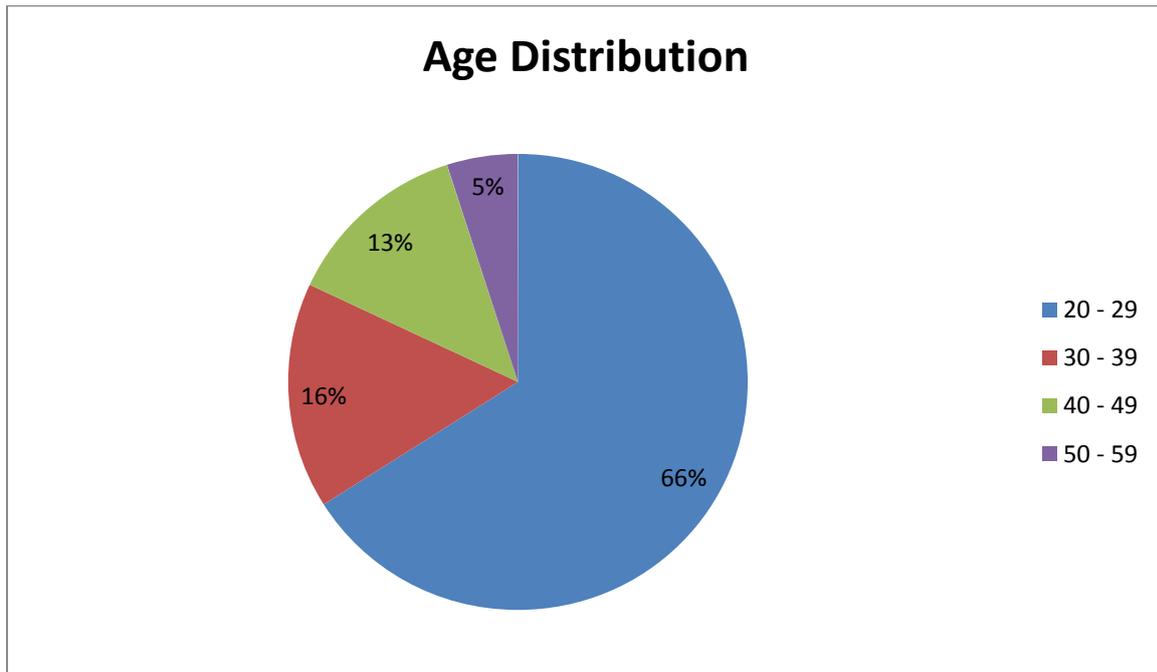


Figure 4.3: Age distribution

The majority of the respondents were from the younger age groups (65.68%).

4.3 CHOOSING AND JUSTIFYING THE PSYCHOMETRIC BATTERY

The questionnaires used were anchored in the seven-point Likert, UWES (Schaufeli & Bakker 2003) and the MBI-GS (Schaufeli, Leiter, Maslach et al., 1996).

Balnaves and Caputi (2001) describe questionnaires as the “ambassador” for the research project, emphasising the importance of ensuring that the questions do not make respondents feel that they are in any way unprotected.

According to Zikmund (2003), the questionnaire must be relevant, which means that no unnecessary information should be collected, and the questionnaire should also be accurate, meaning that the information should be reliable and valid. This is supported by Balnaves and Caputi (2001) who emphasise that well-formatted valid questions improve the probability of eliciting accurate responses. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), the questions should be relevant to most respondents. This was carefully considered when choosing the relevant questionnaires, namely

the UWES (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003) and the MBI-GS (Schaufeli et al., 1996), which were used in the current research. The questionnaires were highly recommended for engagement and burnout surveys to provide the requirements of reliability, validity and relevance. Permission was obtained to utilise the two above-mentioned measuring instruments in this research.

4.3.1 The MBI-GS

The MBI (Maslach & Jackson, 1986) was used to measure burnout. The development, rationale, aim, dimensions, administration, interpretation, reliability, validity and justification for the use of this measuring instrument will be discussed in the next section.

4.3.1.1 Theoretical basis for the development of the MBI-GS

The MBI was introduced in the early 1980s (Maslach & Jackson, 1981a; 1981b). The second edition of the test manual was published five years later (Maslach & Jackson, 1986), while the third edition appeared a few years later (Maslach et al., 1996). To date, the MBI is almost universally used as the instrument to assess burnout. The development of this version of the MBI took eight years. The original MBI developed to measure the hypothetical aspects of burnout defined as a three-factor syndrome, compromised emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment. According to Maslach et al. (1996), it was designed to measure the burnout experienced by health professionals. The first inventory consisted of 47 items, with two response formats, namely frequency and intensity of feelings. It was scored on a seven-point Likert-type scale.

A second edition of the test was published five years later (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). After a factor analysis, ten factors accounted for three-quarters of the variance. Selection criteria were applied and as a result the second edition consisted of a 25-item inventory. The number of items was then reduced, based on their ability to meet the criteria for skewness and kurtosis, through a series of regression analyses and factor analyses to the current 16 items.

According to Maslach et al. (1996), the human service survey was designed for individuals employed in a wide variety of human service professions such as healthcare, social services, mental health and criminal services. The general survey was designed for individuals in occupations where there is no direct personal contact with service recipients or with only casual contact with people, which prompted the development of the MBI-GS instrument.

A multicultural base with the scales administered to samples in their native languages formed the basis of the research plan in the development of the MBI-GS. The third edition of the test was published in 1996 (Maslach et al., 1996). This latest edition includes, in addition to the traditional MBI – human services survey (MBI-HSS) and the MBI – educators survey, the MBI – general survey (MBI-GS). The MBI-GS can be used in any occupational context (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998) and includes three subdimensions, namely exhaustion, cynicism and reduced professional efficacy. These three subdimensions parallel those of the original MBI, except that the items do not explicitly refer to working with people (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).

Maslach et al. (1996) indicated that this instrument was also tested with diverse populations, thus creating an opportunity to assess the robustness of the differentiation between the factors across settings, occupational groups and countries.

The three-factor structure of the MBI-GS was confirmed by means of a confirmatory factor analysis. This indicated that it was applicable to a wide range of occupations such as managers, clerical and maintenance workers, technologists, therapists and nurses (Maslach et al., 1996).

4.3.1.2 Rationale for the MBI-GS

The MBI is almost universally used as the instrument of choice to assess burnout (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Of 498 publications, in which one of the three most prominent burnout instruments was used, 93% referred to the MBI, according to Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998).

The MBI was thus chosen for this study to measure burnout in the sample of pharmaceutical distribution staff. It was chosen for its (1) conceptual congruence to the definition of burnout that would be used in the literature study, and (2) acceptable psychometric qualities provided in the literature (Cilliers, 2002).

Since the subjects in this research project were defined as employees in a pharmaceutical distribution company, the respondents included team leaders and supervisors. The MBI-GS was therefore chosen because it can be used in any occupational context (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1989). Various studies have found the MBI-GS to be an acceptable instrument to use in the South African context.

4.3.1.3 Scales of the MBI-GS

The MBI is designed to assess the following three aspects of the burnout syndrome (a separate subscale measures each aspect):

- (1) Emotional exhaustion is a reduction in emotional resources and feeling drained and used up. The emotional exhaustion subscale assesses feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).
- (2) Depersonalisation is the increase of negative, cynical and insensitive attitudes towards work, colleagues, clients and/or patients. The depersonalisation subscale measures an unfeeling and impersonal response towards recipients of one's service, care, treatment or instruction (Rothmann, 2002).
- (3) Lack of personal accomplishment is a feeling of being unable to meet other's needs and to satisfy essential elements of job performance. The personal accomplishment subscale assesses feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work with people (Rothmann, 2002).

The frequency in terms of which the respondent experiences feelings relating to each subscale is assessed using a six-point, fully anchored response format. Burnout is conceptualised as a continuous variable, ranging from low to moderate to high degrees of experienced feeling. It is not viewed as a dichotomous variable which is either present or absent (Cilliers, 2002).

4.3.1.4 Administration of the MBI-GS

The MBI takes about ten to 15 minutes to complete, and full instructions are provided for the respondent. The testing session should be characterised by respondent privacy, respondent confidentiality and avoidance of sensitisation to burnout. It can be conducted individually or in a group session in which privacy is ensured (Maslach et al., 1996). The examiner should not be a supervisor or manager who has some direct authority over the respondents. The examiner should request that respondents answer all the questions, because this is crucial to the scoring of the instrument (Fourie, 2005).

The MBI scores for a group of respondents may be treated as aggregate data. Means and standard deviations for each subscale are computed for the entire group. The MBI scores can be correlated with other information obtained from the respondent, such as demographic data, job characteristics, job performance, personality or attitude measures and health information. The factors that best predict MBI scores can be assessed by multiple regression techniques.

4.3.1.5 Scoring and interpretation of the MBI-GS

A high degree of burnout is reflected in high scores on the emotional exhaustion (EE) and depersonalisation (DP) subscales and in low scores on the personal accomplishment (PA) subscale. An average degree of burnout is reflected in average scores on the three subscales. A low degree of burnout is reflected in low scores on the emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation subscales and in high scores on the personal accomplishments subscale.

Scores are considered high if they are in the upper third of the normative distribution, average if they are in the middle and low if they are in the lower third. Furthermore, given the limited knowledge about the relationships between the three aspects of burnout, the scores for each subscale are considered separately and are not combined into a single, total score. Hence three scores are computed for each respondent.

Whatever statistical analyses are performed with the MBI, it is strongly recommended that the original numerical scores be used instead of the categorisations of low, average and high. The power of statistical analysis is greatly enhanced by using the full range of scores. The coding itself is intended primarily as feedback for individual respondents. It enables each respondent to compare himself or herself to the overall norm and to perceive various aspects of burnout. However, neither the coding nor the original numerical scores should be used for diagnostic purposes and there is insufficient research on the pattern(s) of scores as indicators of individual dysfunction or the need for intervention (Maslach et al., 1996).

4.3.1.6 Reliability and validity of the MBI-GS

Internal validity was estimated by the Cronbach coefficient alpha (N = 1316). The reliability coefficients and standard error of measurement for the subscales were the following: emotional exhaustion 0.90 and standard error 3.16; personal accomplishment 0.71 and standard error 3.73; and depersonalisation 0.79. The test-retest reliability coefficients for the subscales of the MBI are as follows: 0.82 (frequency) for emotional exhaustion; 0.60 (frequency) for depersonalisation; and 0.80 (frequency) for personal accomplishment. Finally, all values are significant beyond the 0.001 level (Maslach & Jackson, 1981a).

4.3.1.7 Justification for the selection of the MBI-GS

The MBI is the most widely used and well-validated self-report questionnaire on burnout. Because the development of the MBI was based on the need for an instrument to assess burnout as experienced by a wide range of human service workers, it was deemed applicable to employees in the pharmaceutical distribution company, where staff have to deal with pharmaceutical products and the possibility of having to undergo polygraph testing if there is any suspicion of theft of pharmaceutical products. Its inclusion in the measuring battery promotes a better understanding of the personal, social and institutional variables that either promote or reduce the occurrence of burnout. In addition to the significance of this knowledge for theories of emotion and of job stress, such information will have the practical benefit of suggesting modifications in recruitment, training and job design that may

alleviate this serious problem (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

4.3.2 The UWES

The development, rationale, aim, dimensions, administration, interpretation, reliability, validity and justification for the use of this measuring instrument will be discussed in the next section.

4.3.2.1 Theoretical basis for the development of the UWES

The UWES was developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002a). This instrument emerged after burnout researchers had become exhausted with their exclusive preoccupation with negative and illness-perpetuating results. They endeavoured to find the positive antithesis of burnout (Schaufeli et al., 2002b) that would focus on human strengths and optimal functioning instead of weakness and malfunctioning (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). This culminated in the construction of the UWES. Initially, the scale consisted of 24 items, but after much psychometric evaluation, seven unsound items were eliminated (Schaufeli et al., 2006). The scale measures the three dimensions of work engagement, namely vigour, dedication and absorption. The self-report questionnaire requires respondents to make a choice from a seven-point frequency rating scale that varies from 0 (never) to 6 (always). The instrument was developed in Spanish and English (Schaufeli et al., 2002b). Currently, the scale can be downloaded in several other languages (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Interest from many researchers who focus on positive psychology and psychological well-being, together with the general shift towards strength and health, has made the UWES an accepted psychometric tool that continues to enjoy much attention in academic research (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Strumpfer, 1995; Wissing & Van Eeden, 2002).

4.3.2.2 Rationale for the UWES

The rationale for the instrument is that it reflects the respondent's engagement with the organisation through scientifically formulated questions that indicate levels of vigour, dedication and absorption. As indicated previously, engaged workers are

more likely to reflect higher levels of vigour and dedication and are immersed in their jobs (Storm & Rothmann, 2003a; 2003b). The instrument specifically seeks to reveal the positive, fulfilling, affective-cognitive work-related state of mind that is persistent and pervasive (Schaufeli et al., 2002b). The scale was chosen for this study because it reflects how people view, feel about and react to their jobs and will therefore improve one's understanding of employees' emotional and personal experience of their work. In comparison with sense of coherence and organisational commitment, this information is likely to reveal significant findings that will benefit the organisation through identifying levels of engagement, providing assistance where required, and aiming to improve and enhance it.

4.3.2.3 Scales of the UWES

In contrast to individuals who suffer from burnout, engaged individuals characteristically have high levels of energy and an effective connection to work-related activities and they believe in their ability to cope well with the demands of their jobs (Schaufeli et al., 2006). In terms of this, work engagement can be defined as a positive, fulfilling work-related state of mind characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002b). This definition is not meant to refer to a momentary or specific state, but is aimed at a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual or behaviour (Schaufeli et al., 2006).

The work engagement scale is therefore constructed to measure the following (Schaufeli et al., 2002b):

- Vigour is characterised by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, not being easily fatigued and persistence, even in the face of difficulties.
- Dedication is characterised by deriving a sense of significance from one's work, and feeling inspired and challenged by it.

- Absorption is characterised by being totally and happily immersed in one's work and detaching oneself from difficulties. Time passes quickly and one forgets everything that is around one.

The aim of the UWES in this study was to measure levels of vigour, dedication and absorption in order to provide a comprehensive score of work engagement and to make comparisons between this score and burnout.

4.3.2.4 Administration of the UWES

The UWES is a self-report questionnaire that can be administered in groups or individually (Schaufeli et al., 2006). It takes approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete and has no time limit. The total score is the sum of the three subscales and the work engagement score is represented by a single figure. The testing session should be characterised by respondent confidentiality and avoidance of sensation to engagement. It can be conducted individually or in a group session in which privacy is ensured. The examiner should not be a supervisor or manager who has some direct authority over the respondents. The examiner should request that respondents answer all the questions, because this is crucial to the scoring of the instrument (Fourie, 2005).

4.3.2.5 Scoring and interpretation of the UWES

The total score indicates the individual's level of work engagement. The highest possible score is 102. The mean scale score of the three UWES subscales is computed by adding the scores on the particular scale and dividing the sum by the number of items of the subscale involved. A similar procedure is followed for the total score. Hence the UWES yields three subscale scores and/or a total score ranging between 1 and 6. The three concepts of vigour, dedication and absorption provide a profile of the respondent's level of work engagement. Respondents with high scores have high levels of work engagement, while respondents with low scores have low levels of work engagement (Storm & Rothmann, 2003).

Employees who score high on vigour have much energy and stamina when working, whereas those who score low have less energy as far as their work is concerned. However, those who score high on dedication are likely to be enthusiastic, inspired and proud of their work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). By contrast, employees who score low do not identify themselves with their work, because they do not see it as meaningful, inspiring or challenging. Moreover, they feel neither enthusiastic about nor proud of their work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003).

Those who score high on absorption feel that they are usually happily engrossed in their work, they feel immersed in their work and have difficulties detaching from it, because it carries them away. As a consequence, everything else around them is forgotten and time seems to fly. Those who score low on absorption do not feel engrossed or immersed in their work, they have no difficulty detaching from it and they do not forget everything around them, including time (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003).

4.3.2.6 Reliability and validity of the UWES

The UWES has good internal consistency and test-retest reliability (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Schaufeli et al. (2002b) found Cronbach coefficients of 0.68 (sample 1) and 0.91 (sample 2) for vigour; 0.91 for dedication (both samples 1 and 2); and 0.73 (sample 1) and 0.75 (sample 2) for absorption. South African studies have also shown internally consistent Cronbach alphas ranging from 0.65 to 0.79 for vigour; from 0.77 to 0.85 for dedication; and from 0.65 to 0.73 for absorption (Coetzer & Rothmann, 2007). Storm and Rothmann (2003) found alpha coefficients for the three subscales to be between 0.68 and 0.91.

The factorial validity of the UWES was confirmed in a cross-cultural study of students in Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands (Schaufeli et al., 2002a). Other recent studies have also confirmed the factorial validity of the instrument (Schaufeli et al., 2002b; Coetzer & Rothmann, 2007). Storm and Rothmann's (2003) study in the South African Police Service showed that the instrument can be used across different cultures and race groups.

4.3.2.7 Justification for the selection of the UWES

Work engagement is a construct that comprises three concepts, namely vigour (e.g. “I am bursting with energy in my work”), dedication (e.g. “I find my work full of meaning and purpose”) and absorption (e.g. “When I am working, I forget everything around me”) (Bosman et al., 2005b, p. 51). High levels of vigour, dedication and absorption are indicative of work engagement. Since this questionnaire was developed from a need to emphasise psychological well-being, mental health and optimal functioning, it was constructed to assess respondent’s feelings and reactions from this perspective. In addition, the UWES complements the orientation to life scale, because it was also developed against the backdrop of positive psychology. Although Maslach and Leiter (1997) purported that work engagement can be adequately measured by the opposite profile of the MBI scores, it should be remembered that the measurement and structures of both these concepts differ.

The UWES was deemed the best choice for this study because it adequately measures a wide variety of relevant work-related experiences. It provides evidence of cross-cultural applicability (Schaufeli et al., 2002a; Schaufeli et al., 2002b) in both international and South African conditions (Storm & Rothmann, 2003; Bosman et al., 2005b). It is also an instrument that has been rigorously and empirically tested and has proven reliability and validity.

4.3.3 The biographical questionnaire

A biographical questionnaire was constructed and administered to gather information on participant gender, race, age and occupational level. The biographical constitution of the samples was indicated in section 4.2.2.

4.3.4 Limitations of the psychometric battery

The UWES and MBI-GS self-report measures were exclusively relied upon. This poses a particular problem in validation studies that use self-report measures exclusively, because at least part of the common variance of the measures has to be attributed to method variance (Schaufeli, Maslach, & Marek, 1993). According to

Maslach et al. (1996), the MBI-GS does not focus primarily on the service relationship, but on the performance of the work in general. It measures a crisis in one's relationship with work and not necessarily a crisis in one's relationship with people at work (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). It measures the respondents' relationships with their work on a continuum from work engagement to burnout (Fourie, 2005).

4.3.5 Ethical issues

The Employment Equity Act of 1998 prohibits psychometric testing and other similar assessments of an employee unless the test or assessment being used has been scientifically shown to be valid and reliable, can be applied fairly to employees and is not biased against any employee or group (<http://www.labour.gov.za/docs/legislation/eea/act98-055.html>). Reliability and validity, from a legal and moral perspective, are therefore factors requiring attention when considering an instrument for the measurement of any construct (Jackson, 2004).

All research conducted on the internet must conform to the rules and spirit of the International Code of Marketing and Social Research Practice, as well as to all relevant legislation such as data protection (SAMRA, 2006).

This research was conducted confidentially, respecting the individual rights of the respondents. No personally identifiable information was used for any purpose.

- Precautions were taken to protect the security of sensitive data. No confidential information was made available to any other person or institution.
- Biographical data were collected for the purpose of making psychometric deductions and comparisons possible. All biographical data were treated in the strictest confidence and the anonymity of the participants was protected. The researcher had no intention of identifying various respondents or publishing their names or personal information.

- Data collected in this regard were used purely to describe the nature and compilation of the sample group.

4.4 ADMINISTRATION OF THE PSYCHOMETRIC BATTERY

A survey was conducted using questionnaires which were given to employees to complete and return within one week of distribution, which was a convenient survey vehicle to use, especially since all the respondents returned the completed surveys within one week of distribution. Since this was a paper-based survey, costs were incurred in the printing of the two questionnaires handed to each of the 204 employees. However, even though there was a cost for the paper utilised, one page was given to each employee, one side reflecting the UWES questionnaire and the other side reflecting the MBI-SG. Zikmund's (2003) view is supported by Balnaves and Caputi (2001) who state that questionnaires are cost effective and relatively quick. Zikmund (2003) suggests that a brief covering letter explaining who is conducting the survey and why it is being conducted should be sent with the questionnaire to limit chances of non-response errors occurring. This was done for this research. A short deadline was set to encourage an immediate response, instead of allowing a longer response time which may have fostered procrastination. A second deadline was planned once the initial deadline had elapsed if the number of responses was inadequate to achieve the research objective. Extra time was built into the research timeline, based on the theory of constraint which suggests that in a distribution or any other process a time buffer should always be allocated to areas that have a high constraint risk (Goldratt, 2014).

4.5 STATISTICAL DATA PROCESSING

4.5.1 Descriptive statistics

According to Zikmund (2003), descriptive analysis is the raw data in a form that would be easy to understand, interpret, rearrange, order and manipulate to provide descriptive information. Babbie and Mouton (2001) state that descriptive statistics is a method for presenting quantitative descriptions in a manageable form. The measure that was used, according to Zikmund (2003), arranged objects or

alternatives according to their magnitude in an ordered relationship. The seven-point Likert UWES (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003) and the MBI-GS (Schaufeli et al., 1996) were used for the purpose of this survey, which had ratings from zero, which represented a response of never, and from one to six which represented a response of frequency.

4.5.2 Internal consistency reliability analysis of the MBI-GS and UWES

In order to test the internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaires, Cronbach alphas were calculated for each of the combinations of questions used in the research. Cronbach alphas were therefore calculated for the following constructs/subconstructs:

- burnout: exhaustion, professional efficacy and cynicism
- work engagement: vigour, dedication and absorption

In this study, a Cronbach alpha value of 0.7 was used as a measure of good internal consistency. If any of the constructs or subconstructs provided a Cronbach alpha value of less than 0.7, the questions with the lowest reliability were removed in order to improve consistency.

4.5.3 Correlation analysis

Simple correlation analysis indicates the relationship of one variable to another, by calculating a simple correlation coefficient. High positive values indicate positive linear relationships, while high negative values indicate negative linear relationships. A value close to zero indicates the lack of a linear relationship (Zikmund, 2003). In this study, correlations were used to test the hypotheses.

4.5.4 Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient

The Pearson product-moment correlation is symbolised by the small letter (r) and used to calculate the direction and strength of the relationship between variables. This coefficient indicates the strength and direction of the correlations between item scores on the various scales (Tredoux & Durrheim, 2006). The relationship between variables can be positive correlation (a change in one variable leads to a similar change in the other variable) and negative correlation (a change in one variable leads to the opposite change in the other variables) (Tredoux & Durrheim, 2006).

The product-moment correlation coefficient varies between -1.00 and + 1.00. The closer the value of a correlation coefficient is to -1.00 (negative correlation) or to + 1.00 (positive correlation), the more accurate the prediction is that one variable relates to the other (Tredoux & Durrheim, 2006). A cut-off of 0.30, medium effect (Cohen, 1988), is set for the practically significant correlation coefficient, and in addition, values exceeding 0.50 denote large effect. In this study, the Pearson product-moment correlation was used to test the hypotheses regarding the positive or negative relationships that exist between the scores on the MBI or UWES.

4.5.5 Inferential statistics

According to Zikmund (2003), inferential statistics is used to make inferences about a population from a sample. This allows one to generalise from the sample to the population. The inferential tests explained below were used to make inferences on the various hypotheses tested.

4.5.6 Stepwise multiple regressions

A stepwise multiple regression analysis was performed to determine if burnout variables acted as predictors of work engagement. A stepwise multiple linear regression analysis (r^2) was used to determine the proportion of the total variance of one variable that is explained by another variable. According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2004), multiple regression analysis is one of the most commonly used multivariate methods used to study the separate and collective contributions of several independent variables to the variance of a dependent variable. In essence, a stepwise multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine whether

burnout variables as the independent variables could predict work engagement as the dependent variable.

4.5.7 Test of differences between mean scores (Mann-Whitney U test)

For the purposes of this study, the Mann-Whitney U test (for non-parametric data) was conducted to identify significant difference between age and gender and burnout and work engagement variables. The logic behind the Mann-Whitney U test is to rank the data for each condition and then see how different the two rank totals are (Tredoux & Durrheim, 2013). If there is a systematic difference between the two conditions, then most of the high ranks belong to one condition and the low ranks belong to the other. The Mann-Whitney test statistic U reflects the difference between two rank totals (Tredoux & Durrheim, 2013).

Research hypothesis Ha3 was tested by conducting a Mann-Whitney U test.

4.5.8 Statistical significance

The significance level is a critical probability of deciding whether the null or alternative hypothesis is supported (Zikmund, 2003). It is the inverse of the confidence level. In this study, significance levels of 0.05 and 0.1 (confidence levels of 95% and 90%) were used.

4.6 FORMULATION OF THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Based on the research problem indicated in chapter 1 and the above discussion, the following research hypotheses were proposed:

H01: There is no statistically significant positive interrelationship between work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption) and burnout (exhaustion, professional efficacy and cynicism).

Ha2: There is a statistically significant positive interrelationship between work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption) and burnout (exhaustion,

professional efficacy and cynicism).

H02: The variable burnout (exhaustion and professional efficacy and cynicism) does not positively and significantly predict work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption).

Ha2: The variable burnout (exhaustion and professional efficacy and cynicism) positively and significantly predicts work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption).

H03: Individuals from various biographical groups (age and gender) do not differ significantly with regard to work engagement and burnout variables.

Ha3: Individuals from various biographical groups (age and gender) do differ significantly with regard to work engagement and burnout variables.

These hypotheses were tested by analysing the relationship, predictiveness and differences between each variable under investigation.

4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter introduced the empirical phase of the research study and focused on the determination and description of the population and sample. The chosen psychometric battery, with the emphasis on the MBI-GS, which is used to measure burnout, and the UWES, which was used to measure work engagement, was discussed in detail. The chapter further explored the biographical questionnaire, limitations of the psychometric battery and ethical issues pertaining to psychometric testing. Administration of the psychometric battery was explained and the statistical data processing with reference to the descriptive statistics, internal consistency reliability analysis of the psychometric battery and the inferential statistics was explored. The chapter concluded with the formulation of the hypotheses for this study.

In **chapter 5**, the results of the empirical study are reported and discussed.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter focuses on the results of the empirical research. It first explains the means and standard deviations, after which the empirical relationship between the variables of concern to this study is analysed. The results of the regressions and differences between the biographical groups on these variables are then discussed. In conclusion, decisions pertaining to the acceptance or rejection of the research hypotheses are made.

5.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The purpose of descriptive statistics is to describe sets of data. Cohen et al. (2011) indicate that descriptive statistics are more crucial in order to understand the common correlational and inferential statistics. Means and standard deviations are used for the purpose of this study.

5.1.1 Reporting of means and standard deviations

Table 5.1 below indicates that the mean scores ranged from 4.11 to 1.9. The sample of participants obtained the highest mean score on the MBI-GS's professional efficacy ($M = 4.11$; $SD = 7.58$) and the lowest on the exhaustion ($M = 2.04$; $SD = 5.55$) and cynicism ($M = 1.9$; $SD = 4.25$) variables.

Table 5.1
Descriptive statistics on the MBI-GS (N = 204)

	Mean	Std. deviation	Minimum	Maximum	α
Exhaustion	2.04	5.55	1.80	2.18	.96
Professional efficacy	4.11	7.58	3.84	4.21	.97
Cynicism	1.9	4.25	1.80	2.27	.95

The standard deviation for the MBI-GS dimensions ranged from 4.25 to 7.58. This indicates that most of the participants did not fall close to the mean score. Table 5.1

above also indicates that the Cronbach alpha for exhaustion, professional efficacy and cynicism was > .70 cut-off provided by Nunnally and Bernstein (2010).

5.1.2 Interpretation of means and standard deviations for the MBI-GS

In terms of the MBI-GS variables, the participants scored higher on professional efficacy than on exhaustion and cynicism. This indicates that the participants self-evaluate their behaviour and feel competent and productive at work. The participants' perception of exhaustion and cynicism were slightly lower, which implies that they are less depleted or drained of emotional resource, feel less overextended, experience less distress and demonstrate a low level of dysfunctional attitude at work. The participants also appear to experience less interpersonal behaviour that manifests as negative and callous, and are less detached from various aspects of their jobs. Individuals who work in a good, positive and collaborative work environment tend to be less detached from and less likely to exhibit dysfunctional attitudes at work (Rothmann, Steyn, & Mostert, 2005). Table 5.2 provides the statistics for the UWES.

Table 5.2: Descriptive statistics for the UWES (N = 204)

	Mean	Std. deviation	Minimum	Maximum	α
Vigour	4.13	7.58	4.02	4.45	.98
Dedication	4.15	6.36	4.07	4.27	.98
Absorption	4.12	7.63	3.84	4.35	.97

Table 5.2 shows that the mean scores ranged from 4.12 to 4.15. The sample of participants obtained high mean scores on the UWES dedication ($m = 4.15$; $SD = 6.36$), vigour ($m = 4.13$; $SD = 7.58$) and absorption ($m = 4.12$; $SD = 7.63$) variables. Table 5.1 above also indicates that the Cronbach alphas for vigour, dedication and absorption were > .70 cut-off provided by Nunnally and Bernstein (2010).

5.1.3 Interpretation of means and standards deviation for UWES

In terms of the UWES variables, the participants scored the highest on dedication,

vigour and absorption. This indicates that the participants feel more engaged, have high energy and mental resilience, and are enthusiastic and proud. They also appear to be completely absorbed in their jobs. Individuals who are vigorous, enthusiastic and proud are more likely to demonstrate a high level of engagement in their jobs (Schaufeli et al., 2006). This confirms the study by Sonnentag (2003) who indicates that employees who are dedicated and enthusiastic about their jobs are more likely to be energetic and concentrate on their work.

5.2 EXPLANATORY STATISTICS

The descriptive statistics discussed above will now be transformed into explanatory statistics. The explanatory practice is done in order to decide whether to accept or reject the relevant null hypothesis. The correlations between the burnout and work engagement variables were computed using the Pearson product-moment correlation in order to identify the direction and strength of the relationship between the construct under study. The significance level for interpreting findings was set at $p \leq .05$ and for practical significance a cut-off of $r \geq .50$ (large effect) was considered.

5.2.1 Reporting of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients for the dimensions of burnout (MBI-GS) and work engagement (UWES)

Table 5.3 below shows that the variables correlated significantly ($r \geq .91 \leq r \leq .98$; large practical effect; $p \leq .05$) and indicates negative correlation ($r \leq -.62 \leq r \leq -.66$; large effect; $p \leq .05$). Positive correlation was evident between UWES vigour and dedication ($r = .92$; large effect; $p \leq .05$) and between vigour and absorption ($r = .93$; large effect; $p \leq .05$). A positive correlation was also observed between the absorption and dedication ($r = .91$; large effect; $p \leq .05$) variables.

A positive correlation was evident between vigour and professional efficacy ($r = .96$; large effect; $p \leq .05$) and a negative correlation between vigour and exhaustion ($r = -.65$; large effect; $p \leq .05$). A negative correlation was also observed between the vigour and cynicism ($r = -.62$; large effect; $p \leq .05$) variables.

The results indicated a positive correlation between dedication and absorption ($r =$

.91; large effect; $p \leq .05$) and between the dedication and professional efficacy ($r = .98$; large effect; $p \leq .05$) variables. A negative correlation was observed between dedication and exhaustion ($r = -.62$; large effect; $p \leq .05$) and between the dedication and cynicism ($r = -.64$; large effect; $p \leq .05$) variables.

The results also indicated a positive correlation between absorption and professional efficacy ($r = .96$; large effect; $p \leq .05$) and a negative correlation between absorption and exhaustion ($r = -.68$; large effect; $p \leq .05$) and between the absorption and cynicism ($r = -.64$; large effect; $p \leq .05$) variables. Furthermore, they showed a positive correlation between exhaustion and cynicism ($r = .92$; large effect; $p \leq .05$) and a negative correlation between the exhaustion and professional efficacy ($r = -.66$) variables. A negative correlation was also evident between the cynicism and professional efficacy ($r = -.92$; large effect; $p \leq .05$) variables.

Table 5.3: Pearson product-moment intercorrelation analysis between MBI-GS and UWES dimensions (N = 204)

Variables	UWES vigour	UWES dedication	UWES absorption	MBI-GS exhaustion	MBI-GS cynicism	MBI-GS professional efficacy
UWES vigour	1					
UWES dedication	.92***	1				
UWES absorption	.93***	.91***	1			
MBI-GS exhaustion	-.65***	-.62***	-.68	1		
MBI-GS cynicism	-.62***	-.64***	-.64	.92	1	
MBI-GS professional efficacy	.96***	.98***	.96***	-.66***	-.92***	1

Notes: N = 204. *** $p \leq .001$, ** $p \leq .01$, * $p \leq .05$.

5.2.2 Interpretation of the Pearson product-moment correlation of work engagement (UWES) and burnout (MBI-GS)

According to table 5.4, a significant and large correlation between vigour and dedication indicated that the participants who score high in vigour will also score high in dedication. This implies that employees who are energetic, resilient and willing to invest effort in their work and who are persistent in adverse situations tend to be enthusiastic, inspired and proud. The results also indicated a significant and large correlation between vigour and absorption. This implies that participants who are energetic and resilient in their work tend to be happily engrossed and absorbed in their work. Individuals who are energetic, vigorous and enthusiastic, inspired and happily absorbed tend to be engaged in their jobs (Schaufeli et al., 2004).

The correlation between dedication and absorption indicated that the higher dedication, the greater the absorption. This implies that participants who are enthusiastic, inspired, and proud and challenged, and who are focused and deeply engrossed in their work, are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of engagement. Engaged individuals who have a sense of energy, enthusiasm and pride and positive concentration in their work tend to be more productive and helpful to others (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

The significant and large correlation between vigour and professional efficacy indicated that employees who score high on vigour, dedication and absorption will also score high on professional efficacy. This implies that participants who have higher levels of energy and mental resilience, and who are willing to invest effort in their work tend to experience feelings of competence and to be successful in doing their tasks. Individual who experience high energy levels in their job, are more likely to be competent and successful at work (Schaufeli et al., 2008).

The significant negative large correlation between vigour and both exhaustion and cynicism indicated that participants who score low in vigour will score higher in both the exhaustion and cynicism variables. This implies that participants who have low energy and who are less willing to invest effort in their jobs tend to be overextended, drained and display a negative distant attitude towards their jobs.

The results also suggest significant and large correlations between dedication and professional efficacy and exhaustion and cynicism, which indicate that participants who score higher in dedication will score higher in professional efficacy and also score low in both exhaustion and cynicism. This implies that participants who experience a sense of significance, who are enthusiastic, proud and inspired, generally demonstrate higher levels of competence and appear to be successful in their work, are less likely to be drained and have negative and distant attitudes towards their work. Engaged employees who tend to be enthusiastic and inspired, and possess job resources and who feel competent in their jobs, will be less likely to be overextended, drained and distanced from their jobs (Bakker & Costa, 2014).

A significant and large correlation between absorption and professional efficacy and both exhaustion and cynicism indicated that participants who score higher in absorption will score higher in professional efficacy and also score low in both exhaustion and cynicism variables. This indicates that the individual who is absorbed in and focused on his or her work and who possesses job resources and feels competent at work tends to be less emotionally drained and detached in his or her work. Individuals who generally experience higher levels of absorption and professional efficacy seem to demonstrate low levels of exhaustion and cynicism (Bakker & Costa, 2014).

The results also reported significantly positive correlations between exhaustion and cynicism, indicating that employees who score high on exhaustion will also score high on cynicism. This implies that employees who experience a lack of energy and who feel emotionally overextended and drained (high exhaustion) are more likely to be distanced emotionally and cognitively from their work (high cynicism). Individuals who are emotionally exhausted and feel frustrated and depleted, are likely to distance themselves emotionally and cognitively from their work, and be less involved in their direct jobs (Rothmann, 2003).

The results showed that there is a significant and large negative correlation between exhaustion and cynicism and professional efficacy. This indicates that employees who score high on exhaustion and cynicism will score low on professional efficacy. It also implies that those participants who experience fatigue and portray indifference

or a distant attitude towards their work are more likely to exhibit decreased efficacy in their work. Individuals who are overextended and drained and who display negative and distant attitudes towards their work, tend to display fewer job resources and reduced feelings of competence. In other words, individuals who score high on exhaustion and cynicism, and low on professional efficacy, are showing symptoms of burnout (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Table 5.4

Summary of the correlations between burnout variables and work engagement variables

Significant independent variables: Burnout	Dependent variables: Work engagement		
	Vigour (UWES)	Dedication (UWES)	Absorption (UWES)
Exhaustion (MBI-GS)	Negative correlation	Negative correlation	Negative correlation
Cynicism MBI-GS	Negative correlation	Negative correlation	Negative correlation
Professional efficacy (UWES)	Positive correlation	Positive correlation	Positive correlation

The results above provide supportive evidence for the research hypothesis Ha1: The burnout variables (exhaustion and cynicism) correlated negatively with the work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption) variables. Furthermore, the burnout variable (professional efficacy) correlated positively with the vigour, dedication and absorption variables of work engagement.

5.3 INFERENCE STATISTICS

Stepwise multiple regressions were performed to test whether burnout (exhaustion, cynicism and professional efficacy) predicts the work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption) variables. The F-test was used to test whether there was a significant relationship between the independent (burnout) and dependent (work engagement) variables. Prior to conducting the various regression analyses,

collinearity diagnostics were examined to ensure that zero-order correlations were below the level of multicollinearity concern ($r \geq .90$), that the variance inflation factors did not exceed 10, that the condition index was well below 15 and that the tolerance values were close to 1.0 (Hair et al., 2010). The correlation was computed between the subdimensions of burnout, and cynicism correlated highly with exhaustion ($r = .93$, large effect, $p \leq .05$). According to Hair et al. (2010), when two explainable variables correlate at .90 and above, one of them should be removed. In this instance, the researcher decided to delete the cynicism variable to avoid the issue of multicollinearity in the regressions.

5.3.1 Stepwise multiple regression analysis between burnout and work engagement

Table 5.5 summarises the significant results of the stepwise multiple regression analyses that were performed to assess whether burnout acts as a significant predictor of work engagement. It indicates that three regressions were performed, one model for each work engagement variable. All three models were statistically significant ($F_p \leq .05$) with the model accounting for 92% ($R^2 = .92$: vigour); 98% ($R^2 = .98$: dedication) and 96% ($R^2 = .96$: absorption) of the variance in the burnout variable. The results were large in practical effect.

Table 5.5**Significant stepwise multiple regression results: Burnout as a predictor of work engagement**

Variable	Unstandardised coefficient		Standardised coefficient	t	P	F	Adjusted R square	R
UWES vigour (constant)	B 2.49	SEB .95	B	2.63	.000	1109.49	.92***	.96
Exhaustion	-.04	.04	-.03	-1.13	.260			
Professional efficacy	.93	.03	.94	34.61	.000			
UWES dedication (constant)	B -.79	SEB .53	β	-1.49	.000	2662.69	.98***	.96
Exhaustion	.05	.02	-.05	2.73	.007			
Professional efficacy	.86	.02	1.01	56.55	.000			
UWES absorption (constant)	B 3.81	SEB .91	β	4.01	.000	1240.93	.96***	.93
Exhaustion	-.11	.03	-.09	-2.26	.001			
Professional efficacy	.91	.03	.91	35.05	.000			

Notes: N = 204

*** $p \leq 0.001$ ** $p \leq 0.01$ * $p \leq 0.05$ + $R^2 \leq 0.12$ (small practical effect size) ++ $R^2 \geq 0.13 \leq 0.25$ (moderate practical effect size) +++ $R^2 \geq 0.26$ (large practical effect size)

In model 1 (vigour), only professional efficacy ($\beta = .94$; $p = .00$) acted as a significant positive predictor of vigour, contributing the most in explaining its variance.

In model 2 (dedication), exhaustion ($\beta = -.05$; $p = .01$) and professional efficacy ($\beta = 1.01$; $p = .00$) acted as significant negative and positive predictors of dedication with professional efficacy contributing the most in explaining its variance.

In model 3 (absorption), exhaustion ($\beta = -.09$; $p = .01$) and professional efficacy ($\beta = .91$; $p = .00$) acted as significant negative and positive predictors of absorption with professional efficacy contributing the most in explaining its variance.

5.3.2 Interpretation of multiple stepwise regressions with burnout as a predictor of work engagement

The results showed that professional efficacy significantly and positively predicted work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption). Those participants who had job resources and who felt competent in their jobs demonstrated high levels of energy and mental resilience in their work and were also willing to invest effort and persist in the face of challenging situations. This implies also that those individuals who experience feelings of competence and who succeed when achieving their tasks are more likely to identify with their work (Bakker et al., 2014).

Exhaustion and professional efficacy predicted the dedication variable. This implies that when the participants felt competent in their jobs, tended to be strongly involved in their work and experienced a sense of significance, enthusiasm pride and inspiration. This also implies that individuals who have professional competence are more likely to be involved in their jobs, enthusiastic, proud and inspired (Schaufeli et al., 2002a; 2002b). Furthermore, the results suggest that when participants are emotionally exhausted, experience fatigue and portray indifference or a distant attitude towards work, they tend to experience a lower sense of significance and be less enthusiastic, proud and inspired. Individuals who feel emotionally exhausted and drained are less likely to be enthusiastic, proud and inspired (Bakker et al., 2014).

Exhaustion and professional efficacy predicted the absorption variable. This implies that participants who feel competent in their jobs tend to be fully concentrated and happily engrossed in their work. The results also suggest that when participants are exhausted, drained or demonstrate fatigue they tend to be less dedicated or concentrated in their work. This ties in with the findings of Schaufeli et al. (2006), which indicated that individuals who demonstrate high levels of exhaustion are more likely to often detach from the endeavour. Table 5.6 provides a summary of the

statistical predictions.

Table 5.6: Summary of the burnout variables that acted as significant predictors of work engagement variables

Significant independent Burnout predictor variables:	Criterion dependent variables: Work engagement		
	Vigour (UWES)	Dedication (UWES)	Absorption (UWES)
Exhaustion (MBI-GS)		Negative prediction	Negative prediction
Professional efficacy (UWES)	Positive prediction	Positive prediction	Positive prediction

The results above provide supportive evidence for the research hypothesis Ha2: The burnout variables (exhaustion and professional efficacy) predict the work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption) variables.

5.3.3 Reporting on the independent test of differences between age and gender groups

Table 5.7 summarises the Mann-Whitney U test of significant differences between the work engagement variable and burnout with regard to age. The results indicate that there was a significant difference between the ranks of the age groups less than 39 years and higher than 39 years with regard to exhaustion ($z = -2.84$; $p \leq .05$) and cynicism ($z = -2.36$; $p \leq .01$). The test also revealed that the age groups (≤ 39 years) and ($\geq .39$ years) did not differ significantly in their levels of vigour, dedication, absorption and professional efficacy.

Table 5.7: Results of Mann-Whitney U test: Significant mean differences between females and males regarding work engagement and burnout

Variables		N	Mean rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	p
Age: UWES Vigour	< 39	123	77.22	1872.50	-.934	.350
	>39	34	85.43	2904.50		
UWES Dedication	< 39	123	77.94	1960.50	-.561	.575
	>39	34	82.84	2816.50		
Age: UWES Absorption	< 39	123	78.02	1970.00	-.518	.605
	>39	34	82.56	2807.00		
Age: MBI-GS Exhaustion	< 39	123	84.33	1435.50	-2.837	.005*
	>39	34	59.72	2030.50		
Age: MBI-GS Professional efficacy	< 39	123	77.79	1942.00	-.647	.524
	>39	34	83.38	2835.00		
Age: MBI-GS Cynicism	< 39	123	83.44	1545.00	-2.355	.019*
	>39	34	62.94	2140.00		

The results provided some evidence in support of research hypothesis H03: There are significant mean differences between the exhaustion and cynicism burnout variables and the biographical variables of age.

5.4 INTEGRATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS

5.4.1 Biographical profile of the sample

The participants in the sample were predominantly African females and fell into the age groups 20 years and younger and over 39 years and were permanently

employed in a pharmaceutical distribution company in South Africa. The biographical profile obtained for the sample showed that the main sample characteristics that had to be considered for interpretation of the empirical results were age, gender and race.

5.4.2 Descriptive statistics: Interpretation of results

Tables 5.1 and 5.2 are of relevance in this section.

5.4.2.1 Burnout profile

The burnout profile revealed the participants as having high levels of professional efficacy and low levels of exhaustion and cynicism. This, in turn, suggests that the participants were professionally competent in doing their work and less depleted and demonstrated low levels of dysfunctional attitude at work. According to Bakker et al. (2014), individuals who possess the professional competence needed to do their work properly display a less dysfunctional attitude towards their work. Participants with strong professional efficacy are also productive and experience a sense of professional achievement in their tasks (Schaufeli, Leiter, & Maslach, 2009).

The low mean score obtained in both exhaustion and cynicism may suggest that the participants experienced less interpersonal behaviour and found it difficult to detach from their tasks. According to Trépanier, Fernet, and Austin (2013), individuals who perceive their workplace environment as being positive and collaborative are less likely to display dysfunctional attitudes towards their work. Individuals who score low on exhaustion and cynicism and high on professional efficacy may experience low levels of burnout and also experience feelings of competence and achievement (Schaufeli et al., 2009).

5.4.2.2 Work engagement profile

The work engagement profile revealed the participants as possessing a high level of dedication, vigour and absorption, and this, in turn, suggests that the participants were dedicated and concentrated, energetic, mentally resilient and strongly involved

in their jobs, enthusiastic, proud, inspired as well as challenged by their work. Participants with a high level of engagement (and particularly dedication and vigour) are often happily engrossed in their work and able to move on from thought to action and achieve better performance (Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010).

The participants' high levels of absorption suggest that they were immersed in their work and totally happy with their jobs. This links up with the study by Schaufeli et al. (2009), which indicates that individuals who are fully and deeply preoccupied by their work are less likely to stop working. Participants who are engaged, enthusiastic, energetic, involved and reasonably committed to their work, are more likely to invest physical, emotional and mental energy in their work and are capable of optimal performance (Innanen, Tolvanen, & Salmela-Aro, 2014).

5.4.3 Empirical research aim 1: Interpretation of the correlation results

Research aim 1 and table 5.3 are relevant to this section.

Research aim 1 was to determine the nature of the statistical interrelationship between burnout and work engagement as manifested in a sample of respondents employed in a pharmaceutical distribution company.

5.4.3.1 Relationship between burnout and work engagement variables

Table 5.3 is relevant to this section.

The results suggest that participants, who are engaged, vigorous, enthusiastic, proud and inspired, tend to demonstrate high levels of work engagement at work. Individuals who experience vigour are extremely resilient and persevere even when things are not going well (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). Participants who experience vigour and dedication in their jobs appear to be energetic and happily engrossed in and focused on their work. Individuals who are high in vigour and dedication are more likely to be extremely resilient, exert effort and persist, even during difficult times. They are also more likely to be concentrated and happily engrossed in their work (Lekutle & Nel, 2012). Participants who experience dedication and absorption

in their jobs appear to have a sense of significance, enthusiasm, pride, inspiration and challenge. They also tend to be fully concentrated and deeply engrossed in their work. Individuals who are inspired, enthusiastic and highly involved in their work, are more likely to demonstrate a high degree of concentration in their jobs and generally lack conscious awareness of the amount of time spent on the job (Yalabik et al., 2013).

The positive correlation between exhaustion and cynicism suggests that participants' high scores on exhaustion and cynicism may mean that they were overextended, had developed negative attitudes towards their work and felt that they lacked professional competence and feelings of achievement (Bakker et al., 2014). The significant relationship observed between the professional efficacy, exhaustion and cynicism burnout variables suggests that the participants who experience feelings of competence and achievement (higher level of professional efficacy) tend to be less depleted, exhibit less dysfunctional behaviour or have a less indifferent attitude towards their work. Individuals who experience fatigue, depletion, being drained and who are overextended tend to lack the professional competence needed in their work and also lack feelings of achievement (Bakker et al., 2014).

The results of this study suggest that individuals who are energetic, resilient, enthusiastic, proud, inspired and happily engrossed in their work, tend to possess job resources and the professional competence needed, and also demonstrate feelings of achievement. These results are consistent with those of Huhtala, Tolvanen and Mauno (2014), which indicated that individuals who are energetic and resilient while working and strongly involved and enthusiastic in their work are more likely to possess job resources and the professional competence needed to achieve in their work.

Overall, the results of the interrelationship reveal that participants who experience high levels of vigour, dedication, absorption and professional efficacy experience low levels of exhaustion and cynicism. This implies that individuals who are energetic, resilient, enthusiastic, proud, happily engrossed and who possess the professional competence required are more likely to demonstrate less fatigue and depletion. This confirms the findings of González-Roma et al., 2006).

5.4.4 Empirical research aim 2: Interpretation of the stepwise regressions

Research aim 2 and table 5.4 are relevant to this section.

Research aim 2 assessed whether the variable of burnout (exhaustion and professional efficacy) positively and significantly predicts the work engagement variables (vigour, dedication and absorption) (career adaptability and hardiness).

5.4.4.1 Exhaustion and professional efficacy burnout variables as predictors of vigour

Table 5.4 is relevant to this section.

The results reveal that burnout (professional efficacy) significantly positively predicts the vigour variable of work engagement. A higher level of professional efficacy is positively associated with a higher level of vigour. Ventura, Salanova, and Llorens (2014) maintain that a high level of professional efficacy helps workers to be vigorous and resilient in their work. Conversely, the results indicate that exhaustion negatively predicts the vigour variable. A high level of exhaustion is negatively associated with low levels of vigour. Gonzalez-Roma et al. (2006) reported that individuals experiencing high exhaustion are characterised by fatigue, anxiety and tension, lack energy and are less resilient in their work.

5.4.4.2 Exhaustion and the professional efficacy burnout variables as predictors of dedication

The results indicated that burnout (professional efficacy) positively predicted the dedication work engagement variable. High professional efficacy is positively associated with a high level of dedication. Sonnentag (2003) indicates that individuals who possess personal resources have high levels of dedication. They are enthusiastic, proud and inspired in their work. Conversely, the results also revealed that exhaustion negatively predicted the dedication variable. A high level of exhaustion is negatively associated with low levels of dedication. Ventura et al. (2014) indicate that individuals who feel overextended and drained are less

enthusiastic, proud and inspired (low levels of dedication). When faced with difficulties, such individuals are less likely to be passionate about their work.

5.4.4.3 Exhaustion and professional efficacy burnout variables as predictors of absorption

The results also revealed that professional efficacy positively predicts the absorption work engagement variable. High professional efficacy is associated with high absorption. Ventura et al. (2014) reported that workers who have professional competence and personal resources are more likely to be concentrated, and fully and happily engrossed in their work. Conversely, the results also indicated that exhaustion negatively predicts the absorption variable. A high level of exhaustion is negatively associated with the absorption variable. According to Schaufeli et al. (2009), individuals who have fatigue and portray dysfunctional attitudes towards work are less likely to be fully concentrated and engrossed in their work.

Overall, high levels of professional efficacy are positively associated with higher levels of energy and activation (vigour), enthusiasm, pride and inspiration at work (dedication) and to an elevated state of concentration (absorption). Conversely, high levels of fatigue and dysfunctional behaviour at work (exhaustion) may result in a lack of professional competence, low energy, low enthusiasm and low concentration at work (Ventura et al., 2014).

5.4.5 Empirical research aim 3: Interpretation of the tests for significant mean difference results

Table 5.5 is relevant to this section.

The results indicated a significant difference with regard to age and participants' work burnout (exhaustion and cynicism). No significant differences were evident between age group and professional efficacy and work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption) variables.

5.4.6 Conclusions relating to the research hypotheses

Table 5.8: Summary of conclusions relating to the research hypotheses

Hypotheses		Supportive evidence provided
H01	There is no statistically significant positive interrelationship between work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption) and burnout (exhaustion, professional efficacy and cynicism).	Rejected
Ha1	There is a statistically significant positive and negative interrelationship between work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption) and burnout (exhaustion, professional efficacy and cynicism).	Accepted
H02	The variables of burnout (exhaustion, professional efficacy and cynicism) do not positively and significantly predict work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption).	Rejected
Ha2	The variables of burnout (exhaustion, professional efficacy and cynicism) positively and negatively significantly predict work engagement (vigour, dedication and absorption).	Accepted
H03	Individuals from various biographical groups (age and gender) do not differ significantly with regard to work engagement and burnout variables.	Rejected
Ha3	Individuals from various biographical groups (age) differ significantly with regard to work engagement and burnout variables.	Accepted

5.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided an overview of the statistical results obtained. The statistical results confirm the hypotheses. It was confirmed that there is a significant relationship between burnout and work engagement. Burnout is indeed negatively related to work engagement in the contact centre. However, a definitive relationship between burnout and work engagement in the distribution centre was not established. This chapter also integrated the empirical findings with the literature review.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to draw conclusions about the specific objectives that were formulated in chapter 1. In addition, it discusses the limitations of this study and makes recommendations.

6.1 CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO THE DEFINED AIMS

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between burnout and work engagement in a pharmaceutical distribution company in South Africa.

6.1.1 Conclusions relating to the literature review

The literature review examined the specific theoretical goals of the study that were stated in chapter 1. The first aim was achieved in chapters 2 and 3 of this study by conceptualising the two constructs of burnout and work engagement.

Work engagement is a positive and fulfilling work-related state of mind that is characterised by high levels of energy and mental resilience (Schaufeli et al., 2002a; Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2007). It consists of three important concepts, namely vigour, dedication and absorption. Vigour is characterised by high levels of energy and mental resilience that are accompanied by a willingness to persevere even when confronted with obstacles. Dedication refers to being inspired, challenged and excited, and results in eager involvement in work. Absorption is characterised by content appreciation for one's work to the point of not being aware of passing time.

6.1.1.1 Conceptualising burnout

It was evident from this study that burnout is not only a condition of the body, but also of the soul, and constitutes a loss of faith in the enterprise of helping. It has physiological, behavioural, psychological, spiritual and clinical dimensions (Gachutha, 2006).

6.1.1.2 Conclusion relating the construct of burnout

Burnout implies a fairly long temporal process since it is based on the fact that the person has been working for a while and is experiencing a chronic misfit between self and work. The burnout concept can be seen to be a particular slice across the stress process. According to Cox, Kuk, and Leiter (Schaufeli et al., 1993, p. 188), burnout in the sense of this argument, is a mixed bag of an appraisal outcome, an aspect of well-being and a coping strategy, but one that “hangs together” strongly for the helping professional. Research findings on a predictive relationship between burnout and turnover intention are not plentiful and literature on the strength of the relationship proved to be inconsistent. Nevertheless, a clear linkage does seem to exist. It would therefore seem that when experiencing symptoms of burnout, experiences of turnover intention will not be far behind. In the light of this, the finding that generation X nurses experience more symptoms of burnout, compared with baby boomer generation nurses, and that this contributes to high turnover intentions (Leiter, Jackson, & Shaughnessy, 2009), proves to be significant. Furthermore, burnout has also been found to be the dominant predictor of depression, and depression has been proven to predict turnover intention (Anderson, 2008; Baba, Galperin, & Lituchy, 1999). Two different studies found burnout to be a partial mediator between turnover intention and (1) role stressors, and (2) perceived organisational politics (Fogarty, Singh, Rhoads, & Moore, 2000; Huang, Chaung & Lin, 2003). The research consulted for this study showed no indications of findings on burnout acting as a mediator in a work engagement-turnover intention relationship.

Recent clinical observations have indicated that chronic burnout is associated with impaired cognitive functioning (Sandström, Rhodin, Lundberg et al., 2005). However, few studies have included cognitive weariness as a burnout construct (Coetzee & Rothmann, 2004; Van Horn et al., 2004). Empirical studies have revealed that some individuals do not develop burnout, regardless of high job demands and long working hours. On the contrary, they seem to find pleasure in working hard and dealing with job demands (Nelson & Simmons, 2003; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2001). This revelation saw the emergence of theoretical and empirical studies on the concept of engagement.

6.1.1.3 Conceptualising work engagement

Employees' psychological connection with their work has gained critical significance in the information/service economy of the 21st century. In the contemporary world of work, to compete effectively, companies must not only recruit top talent, but must also inspire and enable employees to apply their full capabilities to their work. Contemporary organisations need employees who are psychologically connected to their work, who are willing and able to invest themselves fully in their roles, and who are proactive and committed to high-quality performance standards. They need employees who are engaged with their work (Bakker & Leiter, 2010).

Work engagement is most often defined as "... a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010; Schaufeli et al., 2002a, p. 74). In essence, work engagement captures how workers experience their work: as stimulating and energetic and something to which they really want to devote time and effort (the vigour component); as a significant and meaningful pursuit (dedication); and as engrossing and something on which they are fully concentrated (absorption).

6.1.1.4 Conclusions relating to the construct of work engagement

Research has revealed that engaged employees are highly energetic, self-efficacious individuals who exercise influence over events that affect their lives (Bakker, 2009). Because of their positive attitude and activity level, engaged employees create their own positive feedback in terms of appreciation, recognition and success. Although engaged employees do feel tired after a long day of hard work, they describe their tiredness as a rather pleasant state because it is associated with positive accomplishments. Finally, engaged employees enjoy other things outside work. Unlike workaholics, engaged employees do not work hard because of a strong and irresistible inner drive, but because, for them, working is fun (Gorgievski et al., 2010).

The past decade has witnessed a sharp increase in scientific studies on engagement (Bakker et al., 2008). This research has shown that engagement is related to bottom-

line outcomes such as job performance (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008), client satisfaction (Salanova et al., 2005) and financial returns (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009; Demerouti & Cropanzano, 2010).

6.1.1.5 Determining the theoretical relationship between burnout and work engagement

Studies indicate (Bakker et al., 2014) that burnout and work engagement are important concepts because they predict significant outcomes for individual employees and for organisations at large. Whereas burnout seems to be caused by high job demands and to a lesser extent by low job resources, work engagement seems to be caused by job resources. Individual characteristics, such as personality and personal resources, are also related to both burnout and work engagement but in an opposite fashion. Although both burnout and work engagement are related to job-related outcomes, burnout seems to be more strongly related to health outcomes, whereas work engagement is more strongly related to motivational outcomes. Burnout and work engagement therefore represent substantially different experiences and merit their own attention from researchers and practitioners alike.

6.1.2 Conclusions relating to the empirical study

As stated in chapter 1, the first empirical aim of this study was to determine the levels of burnout and work engagement in the sample group. This aim was achieved and measured against previous research in chapter 5. The participants in the sample had similar levels of burnout and work engagement as the participants in other studies.

The second empirical aim regarding possible relationships between burnout and work engagement was achieved in chapter 5 through the reporting, interpretation and presentation of the results of the empirical studies.

6.1.2.1 Research aim 1

The purpose of research aim 1 was to determine the level of burnout and work engagement among employees. It can be concluded that participants who are engaged, vigorous, enthusiastic, proud and inspired tend to demonstrate high levels of work engagement at work. Individuals experiencing vigour are extremely resilient and persevere even when things are not going well (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). Participants who experience vigour and dedication in their jobs appear to be energetic and happily engrossed and concentrated in their work. Individuals who are high in vigour and dedication are more likely to be extremely resilient, exert effort and persist even through difficult times. They also appear more likely to be concentrated and happily engrossed in their work (Lekutle & Nel, 2012). Participants who experience dedication and absorption in their jobs appear to have a sense of significance, enthusiasm, pride, inspiration and challenge; they also tend to be fully concentrated and deeply engrossed in their work. Individuals who are inspired, enthusiastic and highly involved in their work, are more likely to demonstrate high degrees of concentration in their jobs and generally lack conscious awareness of the amount of time spent on the job (Yalabik et. al, 2013).

The positive correlation between exhaustion and cynicism suggests that participants' high scores on exhaustion and cynicism could mean that they are depleted and overextended, develop negative attitudes towards their work and feel that they may lack professional competence and feelings of achievement (Bakker et al., 2014). The significant relationship observed between professional efficacy and exhaustion and the cynicism burnout variables suggests that individuals who experience feelings of competence and achievement (higher levels of professional efficacy) tend to be less depleted and exhibit less dysfunctional behaviour or less indifferent attitudes towards their work. Individuals who experience fatigue and depletion are drained, and those who are overextended, tend to lack the professional competence needed in their work and also lack feelings of achievement (Bakker et al., 2014).

The results of this study suggest that individuals who are energetic, resilient, enthusiastic, proud, inspired and happily engrossed in their work, tend to possess job resources and the professional competence needed, and also demonstrate

feelings of achievement. These results are consistent with the findings of Huhtala, Tolvanen, and Mauno (2014) indicating that individuals who are energetic and resilient while working and who are strongly involved and enthusiastic in their work are more likely to possess job resources and the professional competence needed to be successful in their work.

Overall, the results of the interrelationships reveal that participants who experience high levels of vigour, dedication, absorption and professional efficacy experience low levels of exhaustion and cynicism. This implies that individuals who are energetic, resilient, enthusiastic, proud, happily engrossed and who possess the required professional competence are more likely to demonstrate less fatigue and depletion. This confirms the findings of González-Roma et al. (2006)

6.1.2.2 Research aim 2

The purpose of research aim 2 was to determine whether burnout predicts the level of work engagement among employees.

It can be concluded that burnout (professional efficacy) significantly positively predicts the vigour variable of work engagement. A higher level of professional efficacy is positively associated with a higher level of vigour. Ventura et al. (2014) maintain that a high level of professional efficacy helps workers to be vigorous and resilient in their work. Conversely, the results indicate that exhaustion negatively predicts the vigour variable. A high level of exhaustion is negatively associated with a low level of vigour. Gonzalez-Roma et al. (2006) reported that individuals experiencing high exhaustion characterised by fatigue, anxiety and tension, lack energy and are less resilient in their work.

Further, the results indicated that burnout (professional efficacy) positively predicts the dedication work engagement variable. High professional efficacy is positively associated with a high level of dedication. Sonnentag (2003) reported that individuals who possess personal resources have high levels of dedication. They are enthusiastic, proud and inspired in their work. Conversely, the results also reveal that exhaustion negatively predicts the dedication variable. A high level of exhaustion is

negatively associated with a low level of dedication. Ventura et al. (2014) reported that individuals who feel overextended and drained are less enthusiastic, proud and inspired (low levels of dedication). When faced with difficulties, such individuals are less likely to be passionate about their work.

The results also indicated that professional efficacy positively predicts the absorption work engagement variable. High professional efficacy is associated with high absorption. Ventura et al. (2014) reported that workers who have professional competence and personal resources are more likely to be concentrated and fully and happily engrossed in their work. Conversely, the results also reveal that exhaustion negatively predicts the absorption variable. A high level of exhaustion is negatively associated with the absorption variable. Schaufeli et al. (2009) found that individuals who have fatigue and portray dysfunctional attitudes towards work are less likely to be fully concentrated and engrossed in their work.

Overall, high levels of professional efficacy are positively associated with higher levels of energy and activation (vigour), enthusiasm, pride and inspiration at work (dedication) and an elevated state of concentration (absorption). Conversely, a high level of fatigue and dysfunctional behaviour at work (exhaustion) may result in lack of professional competence, low energy, low enthusiasm and low concentration at work (Ventura et al., 2014).

6.1.2.3 Research aim 3

The third research aim was to assess whether significant differences exist between the subgroups of biographical variables with regard to burnout and work engagement. The empirical results provided partial supportive evidence for research hypothesis Ha3. The following conclusion was drawn in this regard:

- Significant differences exist between participants in the age group below 39 with regard to their vigour and cynicism. Participants below the age of 39 are likely to be emotionally overextended and drained, and at some stage they are likely to distance themselves emotionally and cognitively from their work.

- No significant differences were observed between the participants' biographical variables of gender, occupational level and race with regard to the burnout and work engagement variables.

6.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE THIS STUDY

6.2.1 Limitations of the literature review

The following limitations were evident in the literature review:

- There is a paucity of studies on work engagement and its relationship with burnout, especially in the South African context, and this limited the researcher's efforts to collect more varied research data.
- A wide variety of burnout models exists in the literature, which made it difficult to decide on the most suitable model to use in this study.
- There is a limited amount of literature on the relationship between burnout and work engagement in the South African context.

6.2.2 Limitations of the empirical study

The following limitations were evident in the empirical study:

- The most serious limitation of the empirical study was the small sample size. This means that the researcher had to exercise caution before making generalisations about the findings.
- A further limitation was the lack of South African validation of the research instruments. All the instruments were originally developed overseas where circumstances differ drastically. This limitation was overcome by conducting a confirmatory factor analysis in order to improve the reliability and validity of the research.
- A limitation that should not be ignored is that, because a convenience sample was used in the research, the results cannot easily be generalised to all the staff or pharmaceutical distribution population of the country as a whole. However, a significant geographical area was covered and this limitation

could provide an opportunity for including other research regions for comparison.

- This sample was drawn from a limited work environment and industry. It would add more value and insight to include samples from multiple industries or work environments.
- Personality type inventories were not used in this study. By determining which personality types demonstrated higher levels/lower levels of work engagement and burnout, more insight into and understanding of the study would have been possible.
- A final limitation of the empirical investigation was the language in which the instruments were developed. All instruments were in English, while the majority of respondents were second language English speakers. The possibility exists that the reliability and validity indices of this research in some instances were lower than in those countries in which English is a first language. All the respondents (100%) in this study did not have a tertiary qualification. Their English fluency was suspect, and this could have limited the value of the research. The above limitations afford South African researchers the opportunity to adapt these instruments to local conditions. Based on the results obtained from this study, it is strongly recommended that the particular measuring instruments should be translated into the 11 official languages of South Africa. Furthermore, the unique multicultural context of South African society would provide excellent opportunities for testing the cross-cultural utility of the MBI. Hence it is strongly recommended that future research should be directed towards exploring burnout among different race groups.

The next section finalises the thesis in the form of concluding recommendations.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.3.1 Industrial and organisational psychologists in the field of burnout and work engagement

- South African organisational psychologists and researchers should investigate adapting the MBI-GS and the UWES instruments to local conditions.
- The aforementioned measuring instruments should be translated into the 11 official languages of South Africa.
- The unique multicultural context of South African society provides outstanding opportunities for testing the cross-cultural utility of the MBI. Hence it is strongly recommended that more future research should be directed towards exploring burnout among different race groups.
- Research should be done on other measuring instruments which could be used to measure burnout and work engagement.

6.3.2 Future research

The following action-oriented recommendations are formulated on the basis of the results of the study:

- In view of the fact that the study reported reasonable values with regard to work engagement in comparison with other studies, it is possible that the organisation's turnover problems could have been related to other factors beyond the scope of this study. A proper organisational diagnosis is recommended to address this problem.
- A larger sample size and additional biographical criteria (e.g. level of education, marital status and length of service) would add value to the research.
- The relationship between burnout and engagement should be investigated in a wider variety of organisations in South Africa, using larger samples. A larger sample could be used to conduct a factor analysis on the different dimensions of the variables.
- The different dimensions of burnout should be investigated
- A South African questionnaire in the different official languages should be developed.

- Work engagement 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.
- It is recommended that future studies include organisational measures indicative of burnout in order to substantiate the findings – for example, staff turnover, absenteeism, tardiness, reduced productivity and an increase in work-related accidents
- Future research should include management in order to make possible comparisons between the experiences of the two groups.

6.4 INTEGRATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 5 reported the results of the study and conducted a thorough analysis of the data. The reliability and validity of the measures were reported, starting with the results of the MBI and UWES.

The results of group differences in burnout and work engagement were reported specifically for gender, race, age and occupational level. The results of the hypotheses that were tested were reported after analysis of the groups. The results of the analysis were used to test the hypotheses to calculate if there was a statistically and practically significant relationship between burnout and work engagement. The results of the Pearson's product-moment correlation were used to assess the relationship between the scales, and were then reported.

Examination of the results indicated that the internal consistency of the distribution centre was high, with high Cronbach alpha values. According to Clark and Watson's (1995) guidelines, the reliability results for the MBI-GS and UWES were consistent.

The results demonstrated that the UWES dimensions of vigour and dedication had a significant positive relationship of large effect. A positive relationship of large effect was observed between vigour and absorption, as well as between absorption and dedication. The vigour dimension reflected a significant positive relationship with professional efficacy and a significant negative relationship with both the MBI-SG's

exhaustion and vigour variables. The UWES dimensions of dedication and absorption and the MBI-GS dimension of professional efficacy had a positive relationship of large effect. The UWES dimension of dedication, however, indicated a significant negative relationship of large effect with both the exhaustion and cynicism variables of the MBI-GS.

The UWES dimension of absorption reflected a significant positive relationship of large effect with the professional efficacy variable of the MBI-GS. The dimension of dedication, however, indicated a significant negative relationship of large effect with both the exhaustion and cynicism variables of MBI-GS. The MBI-GS dimension of exhaustion reflected a significant positive relationship of large effect with cynicism. Both the MBI-GS dimensions of exhaustion and cynicism indicated a significant negative relationship of large effect with the MBI-GS dimension of professional efficacy.

The results for the relationship between exhaustion and cynicism burnout and vigour and dedication work engagement variables reflected a negative relationship. This confirms that employees who score high on both exhaustion and cynicism will score low on vigour and dedication, and vice versa. The employee who experiences burnout symptoms such as a loss of energy, depletion, debilitation, fatigue, concern, trust and interest, will not exhibit vigour, dedication or be engrossed in his or her job.

Conversely, it appears that the employee who experiences high levels of vigour and dedication, and who demonstrates full energy, feels dedicated to his or her job, and has the ability to become absorbed in his or her work, and will not feel exhausted, chronically fatigued, cynical and inefficient in his or her work. These findings are consistent with those of Langelan et al. (2006), who found that vigour and dedication were negatively correlated with the exhaustion and cynicism burnout variables. These findings support Rothmann et al.'s (2005) view that employees who demonstrate a high level of engagement experience a low level of burnout. Hence the findings of Schaufeli et al. (2002b), namely that burnout and engagement are related but distinct concepts, were confirmed in the current study.

The participants in this study had an energetic and affective connection with their work roles/activities and saw themselves as being able to deal completely with the demands of their jobs, even when faced with difficulty and uncertainty. The results further suggest that the participants were generally energetic, mentally resilient, strongly involved in their jobs, enthusiastic, proud, inspired and happily engrossed in their work. Moreover, the results suggested that they have strong psychological involvement in their work activities, and feel inspired as well as challenged by the work (Schaufeli et al., 2002a; 2002b). The participants are interested in their work activities to the extent that time passes quickly (Schaufeli et al., 2002a; 2002b).

6.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The general aim of this research was to determine the relationship between burnout and work engagement. Based on this objective, this final chapter focused on the conclusions of the study in terms of both the literature review and the empirical study. The limitations of the study were also highlighted. The chapter concluded with recommendations for future research based on the findings of the study.

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ANNEXURE A

From: Yvonne Mtsolongo [mailto:yvonnemtsolongo@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2014 2:27 PM

To: Chantel Sonn

Subject: UNISA permission letter

Hi,

Please find attached as requested.

Kind regards

Yvonne

11 August 2014

Department of Industrial Psychology - UNISA

Dear Professor Rudy Oosthuizen

RE – Permission granted to Ms C Sonn to complete her Masters M1 (Theory) and M2 (Research) at New UPD

Chantel Sonn, ID 7811280080089, was employed by New UPD (New Clicks) whilst completing her MCOM – Industrial Psychology. She completed her M1 year (theory) and started her M2 year (dissertation) at New UPD. She was given permission by myself, Yvonne Mtsolongo – New UPD HR Executive at that time, to complete her research at New UPD during her time as Divisional HRM at New UPD. The research related to the Pharmaceutical Distribution industry.

Kind regards

Yvonne Mtsolongo

071 932 0507

yvonnemtsolongo@gmail.com