

**EMOTION WORK AND WELL-BEING OF CLIENT SERVICE WORKERS  
WITHIN SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES**

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- The mini-dissertation is submitted in the form of three (3) chapters, consisting of the following: an introductory chapter, a second chapter (having a research article as content), as well as a concluding chapter. Each chapter of the mini-dissertation has its own reference list.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
List of Tables	5
Summary	6
Opsomming	9
<b>CHAPTER 1: PROBLEM STATEMENT</b>	
1.1. Problem Statement	12
1.1.1. Overview of the Problem	12
1.1.2. Literature Review	13
1.2. Research Objectives	19
1.2.1. General Objectives	19
1.2.2. Specific Objectives	19
1.3. Paradigmatic perspective of the research	20
1.3.1. Intellectual climate	20
1.3.2. Discipline	20
1.3.3. Meta-theoretical Assumptions	21
1.3.3.1. Literature Review	21
1.3.3.2. Empirical Study	22
1.3.4. Market of Intellectual Resources	22
1.3.4.1. Theoretical Beliefs	23
1.3.4.2. Methodological Beliefs	27
1.4. Research Design	27
1.5. Research Method	28
1.5.1. Phase 1: Literature Review	28
1.5.2. Phase 2: Empirical Study	28
Study Population	28
Measuring Battery	29
Statistical Analysis	32
1.6. Division of Chapters	33
1.7. Chapter Summary	33
References	34
<b>CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH ARTICLE</b>	40



References	74
CHAPTER 3: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
3.1. Conclusions	81
3.2. Limitations	82
3.3. Recommendations	86
3.3.1. Recommendations for the Profession	86
3.3.2. Recommendations for Future Research	87
References	88

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Description	Page
1	Characteristics of the Participants	52
2	Descriptive statistics and Alpha coefficients of GEIS, FEWS, OLBI, UWES and Social Support Scale	57
3	Factor Loadings, Communalities ( $h^2$ ), Percentage Variance for Principal Factors Extraction and Direct Oblimin Rotation on GEIS items	60
4	Correlation Coefficients between Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Well-being (Burnout & Engagement) and Social Support	62
5	Multiple Regression Analysis with Work Engagement as dependent variable	63
6	Multiple Regression Analysis with Disengagement as dependent variable	64
7	Multiple Regression Analysis with Emotional Exhaustion as dependent variable	66
8	MANOVAS – Differences in Emotion Work and Well-being (Emotional Exhaustion and Disengagement) of Demographic Groups	67

## SUMMARY

**Title:** Emotion Work and Well-being of client service workers within small and medium enterprises

**Key words:** Burnout, co-worker support, deep acting, Emotional Dissonance, Emotional Intelligence (EI), Emotional Labour, Emotion Work, Engagement, client service workers, small and medium enterprises, surface acting, supervisory support, Well-being.

Frontline client service workers are central to the service elements of any small and medium enterprise. People who have much customer or client contact are seen to be subject to stronger emotional display rules. These display rules may result in compromising the psychological and/or physical health of workers, because they often lead to a disturbing dissonance between felt emotions and the emotions one must exhibit. It is, therefore, of vital importance for service workers to exhibit Emotional Intelligence, which will enable them to manage both their own emotions and their interactions with other people. Their inability to do so may result in stress as well as physical and emotional exhaustion, also known as Burnout.

The objective of this research was to determine the relationship between Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Well-being and Social Support of client service workers within small and medium enterprises. A cross-sectional survey design was used. An availability sample was taken from small and medium enterprises employing client service workers in the Mpumalanga Province ( $N = 145$ ). The Greek Emotional Intelligence Scale (GEIS), Frankfurt Emotion Work Scales (FEWS), Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI) and Social Support Scale, as well as a biographical questionnaire were used as measuring instruments. Cronbach alpha coefficients, factor analysis, inter-item correlation coefficients, Pearson product moment correlation coefficients, stepwise multiple regression analysis, and Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) were used to analyse the data.

Principal component analysis resulted in a one-factor solution for Engagement

labelled Work Engagement, and a two factor solution for Burnout namely: Disengagement and Emotional Exhaustion. Regarding Social Support, a three factor model was extracted namely: Social Support – Co-worker, Social Support – Supervisor and Social Support – Family. A three factor model was extracted for Emotion Work namely: Emotional Dissonance, Display of Client Care and Extent of Client Interaction. A four-factor solution was extracted for Emotional Intelligence namely: Emotional Expression/Recognition, Use of Emotions to Facilitate Thinking, Control of Emotion as well as Caring and Empathy.

An analysis of the data indicated that all of the correlations between the different constructs mentioned below are statistically and practically significant. Disengagement was positively related to Emotional Exhaustion and negatively related to Emotional Expression/Recognition, Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking and Work Engagement. Emotional Exhaustion was positively related to Emotional Dissonance and negatively related to Emotional Expression/Recognition. Emotional Dissonance was positively related to Display of Client Care, while Display of Client Care was positively related to Extent of Client Interaction, as well as Caring and Empathy. Emotional Expression/Recognition was positively related to both Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking and Work Engagement. Emotion Control was positively related to Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking, while it in turn was positively related to Work Engagement. Finally, Social Support from Co-workers was positively related to Social Support from Supervisors and Family, and Social Support from Supervisors was positively related to Social Support from Family.

A multiple regression analysis indicated that Emotion Work, Social Support and Emotional Intelligence predicted 29% of the variance in Work Engagement, 30% of the variance explained in Disengagement and 37% of the variance in Emotional Exhaustion.

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) which was used to determine differences between the departmental, age, race, qualification, language and gender groups with regard to Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Well-being and Burnout, indicated no statistical significant differences ( $p < 0,05$ ).

The results indicated a correlation between Emotional Intelligence, Emotion Work and Well-being factors. Emotional Intelligence factors predicted Work Engagement and Emotion Work predicted Emotional Exhaustion.

Recommendations were made for the profession of client service work in small and medium enterprises, as well as for future research purposes.

## OPSOMMING

**Titel:** Emosie-werk en Welstand van klientediens-werkers binne klein en medium-grootte besighede

**Sleutelwoorde:** Uitbranding, mede-werknemer-ondersteuning, innerlike voorgee, Emosionele Dissonansie, Emosionele Intelligensie (EI), Emosionele Arbeid, Emosie-werk, Verbintenis, kliënte-diens-werkers, klein en medium-grootte besighede, oppervlakkige voorgee, toesighouer-ondersteuning, Welstand.

Kliëntediens-werkers is sentraal tot die diens-verwante elemente van enige klein en medium grootte besigheid. Werkers wat baie kliënte kontak het, word aan sterker emosionele voorgee-reëls blootgestel. Hierdie voorgee-reëls mag moontlik lei tot die benadeling van die psigologiese en/of fisieke gesondheid van die werkers, aangesien dit gereeld lei tot 'n ontstellende gaping tussen emosies wat gevoel word, en dit wat voorgehou word. Dit is dus belangrik vir kliëntediens-werkers om oor Emosionele Intelligensie te beskik, aangesien dit hulle in staat sal stel om beide hul eie emosies asook hul interaksie met ander persone te bestuur. Hul onvermoë om dit te kan doen, mag moontlik lei tot stres asook fisieke en emosionele uitputting – ook bekend as Uitbranding.

Die doelwit van die navorsing was om die verhouding tussen Emosie-werk, Emosionele Intelligensie, Welstand en Sosiale Ondersteuning van kliëntediens-werkers binne klein en medium-grootte besighede vas te stel. 'n Dwarssneeopname-ontwerp is in die studie gebruik. 'n Beskikbaarheid-steekproef is geneem uit kliëntediens-werkers binne klein en medium-grootte besighede in die Mpumalanga Provinsie ( $N = 145$ ). Die Griekse Emosionele-Intelligensieskaal (GEIS), Frankfurt-Emosie-Werk-Skaal (FEWS), Utrecht-Werksbegeestering-Vraelys (UWES), Oldenburg-Uitbrandingsvraelys (OLBI) en Sosiale Ondersteuning-Skaal, asook 'n biografiese vraelys is gebruik as meetinstrumente. Cronbach alfa-koeffisiënte, faktor-analise, interitem-korrelasiekoeffisiënte, Pearson-produk-momentkorrelasiekoeffisiënte, stapsgewyse meervoudige regressie-analise, asook meervoudig-variasie analise (MANOVA) is gebruik om die data te ontleed.

'n Hoofkomponent-analise van Verbintenis het gelei tot 'n een-faktor-oplossing, naamlik Werks-verbintenis, en 'n twee-faktor-oplossing van Uitbranding, naamlik: Losmaking en Emosionele Uitputting. Met betrekking tot Sosial Ondersteuning is 'n drie-faktor-model geproduseer, naamlik: Sosiale Ondersteuning – Mede-werker, Sosiale Ondersteuning – Toesighouer, en Sosiale Ondersteuning – Gesin. 'n Drie-faktor-model is geproduseer van Emosie-werk, naamlik: Emosionele Dissonansie, Bewyse van Omgee vir Kliënte asook Duur van Kliënt-interaksie. 'n Vier-faktor-model van Emosionele Intelligensie is geproduseer, naamlik: Emosionele Uitdrukking/Herkenning, Gebruik van Emosies om Denke te Fasiliteer, Beheer van Emosies, asook Omgee en Empatie.

'n Ontleding van die data het daarop gedui dat al die korrelasiekoëffisiënte tussen die verkillende konstrakte wat hier onder genoem word, statisties en prakties beduidend is. Losmaking het positief korreleer met Emosionele Uitputting en negatief met Emosionele Uitdrukking/Herkenning, Beheer van Emosies, Gebruik van Emosies om Denke te Fasiliteer en Werksverbintenis. Emosionele Uitputting het positief korreleer met Emosionele Dissonansie en negatief met Emosionele Uitdrukking/Herkenning. Emosionele Dissonansie het positief korreleer met Bewyse van Omgee vir Kliënte, terwyl die Bewyse van Omgee vir Kliënte positief korreleer het met die Duur van Kliënt-interaksie asook Omgee en Empatie. Emosionele Uitdrukking/Herkenning het positief korreleer met beide gebruik van Emosies om Denke te Fasiliteer en Werksverbintenis. Beheer van Emosies het positief korreleer met Gebruik van Emosies om Denke te Fasiliteer, terwyl laasgenoemde op sy beurt positief met Werksverbintenis korreleer het. Laastens is gevind dat Sosiale Ondersteuning van Mede-werkers positief met Sosiale Ondersteuning van Toesighouers en Gesin korreleer het, terwyl Sosiale Ondersteuning van Toesighouers positief korreleer met Sosiale Ondersteuning van Gesin.

'n Meervoudige regressie-analise het aangedui dat Emosie-werk, Sosiale Ondersteuning en Emosionele Intelligensie 29% van die totale variansie vir Werksverbintenis verklaar, 30% van die variansie verklaar wat Losmaking voorspel, asook 37% van die totale variansie vir Emosionele Uitputting verklaar.

'n Meervoudige analise van variansie (MANOVA) wat gebruik is om die verskille

tussen groepe te bepaal op grond van departement, ouderdom, ras, kwalifikasie, taal, en geslag, met betrekking tot Emosie-werk, Emosionele Intelligensie, Welstand en Uitbranding, het geen statisties-beduidende verskille identifiseer nie ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Die resultate het 'n korrelasie aangetoon tussen Emosionele Intelligensie, Emosie-werk en Welstand faktore. Emosionele Intelligensie faktore het Werksverbintenis voorspel, en Emosie-werk het Emosionele Uitputting voorspel.

Aanbevelings is gemaak vir die professie van kliënte-diens-werkers binne klein en medium-grootte besighede, asook vir toekomstige navorsing.



## **CHAPTER 1**

### **TITLE**

**Emotion Work and Well-being of client service workers within small and medium enterprises**

### **KEY WORDS**

Burnout, co-worker support, deep acting, Emotional Dissonance, Emotional Intelligence (EI), Emotional Labour, Emotion Work, Engagement, client service workers, small and medium enterprises, surface acting, supervisory support, Well-being.

## **1.1. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

### **1.1.1. Overview of the problem**

At no other time than in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has the people factor in businesses been so vital for ensuring the survival of a company (Boninelli & Meyer, 2004). This is mainly due to profound transition, including increasing trends towards globalisation, rapid technological innovation, electronic commerce, organisational restructuring (such as downsizing, mergers and acquisitions), job security, the psychological contract at work and many more. All of these changes are people-focused because any business is generally based on people – whether as employees, business partners or customers (All about, 2004/5).

Frontline client service workers (because they are involved in direct customer contact) are central to the service elements of any small to medium enterprise (Zemke & Schaaf, 1989). People who have much customer or client contact are seen to be subject to stronger emotional display rules (Sutton, 1991; Sutton & Rafaeli, 1988).

These display rules may result in compromising the psychological and/or physical health of workers, because they often lead to a disturbing dissonance between felt emotions and the emotions one must exhibit (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Morris & Feldman, 1996; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; Wharton & Erickson, 1993).

### **1.1.2. Literature review**

In 1940 an automotive worker at Henry Ford's plant was dismissed for smiling (Pink, 2005). This illustrates the previous conception that work and fun did not mix. The workplace was viewed as a rational environment, where emotions would prevent sound judgment from taking place (Grandey, 2000). Luckily, Pink (2005) states, the ground has shifted quite significantly from where linear and logical thinking dominated, to where various aptitudes such as empathy, playfulness, humour and joyfulness have become more important. According to Grandey (2000), more researchers are continually finding how workplace emotions help to explain important individual and organisational outcomes. This shift is of vital importance, as Kreitner and Kinicki (2004) state that day-to-day organisational life clearly illustrates how prevalent and powerful emotions can be.

Lazarus (1991) defines emotions as being complex, patterned and organismic reactions to how one thinks one is doing with regards to one's efforts to survive and flourish and to achieve what one wishes for oneself throughout the duration of one's life. The word organismic refers to emotions involving the whole person – biological, psychological, and social. Therefore, one should not only focus on health, which can be seen more as a physical or medical matter (Easthope & White, 2006), but rather on Well-being, which is significantly sociable and meaningful (Easthope & White, 2006).

One way of examining and understanding Well-being is in terms of layers or levels (Eckersley, Wierenga, & Wyn, 2006). These layers include (1) Individual – Well-being is seen as a subjective property of individuals; (2) Social – acknowledges broad social, economic and environmental factors behind population patterns of Well-being; (3) Cultural – Well-being is influenced by broader, less tangible characteristics of individuals and their relationship to society; and (4) Spiritual – Well-being reflects the

deepest level of meaning for individuals, a sense of having a place in the world and being part of the bigger picture.

Occupational Well-being includes both emotional and cognitive components (Hart & Cooper, 2001), while psychological Well-being encompasses both short and long-term measures (Ryff, 1989). Ryff (1989) defined psychological Well-being as self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, positive relations with others and personal growth.

Collins (2004) agrees that enormous progress has been made in the past 30 years toward Wellness (psychological Well-being) in the workplace. One of these challenges includes creating positive work experiences and positive emotional responses, which, according to Diener (2000), have been shown to influence individual Well-being outcomes. These challenges are intensified by the immense and permanent changes that today's workforce has to face (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004).

Organisations have been reengineered for greater speed, efficiency and flexibility (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004). The modern business arenas are highly competitive, demanding and expensive. Organisations, management and employees are under constant pressure to achieve higher targets (Rothmann, Steyn, & Mostert, 2005). There is a basic need everywhere for people to produce goods or deliver services that the market wants, at the best possible quality and cost. In the South African context, however, there are the additional issues of black economic empowerment, unemployment and job creation, as well as poverty and the HIV/Aids pandemic (All about, 2004/5). Furthermore, organisations are downsizing, outsourcing and restructuring, and with fewer staff doing more work with limited resources, job demands on employees have definitely increased (Rothmann, 2003).

This increase in job demands is especially relevant to service workers, where employees working in "frontline" service jobs interact with customers (Dormann & Zapf, 2004; Wharton, 1993). Interpersonal or psychosocial features of work may be a potential source of stress for workers (Pugliesi, 1999). Suppressing and faking emotional expressions depletes personal resources and predicts job strain for customer-contact employees (Grandey, Fisk, & Steiner, 2005). It is, therefore, of vital

importance for service workers to be able to manage both their own emotions and their interactions with other people (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Their inability to do so, may result in stress, as well as physical and Emotional Exhaustion also known as Burnout (Bakker, Schaufeli, Sixma, & Bosveld, 2001; Zapf, Seifert, Schmutte, Mertini, & Holtz, 2001).

Burnout is a stress outcome typically experienced by employees in the helping industry (Grandey, 2000), and occurs when an employee becomes overly emotionally involved in interactions with customers (Jackson, Schwab, & Schuler, 1986). Burnout can be seen as an indication that employees are no longer able to manage adequately their emotions when interacting with clients (Zapf, 2002). Burnout can be defined as a persistent, negative, work-related state of mind developing in 'normal' individuals, characterised by various physical, psychological and attitudinal symptoms, primarily exhaustion, and accompanied by distress, a sense of reduced effectiveness, decreased motivation and the development of dysfunctional personal and societal attitudes and behaviours at work (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).

Three signs of Burnout are usually evident, namely Emotional Exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach, 1982). In the helping professions, depersonalisation often means treating people like objects (Zapf, 2002). Pines and Aronson (1988) proposed that excessive emotional demands are responsible for the development of Burnout.

The concept of Emotion Work (or Emotional Labour) refers to the quality of interactions between employees and clients. During face-to-face or voice-to-voice interactions, many employees are required to express appropriate emotions as part of their job requirements (Zapf, 2002). Morris and Feldman (1996) defined Emotional Labour as the "effort, planning and control needed to express organisationally desired emotions during interpersonal transactions. [It should be noted that in psychology, the term labour is used when sociological or societal concepts are involved (Zapf, 2002). To be compatible with other fields of work and organisational psychology, the term Emotion Work will be used in this study.]

Employees in service jobs are sometimes required to enhance, fake or suppress

emotions based on display rules stated by the organisation. These are rules regarding the expectations for emotional expression as required by the organisation (Hochschild, 1983). This regulating of emotions involves modifying feelings either by reappraising the event (deep acting), or modifying facial and bodily expression of emotion (surface acting) (Grandey, 2000). Surface acting, therefore, means that employees try to manage the visible aspects of emotions that appear on the 'surface' and which can be noticed by the interaction partner to bring them in line with the organisational display rules, while the inner feelings remain unchanged (Zapf, 2002). Deep acting, on the other hand, is when individuals try to influence what they feel in order to become the role they are asked to display (Hochschild, 1983). Not only the expressive behaviour but also the inner feelings are regulated. According to Ashforth and Humphrey (1993), employees have to spend effort to regulate emotions when displaying deep acting. This is so because there is a need to strive actively to invoke thoughts, images, and memories to induce a certain emotion.

Repeated regulation of emotions may result in negative consequences for the employee, such as Emotional Exhaustion, energy depletion and fatigue Grandey (2000). Cordes and Dougherty (1993) state that employees may detach from customers in an attempt to cope with their feelings, which may lead to negative feelings towards themselves and their work, or sometimes even result in a lower sense of personal accomplishment. The consequences of Emotion Work are not uniformly negative though (Pugliesi, 1999). In fact, it may be very positive when experienced as self-enhancing. When workers are in control of their emotion management, it can also be experienced as empowering (Leidner, 1993). According to Wharton (1993), employees in jobs that require higher levels of Emotion Work reported higher levels of job satisfaction and also indicated that the negative effects of Emotion Work were diminished among those with greater Job Autonomy. It is important to note that other empirical studies on relations between Emotion Work and job satisfaction provided mixed findings (Zapf, 2002).

Job satisfaction is a measure of the employee's evaluation of the job (Grandey, 2000) and is becoming increasingly recognised as a substantial predictor of work-related psychological Well-being (Brough, 2005).

Work Engagement, which may also be seen as a positive consequence of Emotion Work, is defined by Schaufeli and Bakker (2001) as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption. Vigour is associated with high levels of energy and mental resilience, 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 a sense of significance, enthusiasm, pride, inspiration and challenge about one's work. Finally, absorption is when one is totally and happily immersed in one's work, when time passes quickly and it is difficult to detach from it (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2001).

It is now clear from the literature study that Emotion Work can have positive consequences (Engagement) and negative consequences (Burnout). However, according to the conceptual model of Emotion Work proposed by Grandey (2000), certain individual and organisational factors must be taken into account as possible influences on Emotion Work. Individual differences include gender, emotional expressivity, Emotional Intelligence and affectivity (Grandey, 2000). Organisational factors include supervisor and co-worker support, as well as Job Autonomy.

(Please note that for the purpose of this research attention will only be paid to Emotional Intelligence as individual factor, and supervisor and co-worker support as organisational factor).

### *Emotional Intelligence*

Emotional Intelligence, as defined by Kreitner and Kinicki (2004), is the ability to manage oneself and one's relationship in mature and constructive ways. Goleman (1998) includes abilities such as being able to motivate one and persist in the face of frustrations, to control impulse and delay gratification, to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think, to empathise and to hope. Emotional Intelligence calls attention to the necessity of emphasising the human component in business (Vermeulen, 2004). Becoming more emotionally mature by developing Emotional Intelligence is seen as a way to deal more effectively with emotions (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004), while it is also the single biggest factor in producing engaged employees (All about, 2004/5).

### *Supervisor – and Co-worker support*

The importance of interpersonal relationships and Social Support are frequently highlighted within the literature on Well-being and stress (Cooper, 2005). Caplan, Cobb, French, Harrison, and Pinneau (1975) found Social Support to be of major importance to the psychological Well-being of employees. Social Support covers the extent to which people around the employee, such as his/her supervisor, colleagues as well as wife/husband, family and friends provide support by being good listeners or by being persons he/she can rely on when help is needed (Caplan et al., 1975). Support from co-workers and supervisors should create a positive working environment (Schneider & Bowen, 1985). If employees perceive the working climate as being supportive, they may experience more job satisfaction, lowered stress and turnover intentions, as well as higher team performance (Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, & Toth, 1997). In customer service settings, where it is expected from employees to display positive expressions, feeling positive about the environment may mean that less Emotional Labour is necessary. Indirectly, Social Support may help employees cope with stress related to service jobs (Grandey, 2000). Based on various studies on the moderating effect of Social Support on Emotional Dissonance Zapf (2002) concluded that employees are able to cope with Emotional Dissonance with the support of supervisors and colleagues. Emotional Dissonance in the concept of Krumboltz and Geddes (1998) refers to Hochschild's (1983) concept of *surface acting* and *deep acting*, which are two proposed processes of Emotion Work and considered to be the opposite ends of a continuum.

From the above literature discussion, it is evident that psychological Well-being of service workers is an important area of research within small and medium enterprises, especially since the smaller the workplace, the less likely it is to offer health promotion programmes (Collins, 2004). The significant contribution made to the economy by small and medium enterprises could even be greater by increasing the rate of survival of start-ups and new firms (Orford, Herrington, & Wood, 2004). This then concludes the importance of further research on Emotion Work and Well-being within small and medium enterprises.

The following research questions can be formulated based on the above-mentioned description of the research problem:

- How are Emotion Work, Well-being, Emotional Intelligence and organisational factors conceptualised in the literature?
- How valid and reliable are the measure of Emotion Work, Well-being, Emotional Intelligence and organisational factors for a sample of client service workers in small and medium enterprises?
- What is the relationship between Emotion Work, Well-being, Emotional Intelligence and organisational factors among client service workers in small and medium enterprises?
- What are the differences in the experience of Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Social Support and Well-being constructs according to demographic variables for a sample of client service workers in small and medium enterprises?
- Do Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence and Social Support predict Well-being for a sample of client service workers in small and medium enterprises?

In order to answer the above research questions, the following research objectives are set.

## **1.2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The research objectives can be divided into general and specific objectives.

### **1.2.1. General objectives**

The general objective of this research is to determine the relationship between Emotion Work, Well-being, individual and organisational factors for a sample of client service workers within small and medium enterprises.

### **1.2.2. Specific objectives**

1. To conceptualise the relationship between Emotion Work, Well-being, Emotional



Intelligence and organisational factors by conducting a literature review.

2. To determine the validity and reliability of the measures of Emotion Work, Well-being, Emotional Intelligence and organisational factors for a sample of client service workers in small and medium enterprises.
3. To determine the relationship between Emotion Work, Well-being, Emotional Intelligence and organisational factors among client service workers in small and medium enterprises.
4. To determine differences in the experience of Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Social Support and Well-being constructs according to demographic variables for a sample of client service workers in small and medium enterprises.
5. To determine whether Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence and Social Support predict Well-being for a sample of client service workers in small and medium enterprises.

### **1.3. PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH**

A specific paradigm perspective that includes the intellectual climate and the market of intellectual resources, directs the research (Mouton & Marais, 1996).

#### **1.3.1. Intellectual climate**

The intellectual climate refers to the convictions, assumptions and values which do not form part of the empirical goals of the scientific research practice. In social science research, the intellectual climate, therefore, includes beliefs in relation to the nature of social reality (Mouton & Marais, 1996).

#### **1.3.2. Discipline**

This research falls within the margins of the behavioural sciences and more specifically Industrial Psychology. According to Schultz and Schultz (1986), Industrial Psychology can be described as the application of methods, facts and principles of psychology to people at work. It can, furthermore, be defined as the scientific study of human behaviour and the application of knowledge to address

problems in a work-related context. Components of Industrial Psychology as a discipline include career psychology, organisational psychology, personnel psychology, psychometrics, consumer behaviour and ergonomics.

The sub-disciplines of Industrial Psychology that are relevant to this research are Personnel Psychology and Organisational Psychology.

Personnel Psychology is defined by Plug, Louw, Gouws, and Meyer (1997) as the division of Industrial Psychology which concentrates on studying the psychological traits of the worker in relation to his job tasks and other workers.

Organisational Psychology can be seen as the study of human behaviour, attitudes and performance within an organisation, drawing from theory, methods and principles from disciplines such as psychology in order to learn about individual perceptions, values and learning capacities (Gibson, Ivancevich, & Donnelly, 1991).

This research will cross over into these sub-disciplines in terms of determining the effect of Emotion Work on Well-being of HR employees.

### **1.3.3. Meta-theoretical assumptions**

Three paradigms are relevant to this research. Firstly, the literature review is done within the systems theory, and secondly, the empirical study is done within the positivistic and functionalistic paradigms.

#### **1.3.3.1. Literature review**

Comte (1988) states that the systems theory is a school of thought which places emphasis on the arrangement of and relations between the parts or elements of an entity, which connect them as a whole. Plug, Louw, Gouws, and Meyer (1997) define general systems theory as an approach to the studying of systems such as individuals or groups that are characterised by the following: (1) all systems consist of the same general structure, although they can differ significantly in content; (2) all systems form a hierarchy of systems that increase in complexity, and (3) changes in any one

component influence the whole system.

The following basic assumptions are relevant in this regard:

- Client service workers form part of various systems within the small or medium enterprise, as well as larger society and, therefore, it will be to one's advantage to develop at least a basic understanding of how systems work.
- This understanding can improve customer service and performance, which can lead to increased productivity and financial profit.
- Through the systems theory one aims at understanding why specific problems persist, and how they could be eliminated.

#### **1.3.3.2. Empirical study**

The positivistic paradigm is based on the assumption that knowledge gained through the understanding of the laws of human behaviour (in using quantitative data), as well as hypotheses testing, can be utilised for the purpose of making improvements and predictions, as well as future recommendations (Neuman, 1997). Plug et al. (1997) define Positivism as a philosophical school of thought which assumes that knowledge is only applicable to visible phenomena. In psychology, approaches which emphasise objective, empirical and operational methods are associated with Positivism.

The functionalistic paradigm emphasises that units of psychological phenomena can be explained in terms of relationships which return service to enhance human adaptation and survival (Plug et al., 1997).

#### **1.3.4. Market of intellectual resources**

Mouton and Marais (1996) define the market of intellectual resources as the collection of convictions that lend epistemic status of scientific statements.

There are two major types of beliefs which can be identified: theoretical beliefs and methodological beliefs.

#### 1.3.4.1. Theoretical beliefs

Theoretical beliefs are described as being descriptive and interpretative explanations regarding aspects of human behaviour. They include all statements forming part of hypotheses, typologies, models or theories (Mouton & Marais, 1996).

The elements of theoretical beliefs will be discussed in terms of the concepts, theories and models used within this research study.

#### A. Conceptual definitions

The relevant conceptual definitions from the literature review are given below:

- **Well-being:** Wellness may be defined as the state of being free of illness, injury and disease (Browne, 2005). According to Brodsky (1988), psychological Well-being has four specific characteristics, namely: (1) subjective and emotional, (2) a state as opposed to a continuous part of who we are, (3) a product of personal endeavour, and (4) more than the absence of negative affect and personal conflict, but comes from moving towards desired life goals.
- **Service Workers:** Employees working in “frontline” service jobs are central to the service elements of any business enterprise (Wharton, 1993). A unique feature of service jobs is that employees interact with customers (Dormann & Zapf, 2004).
- **Emotional Labour / Emotion Work:** According to Chu (2004), Emotion Work can be defined as the degree of manipulation of one’s inner feelings or outward behaviour to display the appropriate emotion in response to display rules or occupational norms. It is also the effort, planning and control needed to express organisationally desired emotions during interpersonal transactions (Morris & Feldman, 1996). Emotion Work should furthermore be defined as the psychological processes necessary to regulate organisationally desired emotions (Zapf, 2002). According to Hochschild (1983) and Morris and Feldman (1997), Emotion Work possesses three characteristics, namely (1)

Emotion Work occurs in face-to-face or voice-to-voice interactions with clients; (2) emotions are displayed to influence other people's emotions, attitudes and behaviours; and (3) the display of emotions has to follow certain rules.

- **Emotional Dissonance:** Emotional Dissonance occurs when an employee is required to express emotions which are not genuinely felt in the particular situation (Zapf, 2002). It could be seen as a form of person-role conflict, which means that the response of the individual is in conflict with role expectations regarding the display of emotions (Abraham, 1998; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987).
- **Deep Acting:** During deep acting not only the expressive behaviour is regulated, but also the inner feelings (Zapf, 2002). Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) state that there is a need for the employee to strive actively to invoke thoughts, images and memories to induce a certain emotion.
- **Surface Acting:** Zapf (2002) states that surface acting means that employees try to manage the visible aspects of emotions that appear on the "surface" and which can be noticed by the interaction partner to bring them in line with the organisational display rules, while the inner feelings remain unchanged. Surface acting further means that Emotional Dissonance exists between the inner feelings and the outer expression which persists during the interaction (Zapf, 2002).
- **Emotional Intelligence:** It can be seen as a type of social intelligence which involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate between them, and then to be able to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions (Katz, 1998). Goleman (1995) further describes Emotional Intelligence as a different way of being smart. He says success in life is not due to one's IQ. It's rather a result of how well one manages oneself, handles one's relationships, and works with others.
- **Job Autonomy:** Hackman and Oldham (1980) define Job Autonomy as the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence and discretion to the individual to schedule work and determine the procedures used in carrying it out.
- **Burnout:** According to Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998), Burnout can be

defined 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 behaviour at work. Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) state that Burnout consists of three dimensions, namely feelings of Emotional Exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment.

- **Engagement:** Work Engagement is described as an energetic state in which the employee is dedicated to excellent performance at work, and is confident in his or her effectiveness (Schutte, Toppinen, Kalimo, & Schaufeli, 2002). According to Coetzer (2004) Work Engagement is characterised by vigour (high energy) and dedication (strong identification).
- **Co-worker and Supervisory Support:** Support from co-workers and supervisors should create a positive working environment (Schneider & Bowen, 1985). Indirectly, support may help employees cope with the stress of service jobs (Grandey, 2000).
- **Small and Medium Enterprises:** There is no agreed definition of a small or medium enterprise, but in general a small enterprise is described as having less than 50 to 100 employees, while a medium enterprise employs up to 200 people. They are also referred to SMEs (small and medium enterprises), and include profit-making as well as non-profit organisations (What is a small business?, 2007).

## **B. Models and theories**

A model is aimed at classifying and proposing relationships (Mouton & Marais, 1996), whereas theories also specify the relations between variables in an effort to explain human behaviour in a specific population (Huysamen, 1993).

The following models and theories are relevant to this research:

- *Conceptual model of Emotion Work*

The conceptual model of Emotion Work, as developed by Grandey (2000), has not yet been researched on client service workers in small and medium enterprises

and, therefore, testing it in this research population will be of value. The model includes individual differences (such as Emotional Intelligence) as well as organisational factors (such as Supervisory Support), and is developed through the process of reorganising and integrating previous models of Emotional Labour (Grandey, 2000).

- *Emotional Labour theory*

The sociologist Arlie Russel Hochschild's work stemmed from the dramaturgical perspective of customer interactions (Grandey, 2000). This perspective views the customer as being the audience, the employee as the actor and the work environment as the stage (Goffman, 1959). Hochschild (1983) described the term Emotional Labour as managing feelings in order to create a facial and bodily display which is publicly observable (Hochschild, 1983). This means that managing emotions is one way for employees to achieve organisational goals, for example, if an employee expressed mood or anger towards a customer or colleague, it would ruin the performance (Grandey, 2000). Two main ways are offered through which emotions can be managed, namely surface acting and deep acting. Surface acting refers to the regulation of emotional expressions, while deep acting refers to the conscious modifying of feelings in order to express the desired emotion (Grandey, 2000). In cases where organisations control something as personal as emotions, it is experienced as being unpleasant to the employee (Grandey, 2000) and is, therefore, proposed to relate to Burnout and job stress (Hochschild, 1983).

- *Emotional Intelligence theory*

Mayer and Salovey (1993) define Emotional Intelligence as the capacity to understand emotional information and to reason with emotions. Emotionally intelligent people are defined in part as those who regulate their emotions according to a logically consistent model of emotional functioning (Mayer & Salovey, 1995). The four-branch model of skills involved in Emotional Intelligence was introduced by Mayer and Salovey (1993). This model includes the following four areas of Emotional Intelligence abilities:

1. The capacity to accurately perceive emotions.
2. The capacity to use emotions to facilitate thinking.
3. The capacity to understand emotional meanings.
4. The capacity to manage emotions.

#### **1.3.4.2. Methodological beliefs**

Methodological beliefs can be defined as the beliefs concerning the nature of social science as well as scientific research. Traditions which are practised within the philosophy of social sciences include for example positivism or phenomenology, as well as methodological models such as the quantitative or qualitative model (Mouton & Marais, 1996).

The empirical study is presented within the functionalistic and positivistic frameworks. Positivism within the social sciences is viewed by Neuman (1997) as an organised method of combining deductive logic with empirical observations of individual behaviour. This is done in order to discover and confirm a set of probabilistic casual laws which may be used to predict general patterns of human activity (Neuman, 1997).

Empirical evidence will be gathered during this research through following a quantitative approach. This includes a statistical analysis, which is characterised by the measurement of objective facts, a focus on variables, seeking reliability and being value free (Neuman, 1997).

The research methodology followed within this study is described below.

### **1.4. RESEARCH DESIGN**

In order to reach the objectives of this research, a cross-sectional survey design will be used. Cross-sectional designs are used for simultaneously examining groups of subjects in various stages, while the survey describes a technique of data collection in which questionnaires are used to gather data about the identified population (Burns &



Grove, 1993). This design is well suited for the descriptive and predictive functions associated with correlation research, whereby relationships between variables are examined (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1997).

## **1.5. RESEARCH METHOD**

The research method pertaining to the specific objectives consists of two phases, namely a literature review and an empirical study. The results will be presented in the form of a research article.

### **1.5.1 Phase 1: Literature review**

In phase 1 a complete review regarding the following is done:

- Emotional Labour
- Burnout and Engagement
- Emotional Intelligence
- Emotion Work
- Well-being
- Supervisory and co-worker support (Social Support)

### **1.5.2. Phase 2: Empirical study**

Phase 2 consists of the following steps in the form of descriptive research:

#### **Study population**

An availability sample (N=300) will be taken from client service workers in small and medium enterprises.

## Measuring Battery

The measuring battery will consist of questionnaires to test the emotional regulation process and will include measures of Emotion Work, Well-being, individual and organisational factors.

## Emotional Intelligence.

The *Greek Emotional Intelligence Scale (GEIS)* (Tsaousis, 2007) measures four basic emotional skills, namely:

- (1) Expression and Recognition of Emotions – Relates to the ability of the individual to express and recognise accurately their own emotional reactions
- (2) Control of Emotions – Relates to the ability of the individual to control and regulate emotions in themselves and others
- (3) Use of Emotions to Facilitate Thinking - Relates to the ability of the individual to harness their own emotions in order to solve problems via optimism and self-assurance, two emotional states that facilitate inductive reasoning and creativity
- (4) Caring and Empathy – Relates to the willingness of the individual to help other people and his/her ability to comprehend another's feelings, and to re-experience them.

The 53 item instrument demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties, which justifies its use as a reliable and valid measure of EI (Tsaousis, 2007). More specifically, the factor analytic data suggest a four-factor solution, which bears a close resemblance to Mayer and Salovey's (1997) theoretical framework. The Cronbach alpha coefficients for the four factors ranged between 0,80 and 0,92. All scales demonstrated high internal consistency, indicating that they are homogeneous in their measurements. Furthermore, test-retest data covering a four week period indicates the temporal reliability of the GEIS in that correlation coefficients ranged between 0,79 and 0,91 (Tsaousis, 2007). Also according to Tsaousis (2007), data from 5 different studies provide support for good convergent and discriminant validity of the GEIS scales, suggesting that the test taps a fairly broad range of related emotional constructs, such as positive correlation with empathy, social skills, emotional expressiveness, and Well-being, as well as negative correlation with locus of control,

negative affect, low physical and psychological Well-being, and work stress. These findings justify the concurrent validation of the newly developed instrument, and are therefore used in this study.

## **Well-being**

The *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)* (Schaufeli et al., 2002) is used to measure the levels of Work Engagement of the participants. The UWES includes three dimensions, namely vigour, dedication and absorption, which is seen conceptually as the opposite of Burnout and is scored on a seven-point frequency-rating scale, varying from 0 ("never") to 6 ("every day"). The questionnaire consists of 17 questions and includes questions like "I am bursting with energy every day in my work"; "Time flies when I am at work" and "My job inspires me". The alpha coefficients for the three subscales varied between 0,80 and 0,91. The alpha coefficient could be improved ( $\alpha$  varies between 0,78 and 0,89 for the three subscales) by eliminating a few items without substantially decreasing the scale's internal consistency. Storm and Rothmann (2003) obtained the following alpha coefficients for the shortened version of the UWES in a sample of 2 396 members of the South African Police Service: Vigour: 0,78; Dedication: 0,89; Absorption: 0,78. Coetzer (2004) obtained among a sample of employees in an insurance company, the following alpha coefficients: Vigour (0,80), Dedication (0,87), and Absorption (0,69). The short version of the UWES – Afrikaans and English forms are used in this study.

The *Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (English Version) (OLBI)* is used to measure Burnout. Demerouti, Bakker, Vardakou, and Kantas (2002) have developed and offered initial construct validity and evidence for the OLBI. The OLBI is based on a model similar to that of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), however, it features two scales, namely Exhaustion and Disengagement. The most current version of the OLBI features questions that have balanced positive and negative wording (Bakker, Verbeke, & Demerouti, 2004). The OLBI also features questions designed to assess cognitive and physical components of exhaustion (Halbesleben & Demerouti, 2005). Internal consistency of the OLBI is acceptable, with Cronbach's alpha scores ranging from 0,74–0,87; scores are all above 0,70. Test-retest reliability showed significant correlations from time 1 to 2. Factorial validity indicated a two-factor model

(Disengagement and Exhaustion). Construct validity was also proven using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM).

### **Emotion regulation process**

The *Frankfurt Emotion Work Scales (FEWS)* (Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini, & Isic, 1999) is based on the existing literature on Emotion Work, action theory and emotional regulation requirements. The subscales include: The requirement to express positive emotions, the requirements to express and handle negative emotions, the requirement to be sensitive to clients' emotions, and the requirement to show sympathy, emotional regulation possibilities (control), and emotional regulation problems (Emotional Dissonance) and client contact. Scales showed satisfactory reliabilities. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis revealed minor problems with discriminant validity of the scales within samples of a handicapped children's home (N=83), in the hotel business (N=175) and employees working in call-centres (N=250). Construct validation showed that Emotion Work scales were both positively and negatively related with psychological health (Zapf et al., 1999). The Emotion Work Scales that will be used in this study are: the requirement to express positive emotions, the requirement to be sensitive to clients' emotions, client contact and Emotional Dissonance.

### **Organisational factors**

*Social Support Scale.* The construct Social Support is measured with a 10 item questionnaire based on the work of Caplan et al. (1975), which was done on the relation between job demands and worker health. In their findings they state that Social Support appears to be of major importance to the psychological Well-being of the workers. Low support from supervisors and from others at work is associated not only with job dissatisfaction, but also depression (with a correlation of at or above 0,30). The items in the questionnaire cover the extent to which people around the employee provide support by being good listeners or by being persons he/she can rely on when help is needed. The following is a sample of the questions: "How much do each of these people go out of their way to do things to make your work life easier for you?" The respondent is asked to answer this question with regard to three categories

of people, namely (1) Your immediate supervisor, (2) Other people at work, and (3) Your wife/husband, friends and relatives (Caplan et al., 1975). Validity and reliability within a South African context will be established in this study.

### **Statistical Analysis**

The statistical analysis is carried out with the help of the SPSS-programme (SPSS Inc., 2003). Descriptive statistics (e.g. means, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis) is used to analyse the data. Cronbach alpha coefficients are used to determine the internal consistency, homogeneity and un-dimensionality of the measuring instruments (Clark & Watson, 1995). Coefficient alpha contains important information regarding the proportion of variance of the items of a scale in terms of the total variance explained by that particular scale. Principal axis factoring will be done to estimate the number of factors, the presence of outliers and the factorability of the correlation matrices

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients are used to specify the relationships between the variables. In terms of statistical significance, it was decided to set the value at a 95% confidence interval level ( $p \leq 0,05$ ). Effect sizes (Steyn, 1999) were used to determine the practical significance of the findings. A cut-off point of 0,30 medium effect (Cohen, 1988) was set for the practical significance of correlation coefficients.

A stepwise multiple regression analysis is conducted to determine the percentage variance in the dependent variables that is predicted by the independent variables. The effect size (which indicates practical significance) in the case of multiple regressions are given by the following formula (Steyn, 1999):

$$f^2 = R^2 / 1 - R^2$$

A cut-off point of 0,35 large effect (Steyn, 1999) was set for the practical significance.

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) is used to determine the significance of differences between the levels of emotional intelligence, coping strategies, burnout

and engagement. MANOVA tests whether or not mean differences among groups in a combination of dependent variables are likely to have occurred by chance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In MANOVA, a new dependent variable that maximises group differences was created from the set of dependent variables. Wilk's Lambda is used to test the likelihood of the data, on the assumption of equal population mean vectors for all groups, against the likelihood on the assumption that the population mean vectors are identical to those of the sample mean vectors for the different groups.

## **1.6. DIVISION OF CHAPTERS**

The chapters in this mini-dissertation are presented as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction, problem statement and objectives

Chapter 2: Research article

Chapter 3: Conclusions, limitations and recommendations

## **1.7. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter the problem statement and motivation for the research were discussed. The purpose of the research was formulated, the methodology of the research outlined and the methods used for the statistical analysis described.

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CHAPTER 2  
RESEARCH ARTICLE

# EMOTION WORK AND WELL-BEING OF CLIENT SERVICE WORKERS WITHIN SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

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## ABSTRACT

The objective of this research was to determine the relationship between Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Well-being and Social Support of client service workers within small and medium enterprises. A cross-sectional survey design was used. The study population ( $n = 145$ ) consisted of client service workers in small and medium enterprises in the Mpumalanga Province. The Greek Emotional Intelligence Scale, Frankfurt Emotion Work Scales, Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, Oldenburg Burnout Inventory and Social Support Scale, as well as a biographical questionnaire were used as measuring instruments. Cronbach alpha coefficients, factor analysis, inter-item correlation coefficients, Pearson product moment correlation coefficients, stepwise multiple regression analysis and Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) were used to analyse the data. The results indicated a correlation between Emotional Intelligence, Emotion Work and Well-being factors. Emotional Intelligence factors predicted Work Engagement and Emotion Work predicted Emotional Exhaustion. No differences in the experience of Emotional Intelligence, Emotion Work, Social Support and Well-being was found between different demographical groups.

## OPSOMMING

Die doelwit van die navorsing was om die verhouding tussen Emosie-werk, Emosionele Intelligensie, Welstand en Sosiale Ondersteuning van klientediens-werkers binne klein en medium-grootte besighede vas te stel. 'n Dwarssneeopname-ontwerp is in die studie gebruik. Die studiepopulasie ( $n = 145$ ) het bestaan uit kliente-diens-werkers binne klein en medium-grootte besighede in die Mpumalanga Provinsie. Die Griekse Emosionele-Intelligensieskaal, Frankfurt-Emosie-Werk-Skaal, Utrecht-Werksbegeesterings-Vraelys, Oldenburg-Uitbrandingsvraelys en Sosiale Ondersteuning-Skaal, asook 'n biografiese vraelys is gebruik as meetinstrumente. Cronbach alfa-koeffisiënte, faktor-analise, interitem-korrelasiekoeffisiënte, Pearson-produk-momentkorrelasiekoeffisiënte, stapsgewyse meervoudige regressie-analise,

asook meervoudig-variasie analise (MANOVA) is gebruik om die data te ontleed. Die resultate het 'n korrelasie aangetoon tussen Emosionele Intelligensie, Emosie-werk en Welstand faktore. Emosionele Intelligensie faktore het Werksverbintenis voorspel, en Emosie-werk het Emosionele Uitputting voorspel. Geen verskille in die ervaring van Emosionele Intelligensie, Emosie-werk, Sosiale Ondersteuning en Welstand is gevind tussen verskillende demografiese groepe nie.

In recent years, many believed business to be about the ability to manipulate the rules of money (Vermeulen, 2004). Organisations used to devalue the idea of laughter at work, viewing it as a distraction from getting the job done and impeding sound judgement (Grandey, 2000). Luckily, Pink (2005) states that the ground has shifted to such an extent that employers now actively promote play and laughter in the workplace. People are starting to realise that a linear and logical way of thinking is actually counter-productive to the bottom-line results so highly sought after in this time of change and down-sizing and, therefore, the neglect and marginalisation of emotions can have negative consequences for organisations (Clarke, Hope-Hailey, & Kelliher, 2007). In fact, aptitudes such as empathy, humour, playfulness and joyfulness will increasingly determine which organisations flourish and which do not (Pink, 2005). According to Zapf (2002), the topic of emotions in the workplace is starting to receive closer attention by researchers and theorists, seeing as it may assist in explaining important individual and organisational outcomes (Grandey, 2000).

An array of definitions can be found in psychological literature on what exactly emotions are, but they seem to agree that emotions are in essence a reaction to a stimulus which consists of a cognitive, physical and behavioural component (Louw & Edwards, 1994). Emotions are a key element to the notion of self and a strong link can be found between emotions and motivation, behaviour and psychological health (Slaski & Cartwright, 2003; Stanley & Burrows, 2005). Plug, Meyer, Louw, and Gouws (1997) agree in their definition of emotions that it entails more than just feelings, seeing as the whole organism is involved in the experience of emotions. In order to address the physical, mental and social needs of employees, one should not only focus on health (as being the absence of illness or disability) but rather on Well-being which encompasses all these dimensions (Easthope & White, 2006).

Pollard and Rosenberg (2003) define Well-being as a state of successful performance throughout one's life, integrating physical, cognitive and social-emotional functions. These three functions result in productive activities regarded as significant by one's cultural community, fulfilling social relationships and the ability to transcend moderate psychological and environmental problems. Well-being also consists of a subjective dimension in the sense of satisfaction associated with fulfilling one's potential. Cowen (1991) sees Well-being as more than the absence of



psychopathology and describes it as a collection of positive aspects of functioning promoted by (1) the realisation of strong attachment relationships; (2) the attainment of age-appropriate cognitive, interpersonal and coping skills; and (3) exposure to favourable and empowering environments. Within the workplace, employee Wellness refers to all the strategies, action plans and methods organisations use to promote the physical, emotional and mental health of employees to ensure a productive workforce (All about, 2004/5). Achieving Well-being within the workplace makes bottom-line sense, especially since the modern business arena is recognised as being highly competitive and demanding, with the workforce facing immense changes (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004).

Organisations world-wide are in a state of profound transition. There are increasing trends towards globalisation, electronic commerce, rapid technological advances, organisational restructuring (such as downsizing, outsourcing, mergers and acquisitions) and considerable shifts in the nature of careers, job security and the psychological contract at work (All about, 2004/5). Work environments locally and internationally demand more from employees than ever before (Rothmann, 2003). The employment relationship changed dramatically, in effect also altering the type of work people do, when they work and how much they do (Barling, 1999). The expectations of fewer staff having to do more work with limited resources, have led to increased job demands on employees (Rothman, Steyn, & Mostert, 2005).

In the South African context, many additional issues complicate matters even further. These include black economic empowerment, unemployment and job creation, poverty, the HIV/Aids pandemic, government legislation and cultural diversity, to name but a few (All about, 2004/5; Rothmann, 2003). Many South Africans are turning to private enterprise as means of survival in the current economic climate (Clark, 2007). These small and medium entrepreneurial businesses (also known as SMEs) are critical to the economy, forming the basis from which it can expand (The secrets of successful business, 2007). SMEs now form the growth driver of the world's largest economies and are driving much of today's global job creation. Unfortunately it is very difficult for SMEs to compete because the market is saturated and highly competitive (Clark, 2007). The conduct of the employee is central to the success of the company, in that customers' perceptions of quality service are

significantly affected by the nature of the interaction with front line staff (Deery, Iverson, & Walsh, 2002).

Frontline service jobs can be found in any business or industry where services are provided (Wharton, 1993) and involve direct customer contact (Zemke & Schaaf, 1989). Although many people prefer working in a service job based on their social motives and values (Judge & Britz, 1992), interpersonal or psychosocial features of work may be a potential source of stress for them (Pugliesi, 1999). Hochschild (1983) argues that the false nature of feelings and expressions required from client service workers is especially damaging to the employee. Suppressing and faking emotional expressions not only exhausts personal resources and predicts job strain, but may also result in stress as well as physical and Emotional Exhaustion or Burnout (Grandey, Fisk, & Steiner, 2005; Bakker, Schaufeli, Sixma, & Bosveld, 2001; Zapf, Seifert, Schmutte, Mertini, & Holtz, 2001). Burnout is then an indication that employees are no longer able to manage their emotions adequately when interacting with clients (Zapf, 2002).

The term "Burnout" was introduced by Herbert Freudenberger (1974) in the mid-1970's. He used it to describe the symptoms of emotional exhaustion and a loss of motivation and commitment (Freudenberger, 1974). Maslach and Jackson (1986, p.1) 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". Emotional Exhaustion refers to the depletion or draining of emotional resources, while depersonalisation or cynicism means treating people like objects (Zapf, 2002). Another definition comes from Maslach and Leiter (2005) in which they describe Burnout as a psychological syndrome that involves a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors. The consequences of Burnout are potentially serious, seeing as it could lead to deterioration in the quality of service that is provided by employees (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). Burnout also appears to be a contributing factor in job turnover, absenteeism, low morale and job dissatisfaction (Rothmann, 2003). Although causes of Burnout seem to be varied and complex, Pines and Aronson (1988) propose that excessive emotional demands are responsible for the development of Burnout. It seems that employees in service-type professions are particularly prone to Burnout due to intense and demanding person-to-person contact

and interaction, as well as pressure of always having to perform (Hellesoy, Gronhaug, & Kvitastein, 2000). Within these service-worker and customer interactions, Emotion Work (or Emotional Labour) may also contribute to personal conflict and tension (Clarke, et al., 2007). It is important to note that the term Emotion Work is used in this study seeing as the term labour is used in psychology when sociological or societal concepts are involved (Zapf, 2002).

Emotion Work is defined by Hochschild (1983) as managing feelings in order to create an openly noticeable facial and bodily display. Bolton (2005, p. 50) defines Emotion Work as “the act of attempting to change an emotion or feeling so it is appropriate for any given situation”, while Clarke et al. (2007) explain it as either expressing or suppressing emotions for the benefits of others. Another definition comes from Morris and Feldman (1996), who define Emotion Work as “the effort, planning, and control needed to express organisationally desired emotion during interpersonal transactions” (p. 987). They state that Emotion Work consists of four dimensions, namely: (1) frequency of interactions, (2) attentiveness, (3) variety of emotions required, and (4) Emotional Dissonance. According to Pugliesi (1999), Emotion Work refers to various efforts to manage emotional states and displays and involves active strategies to modify, create or alter the expressions of emotions in the course of ongoing relationships and interactions. These strategies can be cognitive, behavioural or physical in character. Emotion Work is typified by three features: (1) it occurs in face-to-face or voice-to-voice interactions with clients, (2) emotions are displayed to influence other people’s emotions, attitudes and behaviours, and (3) the display of emotions has to follow certain rules (Hochschild, 1983; Morris & Feldman, 1997). In short, Emotion Work is the process of regulating both feelings and expressions in order to reach organisational goals (Grandey, 2000). This regulating of emotions involves modifying feelings either by reappraising the event (deep acting), or modifying facial and bodily expression of emotion (surface acting) (Grandey, 2000).

Surface acting, or antecedent-focused emotion regulation, may be desirable to organisations according to Grandey (2000). This is because customers always see the expressions that are mandated by the organisation, even when the employee feels differently. Zapf (2002) explains that surface acting occurs when employees, based on

the display rules of the organisation, try to manage the visible aspects of emotions that appear on the surface, while the inner feelings remain unchanged. Deep acting, on the other hand, occurs through reappraisal or self-talk (Grandey, 2000) and is when individuals try to influence what they feel in order to become the role they are asked to display (Hochschild, 1983). In doing this, not only the expressive behaviour is regulated, but also the inner feelings, which takes much effort from the employee (Zapf, 2002). Deep acting may be required when surface acting seems too mechanical to satisfy a customer's expectation of genuine interpersonal relationships (Zapf, 2002).

Managing emotions within the workplace setting is becoming more and more important as the economy becomes increasingly service-oriented (Gosserand, 2003). In order to maintain loyal customers and repeat business, employees in service jobs are sometimes required to enhance, fake or suppress emotions based on display rules stated by the organisation (Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983). According to Ekman (1973), these display rules are norms or standards of behaviour indicating which emotions are appropriate in a given situation, but also how the emotions should be publicly expressed. The repeated requirement of regulating emotions can result in high psychological costs for service workers, such as Emotional Exhaustion, energy depletion and fatigue (Grandey, 2000). Although Hochschild (1983) states that the alienation of one's feelings would cause psychological ill health, Pugliesi (1999) suggests that the consequences of Emotion Work are not uniformly negative. Studies suggest that it may be experienced as empowering when Emotion Work involves management of others' emotions (Leidner, 1993; Stenross & Kleiman, 1989; Tolich, 1993), as well as diminish status difference between employees and clients (Gimlin, 1996). Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) suggest that Emotion Work is beneficial in the sense that it contributes to making interactions more predictable, thus, reducing uncertainty at work.

Engagement, which can be seen as another positive consequence of Emotion Work, is defined by Schaufeli and Bakker (2001) as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour (high levels of energy and mental resilience), dedication (deriving a sense of significance from one's work) and absorption (being immersed in one's work). Furthermore, Engagement should not be seen as a

momentary and specific state, but rather as a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state which is not focused on a particular object, event, individual or behaviour (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002). Maslach and Leiter (1997) on the other hand, describe Work Engagement as being characterised by energy, involvement and efficacy.

It is evident from the above literature that Emotion Work can have both positive consequences (Engagement) and negative consequences (Burnout). Grandey (2000) states that it is also essential to consider certain individual and organisational factors which may influence Emotion Work (see Figure 1). Although there are many individual and organisational factors that contribute to Emotion Work, only Emotional Intelligence (as individual factor) and supervisor and co-worker support (as organisational factors) will be focused on in this study.

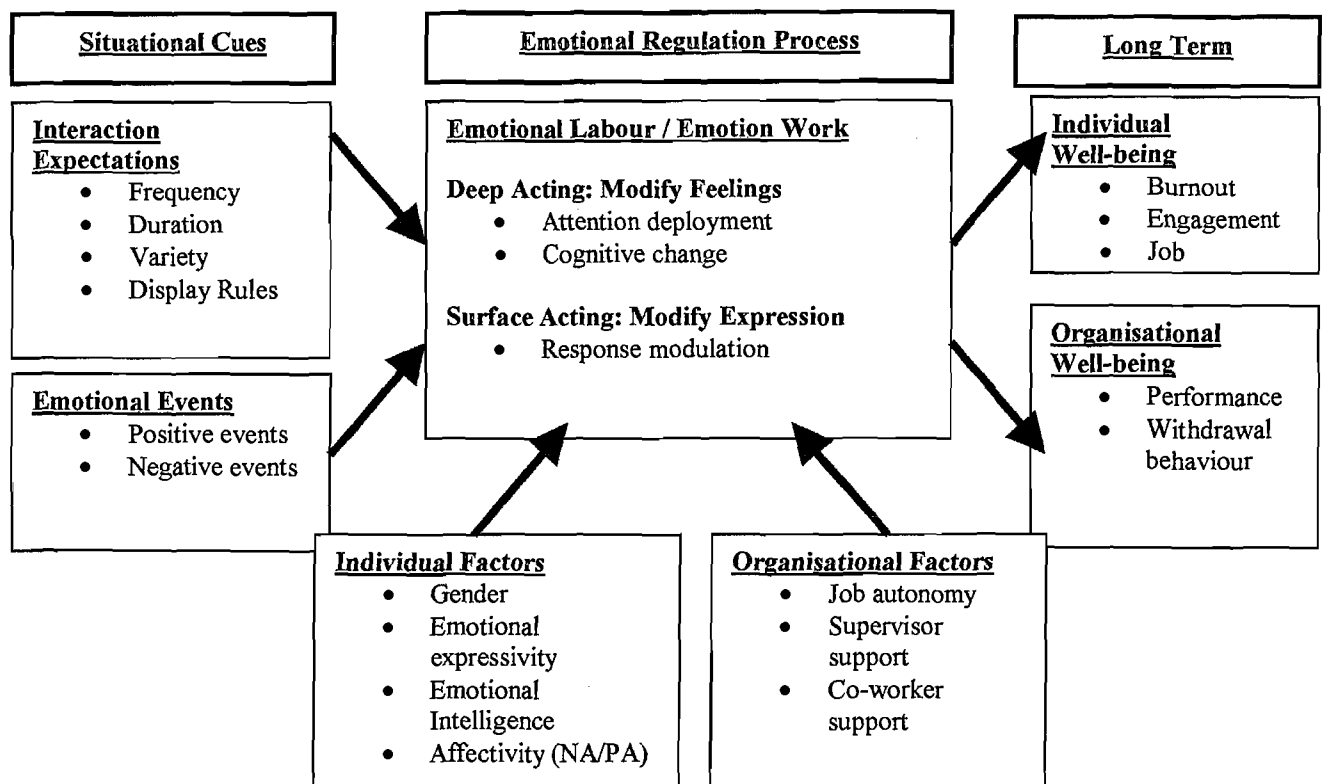


Figure 1. Proposed conceptual framework of emotion regulation performed in the work setting. NA = negative affect; PA = positive affect

### *Emotional Intelligence*

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is defined as the capacity to process emotional information accurately and efficiently, while emotionally intelligent people are viewed as those who regulate their emotions according to a logically consistent model of emotional functioning (Mayer & Salovey, 1995). Katz (1998) defines EI as a type of social intelligence which involves the ability to monitor one's own emotions and that of others, to discriminate between the different emotions, and to then use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. Goleman (1995) describes EI as a different way of being smart. He defines it as the capacity for recognising one's own feelings and those of others, motivating oneself, and managing emotions well in oneself and one's relationships. Another definition is that of Bar-on (1997) where EI is seen as an umbrella concept of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies and skills, which helps an individual become more efficient in coping with environmental demands and pressures. According to Vermeulen (2004), EI calls attention to the necessity of emphasising the human component in business, while it is also the single biggest factor in producing engaged employees (All about, 2004/5). In accordance with Salovey, Hsee, and Mayer (1993), who state that effective affect regulation is one of the signs of strong Emotional Intelligence, Vitello-Cicciu (2002) considers EI to be an asset in contexts where it is important to understand other people and is, therefore, a desired characteristic in service work (Grandey, 2000). McQueen (2004), however, suggests that although the link between Emotional Intelligence and Emotion Work is significant, it remains a fruitful area for further research.

### *Supervisor – and Co-worker support*

Various studies have emphasised the important influence of interpersonal relationships and Social Support on Well-being and stress (Cooper, 2005). According to research by Caplan, Cobb, French, Harrison, & Pinneau (1975), Social Support covers the extent to which people around the employee, such as his/her supervisor, colleagues as well as wife/husband, family and friends, provide support by being good listeners or by being persons he/she can rely on when help is needed. Supervisor and co-worker support are critical to emotional Well-being and professional effectiveness (Slattery, 2004), while the situation in which employees work, may affect the level and type of Emotion Work they experience (Grandey, 2000). A positive perception of the work environment, may relate to job satisfaction, diminished stress and turnover,

as well as higher team performance (Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, & Toth, 1997). Being able to disclose of emotional events (such as talking to other people) is a method of coping with stress and a buffer against health risks (Pennebaker, 1990). Barling, Kelloway, and Frone (2005) found Social Support to be a contributing factor in reducing work-family conflict. Through various studies, Zapf (2002) concluded that employees are able to cope with Emotional Dissonance through the support of supervisors and colleagues.

The above literature discussion is based on the conceptual model of Emotion Work by Grandey (2000), and emphasises the importance of research on the psychological Well-being of service workers. Many studies have been done previously on Emotion Work and Well-being, within a variety of populations such as:

- nurses (Grove & Erickson, 2006),
- supermarket clerks (Tolich, 1993),
- fire-fighters (Scott & Myers, 2005),
- call centre employees (Lewig & Dollard, 2003),
- nursing homes care workers (Lopez, 2006),
- teachers (Isenbarger & Zembylas, 2006; Näring, Briët, & Brouwers, 2006)
- police officers (Pogrebin & Poole, 1995; Schaible, 2006), and
- the hospitality industry (Chu, 2004).

It has, however, not yet been investigated within small and medium enterprises in South Africa, and is consequently the focus of this study.

According to the literature study the following hypotheses can be investigated:

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a correlation between Emotional Intelligence, Emotion Work, Social Support and Well-being within a sample of service workers within small and medium enterprises.

H<sub>2</sub>: Emotional Intelligence, Emotion Work and Social Support predict Well-being within a sample of service workers within small and medium enterprises.

H<sub>3</sub>: There are differences in demographical groups in the experience of Emotional Intelligence, Emotion Work and Social Support and Well-being within a sample of service workers within small and medium enterprises.

## **1. RESEARCH METHOD**

### **1.1. Research Design**

In order to reach the objectives of this research, a cross-sectional survey design was used. Cross-sectional designs are used for simultaneously examining groups of subjects in various stages, while the survey describes a technique of data collection in which questionnaires are used to gather data about the identified population (Burns & Grove, 1993). This design is well suited for the descriptive and predictive functions associated with correlation research, whereby relationships between variables are examined (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1997).

### **1.2. Participants**

An availability sample (N=145) was taken from client service workers in small and medium enterprises in Mpumalanga Province. According to Table 1, the participants were predominantly female (67,6%). The sample consisted of White (90,3%), African (3,4%), Coloured (2,1%) and Indian (3,4%) participants, of which 80,0 % were Afrikaans and 16,6 % English speaking. Other African languages, including Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, isiZulu, isiTsonga, isiSwati, isiXhosa, isiNdebele and Tshivenda made up a representation of 2,8%. The participants' ages ranged mostly between 20 and 29 (42,8%), while the majority of participants achieved a highest qualification of Grade 12 (56,6%). Service departments in which they operate within the organisation included Reception (11,0%), Sales (55,9%), Secretarial (6,2%), Service (16,6%) and Other (9,7%).



Table 1

*Characteristics of the Participants (N=145)*

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	17-19	7	4,8
	20-29	62	42,8
	30-39	39	26,9
	40-49	22	15,2
	50-59	11	7,6
	60-69	3	2,1
	Missing values	1	0,7
Gender	Male	46	31,7
	Female	98	67,6
	Missing values	1	0,7
Race	White	131	90,3
	African	5	3,4
	Coloured	3	2,1
	Indian	5	3,4
	Missing Values	1	0,7
Language	Afrikaans	116	80,0
	English	24	16,6
	African Languages	4	2,8
	Missing Values	1	0,7
Education / Qualification	Below Grade 10	7	4,8
	Grade 10	14	9,7
	Grade 11	4	2,8
	Grade 12	82	56,6
	Diploma	24	16,5
	Degree	8	5,5
	Post Graduate Degree	2	1,4
	Other	3	2,1
	Missing Values	1	0,7
Department	Reception	16	11,0
	Sales	81	55,9
	Secretarial	9	6,2
	Service	24	16,6
	Other	14	9,7
	Missing Values	1	0,7

**1.3. Measuring Battery**

The measuring battery consisted of questionnaires to test the emotional regulation process and included measures of Emotion Work, Well-being, individual and organisational factors.

## **Emotional Intelligence.**

The *Greek Emotional Intelligence Scale (GEIS)* (Tsaousis, 2007) measures four basic emotional skills, namely:

- (1) Expression and Recognition of Emotions – Relates to the ability of the individual to express and recognise accurately their own emotional reactions.
- (2) Control of Emotions – Relates to the ability of the individual to control and regulate emotions in themselves and others.
- (3) Use of Emotions to Facilitate Thinking - Relates to the ability of the individual to harness their own emotions in order to solve problems via optimism and self-assurance, two emotional states that facilitate inductive reasoning and creativity.
- (4) Caring and Empathy – Relates to the willingness of the individual to help other people and his/her ability to comprehend another's feelings, and to re-experience them.

The 53 item instrument demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties, which justifies its use as a reliable and valid measure of EI (Tsaousis, 2007). More specifically, the factor analytic data suggest a four-factor solution, which bears a close resemblance to Mayer and Salovey's (1997) theoretical framework. The Cronbach alpha coefficients for the four factors ranged between 0,80 and 0,92. All scales demonstrated high internal consistency, indicating that they are homogeneous in their measurements. Furthermore, test-retest data covering a four week period indicates the temporal reliability of the GEIS in that correlation coefficients ranged between 0,79 and 0,91 (Tsaousis, 2007). Also according to Tsaousis (2007), data from 5 different studies provide support for good convergent and discriminant validity of the GEIS scales, suggesting that the test taps a fairly broad range of related emotional constructs, such as positive correlation with empathy, social skills, emotional expressiveness, and Well-being, as well as negative correlation with locus of control, negative affect, low physical and psychological Well-being, and work stress. These findings justify the concurrent validation of the newly developed instrument and are, therefore, used in this study.

## Well-being

The *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)* (Schaufeli et al., 2002) is used to measure the levels of Work Engagement of the participants. The UWES includes three dimensions, namely vigour, dedication and absorption, which is conceptually seen as the opposite of Burnout and is scored on a seven-point frequency-rating scale, varying from 0 (“never”) to 6 (“every day”). The questionnaire consists of 17 questions and includes questions such as “I am bursting with energy every day in my work”; “Time flies when I am at work” and “My job inspires me”. The alpha coefficients for the three subscales varied between 0,80 and 0,91. The alpha coefficient could be improved ( $\alpha$  varies between 0,78 and 0,89 for the three subscales) by eliminating a few items without substantially decreasing the scale’s internal consistency. Storm and Rothmann (2003) obtained the following alpha coefficients for the shortened version of the UWES in a sample of 2 396 members of the South African Police Service: Vigour: 0,78; Dedication: 0,89; Absorption: 0,78. Coetzer (2004) obtained among a sample of employees in an insurance company, the following alpha coefficients: Vigour (0,80), Dedication (0,87), and Absorption (0,69). The short version of the UWES – Afrikaans and English forms are used in this study.

The *Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (English Version) (OLBI)* is used to measure Burnout. Demerouti, Bakker, Vardakou, and Kantas (2002) have developed and offered initial construct validity and evidence for the OLBI. The OLBI is based on a model similar to that of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), however, it features two scales, namely Exhaustion and Disengagement. The most current version of the OLBI features questions that have balanced positive and negative wording (Bakker, Verbeke, & Demerouti, 2004). The OLBI also features questions designed to assess cognitive and physical components of exhaustion (Halbesleben & Demerouti, 2005). Internal consistency of the OLBI is acceptable, with Cronbach’s alpha scores ranging from 0,74–0,87; scores are all above 0,70. Test-retest reliability showed significant correlations from time 1 to 2. Factorial validity indicated a two-factor model (Disengagement and Exhaustion). Construct validity was also proven using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM).

## **Emotion regulation process**

The *Frankfurt Emotion Work Scales (FEWS)* (Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini, & Isic, 1999) is based on the existing literature on Emotion Work, action theory and emotional regulation requirements. The subscales include: The requirement to express positive emotions, the requirements to express and handle negative emotions, the requirement to be sensitive to clients' emotions, and the requirement to show sympathy, emotional regulation possibilities (control), and emotional regulation problems (Emotional Dissonance) and client contact. Scales showed satisfactory reliabilities. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis revealed minor problems with discriminant validity of the scales within samples of a handicapped children's home (N=83), in the hotel business (N=175) and employees working in call-centres (N=250). Construct validation showed that Emotion Work scales were both positively and negatively related with psychological health (Zapf et al., 1999). The Emotion Work Scales that will be used in this study are: the requirement to express positive emotions, the requirement to be sensitive to clients' emotions, client contact and Emotional Dissonance.

## **Organisational factors**

The *Social Support Scale*. The construct Social Support is measured with a 10 item questionnaire based on the work of Caplan et al. (1975) which was done on the relation between job demands and worker health. In their findings they state that Social Support appears to be of major importance to the psychological Well-being of the workers. Low support from supervisors and from others at work is associated not only with job dissatisfaction, but also depression (with a correlation of at or above 0,30). The items in the questionnaire cover the extent to which people around the employee provide support by being good listeners or by being persons he/she can rely on when help is needed. The following is a sample of the questions: "How much do each of these people go out of their way to do things to make your work life easier for you?" The respondent is asked to answer this question with regard to three categories of people, namely (1) Your immediate supervisor, (2) Other people at work, and (3) Your wife/husband, friends and relatives (Caplan et al., 1975). Validity and reliability within a South African context will be established in this study.

#### 1.4. Statistical Analysis

The statistical analysis was carried out with the help of the SPSS-programme (SPSS Inc., 2003). Descriptive statistics (e.g. means, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis) was used to analyse the data. Cronbach alpha coefficients were used to determine the internal consistency, homogeneity and un-dimensionality of the measuring instruments (Clark & Watson, 1995). Coefficient alpha contains important information regarding the proportion of variance of the items of a scale in terms of the total variance explained by that particular scale. Principal axis factoring was done to estimate the number of factors, the presence of outliers and the factorability of the correlation matrices

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were used to specify the relationships between the variables. In terms of statistical significance, it was decided to set the value at a 95% confidence interval level ( $p \leq 0,05$ ). Effect sizes (Steyn, 1999) were used to determine the practical significance of the findings. A cut-off point of 0,30 medium effect (Cohen, 1988) was set for the practical significance of correlation coefficients.

A stepwise multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the percentage variance in the dependent variables that is predicted by the independent variables. The effect size (which indicates practical significance) in the case of multiple regressions are given by the following formula (Steyn, 1999):

$$f^2 = R^2 / 1 - R^2$$

A cut-off point of 0,35 large effect (Steyn, 1999) was set for the practical significance.

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to determine the significance of differences between the levels of emotional intelligence, coping strategies, burnout and engagement. MANOVA tests whether or not mean differences among groups in a combination of dependent variables are likely to have occurred by chance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In MANOVA, a new dependent variable that maximises group differences was created from the set of dependent variables. Wilk's Lambda is

used to test the likelihood of the data, on the assumption of equal population mean vectors for all groups, against the likelihood on the assumption that the population mean vectors are identical to those of the sample mean vectors for the different groups.

## RESULTS

The descriptive statistics and Cronbach alpha coefficients of the GEIS, FEWS, OLBI, UWES and Social Support Scale are given in Table 2.

Table 2

*Descriptive statistics and Alpha coefficients of GEIS, FEWS, OLBI, UWES and Social Support Scale*

Item	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	$\alpha$
<b><u>Well-being</u></b>					
<b>Engagement</b>					
Work Engagement	59,15	13,73	-0,73	1,56	0,93
<b>Burnout</b>					
Disengagement	6,31	1,55	0,78	2,34	0,70
Emotional Exhaustion	12,67	2,35	0,89	0,31	0,77
<b><u>Social Support</u></b>					
Social Support – Co-worker	11,16	3,16	-0,61	-0,48	0,86
Social Support - Supervisor	12,07	3,19	-1,13	0,68	0,95
Social Support - Family	14,85	4,16	-0,94	0,35	0,88
<b><u>Emotion Work</u></b>					
Emotional Dissonance	11,58	3,88	0,29	-0,51	0,81
Display of Client Care	11,37	3,92	0,11	-0,86	0,81
Extent Client Interaction	11,83	2,84	-1,20	0,94	0,73
<b><u>Emotional Intelligence</u></b>					
Emotion Expression Recognition	25,92	4,32	0,15	-0,08	0,73
Emotion Control	30,23	5,24	-0,17	-0,09	0,80
Emotion Facilitate Thinking	18,42	2,51	-0,56	0,63	0,67
Caring and Empathy	30,46	3,81	-0,63	0,59	0,77

From the information supplied in Table 2, it is evident that most of the scales of the measuring instruments have relatively normal distributions with low skewness and kurtosis, except for Disengagement, supervisor support and extent client interaction. The Cronbach alpha coefficients of all the measuring instruments are considered to be acceptable, compared to the guidelines of  $\alpha > 0,70$  (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), except for the alpha coefficient of Emotion Facilitate Thinking which is below the accepted 0,70 guideline. It, therefore, appears as if most of the measuring instruments have acceptable levels of internal consistency.

A principal axis factoring analysis was done on the 17 items of the UWES (measuring engagement) and showed a one factor solution explaining 47% of the total variance. The scree plot also showed a sharp break after the first factor. It was decided to extract one factor by using an oblimin rotation that also explained 47% of the total variance. This factor was labelled Work Engagement.

A principal axis factoring analysis was conducted on the 16 items of the OBLI (measuring burnout). Analysis of eigen values larger than one indicated a five factor solution explaining 62% of the total variance. However, the scree plot showed a sharp break after the second factor. It was decided to extract two factors (also based on the theory of burnout) using an oblimin rotation. The two factors explained 40% of the total variance and were labelled: Disengagement and Emotional Exhaustion.

A principal axis factoring analysis was done on the ten items of the Social Support Scale and showed 3 factors (with eigen values larger than one) explaining 81% of the total variance. It was decided to extract three factors by using an oblimin rotation that also explained 81% of the total variance. Items loaded on the three factors as indicated in the measurement instrument: Social Support – Co-worker, Social Support-Supervisor and Social Support Family.

A principal axis factoring analysis was performed on the 17 items of the Frankfurt Emotion Works Scales used in this study. Analysis of eigen values larger than one indicated a five factor solution explaining 65% of the total variance. However, the scree plot showed a sharp break after the third factor. An oblimin rotation was used to

extract three factors explaining 50% of the total variance. The three factors were labelled Emotional Dissonance, Display of Client Care and Extent of Client Interaction.

A principle axis factoring analysis with oblique direct oblimin rotation was performed on the 52 items of the GEIS. The cut-off value of 0,30 was set for inclusion of a variable in the interpretation of a factor. According to the results, a four-factor solution emerged, accounting for 75% of the total variance. Each factor is described below (Tsaousis, 2007):

Factor 1 was named Emotion Expression/Recognition and relates to the ability of the individual to express and recognise his/her own emotional reactions accurately. Examples of items included in this sub-scale are: *"I find it difficult to describe exactly what I feel with words"* and *"I am unable to explain my emotional state to others"*.

Factor 2 was termed Control of Emotion and relates to the ability of the individual to control and regulate emotions in themselves and others. Examples of items included in this sub-scale are: *"I get carried away by emotions of anger"* and *"When I am under pressure I snap"*.

Factor 3 was termed Use of Emotions to Facilitate Thinking which relates to the ability of the individual to harness their own emotions in order to solve problems via optimism and self-assurance, which in turn facilitate inductive reasoning and creativity. Examples of items included in this sub-scale are: *"I think of the positive side of things"* and *"Usually, my personal problems do not affect my performance at work"*.

Factor 4 was named Caring and Empathy and relates to the willingness of the individual to help other people and his / her ability to understand someone else's feelings, as well as re-experience them. Examples of items included in this sub-scale are: *"I respond to the emotions of others"* and *"I sympathise with others' personal problems"*.



The results of the factor analysis on the GEIS are shown in Table 3. Loading of variable on factors, communalities and percent variance are shown. Variables are ordered and grouped by size of loadings to facilitate interpretation. Labels for each factor are suggested in a footnote.

Table 3

*Factor Loadings, Communalities ( $h^2$ ), Percentage Variance for Principal Factors Extraction and Direct Oblimin Rotation on GEIS items*

Item	F <sub>1</sub>	F <sub>2</sub>	F <sub>3</sub>	F <sub>4</sub>	$h^2$
43 – I find it difficult to describe exactly what I feel with words.	<b>0,63</b>	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,48
52 – When I try to help someone, I unintentionally give directions by strongly criticising them.	<b>0,60</b>	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,61
13 – I am unable to explain my emotional state to others.	<b>0,60</b>	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,38
20 – I find it difficult to express my emotions to others.	<b>0,57</b>	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,44
44 – It's difficult for me to be optimistic.	<b>0,56</b>	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,60
18 – I believe that few people understand my emotions.	<b>0,53</b>	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,44
4 – Most people cannot understand exactly what I feel.	<b>0,48</b>	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,45
11 – I am careful not to reveal my emotions to others.	<b>0,45</b>	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,41
6 – When I am under pressure I snap.	0,00	<b>0,68</b>	0,00	0,00	0,51
35 – I get carried away by emotions of anger.	0,00	<b>0,65</b>	0,00	0,00	0,57
49 – Prior to important events, I feel tense.	0,00	<b>0,60</b>	0,00	0,00	0,73
15 – I often get angry and afterwards I find my anger inexcusable.	0,00	<b>0,55</b>	0,00	0,00	0,59
16 – My worry and stress do not decrease my ability to complete any task.	0,00	<b>0,54</b>	0,00	0,00	0,47
31 – I usually control my anger.	0,00	<b>0,53</b>	0,00	0,00	0,32
47 – When I am experiencing a sad event, I react intensely.	0,00	<b>0,52</b>	0,00	0,00	0,33
2 – I often have conflicting emotions for the same persons.	0,00	<b>0,50</b>	0,00	0,00	0,34
7 – When I am upset, everything bothers me.	0,00	<b>0,50</b>	0,00	0,00	0,58
22 – I think of the positive side of things.	0,00	0,00	<b>0,69</b>	0,00	0,56
12 – Most of the times, I believe that things will go well for me.	0,00	0,00	<b>0,65</b>	0,00	0,48
25 – Usually, my personal problems do not affect my performance at work.	0,00	0,00	<b>0,55</b>	0,00	0,54
40 – I function more based on the hope for success and less with the fear of failure.	0,00	0,00	<b>0,47</b>	0,00	0,59
24 – I am always willing to help someone who is confronted with personal problems.	0,00	0,00	0,00	<b>0,75</b>	0,64
21 – I sympathise with others' personal problems.	0,00	0,00	0,00	<b>0,75</b>	0,59
46 – I show my concern to others.	0,00	0,00	0,00	<b>0,65</b>	0,46
34 – I respond to the emotions of others.	0,00	0,00	0,00	<b>0,61</b>	0,48
51 – When someone is talking to me about his/her problems, I almost feel like I have experienced these problems myself.	0,00	0,00	0,00	<b>0,57</b>	0,36
10 – I believe that I am a person who helps and is considerate of others.	0,00	0,00	0,00	<b>0,56</b>	0,48
28 – When I am conversing with someone, I am concentrated to what he/she is telling me.	0,00	0,00	0,00	<b>0,48</b>	0,41
50 – I can easily understand what someone else feels by putting myself in his/her position.	0,00	0,00	0,00	<b>0,46</b>	0,26
Variance explained	17%	8%	6%	4%	

F<sub>1</sub> Emotion Expression/Recognition, F<sub>2</sub> Control Emotion, F<sub>3</sub> Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking, F<sub>4</sub> Caring & Empathy

The product-moment correlation coefficients between Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Well-being (Burnout and Engagement) and Social Support are reported in Table 4.

As is evident from Table 4, all of the following constructs mentioned in the discussion below, are statistically and practically significant.

Disengagement is positively correlated with Emotional Exhaustion (medium effect) and negatively correlated (medium effect) with Emotion Expression/Recognition, Emotion Control, Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking and Work Engagement. Emotional Exhaustion is positively correlated with Emotional Dissonance (medium effect) and negatively correlated with Emotion Expression/Recognition (medium effect). Emotional Dissonance is positively correlated with Display of Client Care (medium effect), while Display of Client Care is positively correlated with Extent of Client Interaction (medium effect) as well as Caring and Empathy (medium effect). Emotion Expression/Recognition is positively correlated (medium effect) with both Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking and Work Engagement. Emotion Control is positively correlated with Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking (medium effect), while it in turn is positively correlated with Work Engagement (medium effect). Finally, Social Support from co-workers is positively correlated with Social Support from supervisors and family (large effect), and Social Support from supervisors is positively correlated with Social Support from family (medium effect).

H<sub>1</sub> is therefore partially accepted.

Table 4

*Correlation Coefficients between Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Well-being (Burnout & Engagement) and Social Support (N=145)*

	Disengagement	Emotional Exhaustion	Emotional Dissonance	Display of Client Care	Extent Client Interaction	Emotion Expression/Recognition	Emotion Control	Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking	Caring and Empathy	Work Engagement	Social Support – Co-worker	Social Support – Supervisor	Social Support – Family
Disengagement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Emotional Exhaustion	0,33**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Emotional Dissonance	0,96	0,32**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Display of Client Care	-0,14	0,04	0,33**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Extent Client Interaction	0,04	0,21*	0,13	0,34**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Emotion Expression/Recognition	-0,30**	-0,31**	-0,13	0,10	-0,04	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Emotion Control	-0,30**	-0,26*	-0,19	0,05	-0,04	0,22*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking	-0,32**	-0,22*	-0,14	0,13	-0,10	0,40**	0,43**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Caring and Empathy	-0,24*	0,04	0,03	0,30**	0,06	0,23*	0,15	0,19	-	-	-	-	-
Work Engagement	-0,48**	-0,16	-0,17*	0,17*	0,20*	0,39**	0,21*	0,45**	0,25*	-	-	-	-
Social Support – Co-worker	-0,07	-0,06	-0,06	0,16	0,12	0,01	-0,02	0,04	0,14	-0,01	-	-	-
Social Support – Supervisor	-0,15	-0,03	-0,08	0,14	0,08	0,07	0,04	0,16	0,14	0,10	0,58***	-	-
Social Support – Family	-0,06	-0,12	-0,02	0,21*	0,16	-0,03	-0,04	0,13	0,07	0,02	0,53***	0,35**	-

\* Correlation is significant at the 0,01 level

+ Correlation is practically significant  $r \geq 0,30$  (medium effect)

++ Correlation is practically significant  $r \geq 0,50$  (large effect)

The result of a multiple regression analysis with Work Engagement as dependant variable and Emotion Work, Social Support and Emotional Intelligence as independent variables is displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

*Multiple Regression Analysis with Work Engagement as dependant variable*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$
		<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Beta</i>						
1	(Constant)	59,70	7,94		7,50	0,00	2,20	0,27	0,07	0,04
	EmotionalDissonance	-0,65	0,35	-0,20	-1,89	0,06				
	DisplayClientCare	0,74	0,35	0,23	2,10	0,04				
	ExtentClientInteraction	-0,17	0,53	-0,04	-0,32	0,75				
2	(Constant)	61,20	10,05		6,09	0,00	1,50	0,30	0,09	0,02
	EmotionalDissonance	-0,74	0,36	-0,23	-2,09	0,04				
	DisplayClientCare	0,86	0,37	0,27	2,36	0,02				
	ExtentClientInteraction	-0,08	0,53	-0,02	-0,14	0,89				
	SSCoworker	-0,44	0,55	-0,11	-0,80	0,43				
	SSSupervisor	0,50	0,47	0,13	1,07	0,29				
	SSFFamily	-0,27	0,40	-0,09	-0,68	0,50				
3	(Constant)	-4,83	19,89		-0,24	0,81	3,10	0,53	0,29	0,20
	EmotionalDissonance	-0,42	0,34	-0,13	-1,21	0,23				
	DisplayClientCare	0,33	0,38	0,10	0,88	0,38				
	ExtentClientInteraction	0,83	0,54	0,17	1,53	0,13				
	SSCoworker	-0,36	0,51	-0,09	-0,70	0,49				
	SSSupervisor	0,29	0,44	0,07	0,65	0,52				
	SSFFamily	-0,22	0,38	-0,07	-0,58	0,57				
	EmotionExpressionRecognition	0,81	0,31	0,29	2,70	0,01				
	EmotionControl	-0,19	0,28	-0,08	-0,70	0,49				
	EmotionUseFacilitateThinking	1,57	0,69	0,27	2,28	0,02				
	CaringEmpathy	0,47	0,40	0,14	1,17	0,25				

a Dependent Variable: WorkEngagement

When Emotion Work (Extent of Client Interaction, Emotional Dissonance and Display of Client Care) was entered into the first step of the multiple regression analysis, a non significant model was produced ( $F = 2,20$ ;  $p > 0,05$ ), explaining only 7% of the variance ( $R^2 = 0,07$ ). Entering Social Support variables into the second model also made no significant difference ( $F = 1,50$ ;  $p > 0,05$ ); explaining only 9% of the variance ( $R^2 = 0,09$ ). However, when Emotional Intelligence factors were entered into the third step, a statistical significant model was produced ( $F = 3,10$ ,  $p < 0,05$ )

with an increase of 20 % ( $\Delta R^2 = 20$ ) of the variance of Work Engagement predicted. More specifically it was Emotion Expression/Recognition ( $\beta = 0,29$ ;  $t = 2,70$  ; $p = 0,01$ ) and Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking ( $\beta = 0,27$  ;  $t = 2,28$  ; $p = 0,02$  ) that were the most significant predictors of Work Engagement. Overall, Emotion Work, Social Support and Emotional Intelligence predicted 29 % of the variance Work Engagement.

The result of a multiple regression analysis with Disengagement as dependant variable and Emotion Work, Social Support and Emotional Intelligence as independent variables is displayed in Table 6.

Table 6

*Multiple Regression Analysis with Disengagement as dependant variable*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>						
1 (Constant)	5,94	0,79		7,57	0,00	1,90	0,25	0,06	0,03
ExtentClientInteraction	0,08	0,05	0,17	1,53	0,13				
DisplayClientCare	-0,07	0,04	-0,22	-2,02	0,05				
EmotionalDissonance	0,01	0,04	0,02	0,13	0,90				
2 (Constant)	5,95	0,98		6,06	0,00	1,60	0,32	0,10	0,04
ExtentClientInteraction	0,08	0,05	0,16	1,50	0,14				
DisplayClientCare	-0,08	0,04	-0,26	-2,32	0,02				
EmotionalDissonance	0,01	0,04	0,04	0,37	0,71				
SSCoworker	-0,05	0,05	-0,12	-0,90	0,37				
SSSupervisor	-0,04	0,05	-0,10	-0,83	0,41				
SSFFamily	0,07	0,04	0,23	1,76	0,08				
3 (Constant)	13,23	1,92		6,89	0,00	3,50	0,55	0,30	0,20
ExtentClientInteraction	-0,02	0,05	-0,04	-0,40	0,70				
DisplayClientCare	-0,01	0,04	-0,03	-0,25	0,80				
EmotionalDissonance	-0,02	0,03	-0,07	-0,65	0,52				
SSCoworker	-0,04	0,05	-0,11	-0,85	0,40				
SSSupervisor	0,01	0,04	0,01	0,03	0,98				
SSFFamily	0,06	0,04	0,18	1,53	0,13				
EmotionExpressionRecognition	-0,06	0,03	-0,23	-2,10	0,03				
EmotionControl	0,01	0,03	0,03	0,22	0,83				
EmotionUseFacilitateThinking	-0,10	0,07	-0,18	-1,52	0,13				
CaringEmpathy	-0,12	0,04	-0,35	-3,09	0,03				

a Dependent Variable: Disengagement

When model 1 (Emotion Work variables: first step) and model 2 (Social Support variables: second step) were entered into the multiple regression analysis, no statistical significant model was found (Model 1:  $F = 1,90$ ;  $p > 0,05$ ; Model 2:  $F = 1,60$ ,  $p > 0,05$ ). However, when Emotional Intelligence was entered into the third step of the multiple regression analysis a statistical significant model was produced ( $F = 3,50$ ,  $p < 0,05$ ) with the variance explained in Disengagement increasing with 20 % ( $\Delta R^2 = 0,20$ .) More specifically it was Emotion Expression/Recognition ( $\beta = -0,23$  ;  $t = 2,10$  ;  $p = 0,03$  ) and Caring and Empathy ( $\beta = -0,35$  - ;  $t = -3,09$  ;  $p = 0,03$  ) that were the most significant predictors of Disengagement. Overall, Emotion Work, Social Support and Emotional Intelligence predicted 30% of the variance explained in Disengagement.

The result of a multiple regression analysis with Emotional Exhaustion as dependant variable and Emotion Work, Social Support and Emotional Intelligence as independent variables is displayed in Table 7.

Table 7

*Multiple Regression Analysis with Emotional Exhaustion as dependant variable*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>						
1 (Constant)	7,34	1,58		4,66	0,00	5,70	0,46	0,22	0,18
ExtentClientInteraction	0,22	0,10	0,25	2,20	0,03				
DisplayClientCare	-0,08	0,07	-0,13	-	0,27				
				1,13					
EmotionalDissonance	0,28	0,07	0,45	3,90	0,00				*
2 (Constant)	9,07	2,08		4,37	0,00	4,30	0,55	0,30	0,08
ExtentClientInteraction	0,19	0,10	0,22	1,91	0,06				
DisplayClientCare	-0,03	0,07	-0,06	-	0,63				
				0,49					
EmotionalDissonance	0,24	0,07	0,39	3,31	0,01				
SSCoworker	-0,14	0,10	-0,18	-	0,19				
				1,33					
SSSupervisor	0,18	0,09	0,28	2,12	0,04				
SSFFamily	-0,13	0,08	-0,22	-	0,11				
				1,63					
3 (Constant)	16,67	4,34		3,84	0,00	3,30	0,60	0,37	0,07
ExtentClientInteraction	0,12	0,11	0,14	1,08	0,29				
DisplayClientCare	0,06	0,09	0,10	0,64	0,52				
EmotionalDissonance	0,15	0,08	0,24	1,83	0,07				
SSCoworker	-0,09	0,11	-0,12	-	0,39				
				0,88					
SSSupervisor	0,17	0,09	0,25	1,92	0,06				
SSFFamily	-0,15	0,08	-0,25	-	0,08				
				1,81					
EmotionExpressionRecognition	-0,08	0,06	-0,17	-	0,18				
				1,38					
EmotionControl	-0,06	0,05	-0,15	-	0,22				
				1,25					
EmotionUseFacilitateThinking	-0,02	0,13	-0,02	-	0,88				
				0,15					
CaringEmpathy	-0,08	0,09	-0,14	-	0,35				
				0,96					

a Dependent Variable: EmotionalExhaustion

When Emotion Work variables (model 1) were entered into the first step of the multiple regression analysis a statistical significant model was produced ( $F = 5,70$ ,  $p < 0,00$ ). Table 7 shows that Emotion Work explained 22 % of the variance predicted in Emotional Exhaustion ( $R^2 = 0,22$ ). More specifically it was Extent of Client Interaction ( $\beta = 0,25$  - ;  $t = 2,20$ ;  $p = 0,03$ ) and Emotional Dissonance ( $\beta = 0,45$ ;  $t =$

3,90 ; $p = 0,00$ ) that were the most significant predictors of Emotional Exhaustion. When Social Support factors were entered into the second step of the model the variance explained increased with 8 % ( $\Delta R^2 = 0,08$ ). Entering Emotional Intelligence into the third step the variance explained in Emotional Exhaustion increased with 7% ( $\Delta R^2 = 0,07$ ). Overall, Emotion Work, Social Support and Emotional Intelligence explained 37 % ( $R^2 = 0,37$ ) of the predicted variance in Emotional Exhaustion.

H<sub>2</sub> is therefore partially accepted.

Next, MANOVA (multivariate analysis of variance) was used to determine differences between age groups with regard to Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Well-being and Burnout. Results were first analysed for statistical significance using Wilk's Lambda statistics. The results of the MANOVA analyses are given below in Table 8.

Table 8

*MANOVAS - Differences in Emotion Work and Well-being (Emotional Exhaustion and Disengagement) of Demographic Groups*

Variable	Value	F	Df	p	Partial Eta Squared
Department	0,70	1,43	24,00	0,09	0,08
Age	0,76	0,84	30,00	0,07	0,05
Race	0,84	1,37	12,00	0,18	0,08
Qualification	0,60	1,00	48,00	0,50	0,08
Language	0,90	1,60	12,00	0,08	0,06
Gender	0,95	1,33	5,00	0,25	0,04

\* Statistically significant difference  $p < 0,05$

In an analysis of Wilk's Lambda values, no statistical significant differences ( $p < 0,05$ ) regarding Emotion Work and Well-being levels could be found between the department, age, race, qualification, language and gender groups in which they reside.

H<sub>3</sub> is therefore not accepted.



## DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to determine the relationship between Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Well-being and organisational/individual factors of client service workers within small and medium enterprises. The results indicated the following:

In comparison to the guidelines of  $\alpha > 0,70$  (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), the Cronbach alpha coefficients of all the measuring instruments were considered to be acceptable, except for the alpha coefficient of the emotion facilitate thinking – scale, which was below the acceptable 0,70 guideline. The scores on the questionnaires, including GEIS (Emotional Intelligence), FEWS (Emotion Work), UWES (Engagement), OLBI (Burnout) and Social Support Scale, were distributed normally, with the exclusion of Disengagement, Supervisor Support and Extent Client Interaction.

One factor was extracted on the 17 items of the UWES (measuring engagement) which was labelled Work Engagement. The two factors extracted on the 16 items of the OBLI (measuring burnout) were labelled: Disengagement and Emotional Exhaustion. Three factors were extracted on the 10 items of the Social Support Scale namely: Social Support – Co-worker, Social Support- Supervisor and Social Support Family. Three factors were extracted on the 17 items of the Frankfurt Emotion Work Scale namely: Emotional Dissonance, Display of Client Care and Extent of Client Interaction. Four factors were extracted on the 52 items on the GEIS which were labelled: Emotion Expression/Recognition, Control of Emotion, Use of Emotions to Facilitate Thinking as well as Caring and Empathy.

The results also identified Disengagement to be positively correlated with Emotional Exhaustion (medium effect) and negatively correlated with Emotion Expression/Recognition, Emotion Control, Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking and Work Engagement (all with a medium effect). This indicates that client service workers who do not recognise or understand their own feelings and that of others, are not able to express their feelings accurately, do not have proper control of their

emotions or cannot manage their feelings appropriately in order to solve problems, may experience decreased motivation, reduced effectiveness, dysfunctional attitudes or behaviour and distress (all which accompanies Emotional Exhaustion), which in turn results in the employee becoming disengaged from his/her work. Brotheridge and Lee (2003) agree that it is of vital importance for service workers to be able to manage both their own emotions and their interactions with other people, and that this ability to control emotions may be experienced as empowering (Leidner, 1993). The inability, however, to do so may result in stress as well as physical and emotional exhaustion or Burnout (Bakker et al., 2001; Zapf et al., 2001). Seeing as Emotion Expression/Recognition, Emotion Control and Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking are all facets of Emotional Intelligence, while Disengagement and Emotional Exhaustion comprise Burnout, the conclusion can be made that client service workers with lower Emotional Intelligence and Work Engagement may experience Burnout more frequently.

Emotional Exhaustion was found to correlate positively with Emotional Dissonance (medium effect) which is supported in the literature (Abraham, 1998; Grandey, 2000; Morris & Feldman, 1997). Emotional Exhaustion was also found to correlate negatively with Emotion Expression/Recognition (medium effect). The conclusion can be drawn that client service workers who do not understand and recognise their emotions and that of others, or are unable to express their feelings accurately, and yet are required to express emotions which are not genuinely felt, may experience Emotional Exhaustion. Exhaustion can thus be viewed as one aspect of having to perform Emotion Work (Grandey, 2000).

The Display of Client Care was positively related (medium effect) to the Extent of Client Interaction as well as Caring and Empathy, which means that the more frequently or the longer the interaction is between the service-worker and client, the more the service-worker will display client care through caring and empathy. Since Display of Client Care also positively correlated with Emotional Dissonance (medium effect), the conclusion can be made that while the employee is displaying client care, he/she may experience Emotional Dissonance, seeing as the organisation requires him/her to regulate his/her own emotions, either through surface acting or deep acting, which in turn, may lead to exhaustion. Grandey (2000) confirms this in stating that

repeated regulation of emotions may result in negative consequences for the employee, such as Emotional Exhaustion, energy depletion and fatigue.

Emotional Expression/Recognition was positively correlated (medium effect) with both Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking and Work Engagement. This indicates that client service workers who understand, recognise and express their emotions accurately are able to apply their emotion appropriately when having to solve problems (for example through being optimistic or creative), which in turn leads the employee to experience his/her work as positive and fulfilling (Work Engagement). Kreitner and Kinicki (2004) concur with this finding through stating that the development of an understanding of emotions (which is a characteristic of Emotional Intelligence) may be seen as a way of dealing more effectively with, or making use of emotions. This ability, according to All about (2004/5), is the single biggest factor in producing engaged employees.

Interestingly, Social Support (whether from supervisor, co-worker or family) did not have correlations with any of the other constructs. Social Support from co-workers did, however, correlate positively (large effect) with Social Support from supervisors and family, while Social Support from supervisors positively correlated with Social Support from family (large effect). This correlation with each other may indicate that when client service workers experience support from each other or from their supervisor, they also tend to experience support from their family and *vice versa*. However, the fact that the research was conducted within small and medium enterprises may have had an influence on the perception that client service workers have of the importance of Social Support. Seeing as each employee within small and medium enterprises has very specific work-related responsibilities, they seem to rely more on themselves than on other people. Within larger organisations, it is much easier to shift responsibility onto co-workers, or delegate work to someone else, but in small and medium enterprises the employees are highly visible and have to be accountable for all their actions. It may thus be “safer” for the individual not to rely on other people. In contrast with this finding, other researchers have frequently highlighted the importance of Social Support from co-workers, supervisors and family within the literature on Well-being and stress (Cooper, 2005). Various studies found Social Support to be of major importance to the psychological Well-being of

employees, stating that it may contribute to more job satisfaction, lowered stress and turnover intentions, reduced work-family conflict, as well as higher team performance and the ability to cope with Emotional Dissonance (Barling, Kelloway, & Frone, 2005; Caplan et al., 1975; Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, & Toth, 1997; Grandey, 2000; Zapf, 2002). Further research on this aspect is suggested.

A multiple regression analysis with Engagement as dependent variable was done. The results indicated that Emotion Work explained 7% and Social Support 9% of the total variance, both producing a non-significant model. However, when Emotional Intelligence was included, a statistical significant model was produced with an increase of 20% of the variance of Work Engagement being predicted. More specifically, it was Emotion Expression/Recognition and Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking which were the most significant predictors of Work Engagement. This finding correlates with the conceptual framework of emotion regulation by Grandey (2000) in that the experience of Emotion Work and perception of amount of Social Support alone are not sufficient in predicting Work Engagement. Emotional Intelligence influences to a great extent how people experience their work, how well they can cope with emotional demands and pressures, and more specifically, how well they understand, manage and use their emotions to guide their thinking and actions (Bar-on, 1997; Katz, 1998). It is Emotional Intelligence and the ability to understand and manage emotions in a positive and creative way that seems to be the single biggest factor in producing engaged employees (All about, 2004/5).

In the multiple regression analysis with Disengagement as dependent variable, no statistically significant model was found when only Emotion Work and Social Support were entered. However, when Emotional Intelligence was included, a statistically significant model was produced, with the variance explained in Disengagement increasing with 20%. More specifically, it was Emotion Expression/Recognition and Caring and Empathy that were the most significant predictors of Disengagement. The prediction can thus be made that the repeated requirement of client service workers to display Caring and Empathy to their clients, without themselves having the ability to express accurately, understand and recognise their own feelings and those of others, may result in the employees becoming disengaged in their work.

In the multiple regression analysis with Emotional Exhaustion as dependent variable, a statistically significant model was produced, with Emotion Work explaining 22% of the variance predicted in Emotional Exhaustion. More specifically it was the Extent of Client Interaction and Emotional Dissonance that predicted Emotional Exhaustion most significantly. When Social Support factors were entered, the variance explained increased with 8%, while a further increase of 7% was produced when Emotional Intelligence was entered. Overall, Emotion Work, Social Support and Emotional Intelligence explained 37% of the predicted variance in Emotional Exhaustion. In this study, the prediction can, therefore, be made that the more frequent or longer the amount of client interaction, along with the repeated requirement to express emotions which are not genuinely felt, the higher the level of Emotional Exhaustion, energy depletion and fatigue among client service workers in small and medium enterprises.

Finally, a multivariate analysis of variance which was used to determine differences between the department, age, race, qualification, language and gender groups with regard to Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Well-being and Burnout, indicated no statistical significant differences ( $p < 0,05$ ).

This study had several limitations. Firstly, a cross-sectional survey design was used, which makes it impossible to prove the causality of the obtained relationship. Secondly, since self-report questionnaires were used, descriptions given by participants are likely to be inaccurate, in comparison to a description an outsider would give of the same person (Hofstee, 1994). Thirdly, the study was conducted solely in the Secunda/Bethal region in Mpumalanga and can, therefore, not be generalised to the whole public, especially when the size of the sample is kept in mind. In the fourth place, language seemed to be a major hazard seeing as the questionnaires were only available in English, while the majority of the study population was Afrikaans speaking. Another limitation is that of confidentiality. Although assurance was given to all participants, some may still have had suspicions as to whether their results would be discussed with supervisors, colleagues or family. Finally, the length of the questionnaire could have influenced the results, seeing as participants grew tired and lost interest.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This study suggested that Emotional Intelligence and Social Support will increase the Well-being (higher Engagement/lower Burnout) of the Emotion Work done by client service workers in small and medium enterprises.

Firstly, interventions should be put in place to ensure that client service workers in small and medium enterprises understand exactly what Emotion Work and Emotional Intelligence entail, and also be thoroughly educated on how to manage and appropriately express their emotions, as well as prevent Emotional Dissonance and Exhaustion.

Secondly, organisations should implement Wellness programmes, which include strategies, action plans and methods used to promote the physical, emotional and mental health of employees to ensure a productive workforce (All about, 2004/5).

There are several research issues that flow from this study and require attention in order to increase the understanding of Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Social Support and Well-being. Further construct validity research is needed to establish more completely the factorial validity of the GEIS instrument in the South African context.

It is recommended that a qualitative study be conducted on the experience of Emotion Work of client service workers within small and medium enterprises, in order to obtain more specified detail.

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## CHAPTER 3

### CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter encompasses conclusions regarding the literature review and the empirical study according to specific objectives. The limitations for the study are highlighted and recommendations are made for the organisation as well as for future studies.

#### 3.1. CONCLUSIONS

In this section conclusions are drawn in terms of specific objectives and empirical findings obtained in the present study.

- *To conceptualise the relationship between Emotion Work, Well-being, Emotional Intelligence and organisational factors by conducting a literature review.*

Managing emotions within the workplace setting is becoming more and more important as the economy becomes increasingly service-oriented (Gosserand, 2003). In order to ensure the success of the company through maintaining loyal customers, client service workers within small and medium enterprises are sometimes required to perform Emotion Work, which entails regulating their feelings and expressions in order to reach specific organisational goals (Grandey, 2000). Research has indicated that the repeated requirement of regulating emotions influences the Well-being of employees through having both negative consequences, such as Emotional Exhaustion, energy depletion, fatigue, Burnout and psychological ill health (Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983), as well as positive consequences, including self-empowerment, diminished status difference, reduction in uncertainty at work, increased job satisfaction and Engagement (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Gimlin, 1996; Leidner, 1993; Pugliesi, 1999; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2001; Stenross & Kleiman, 1989; Tolich, 1993). The effect of Emotion Work on Well-being, which includes physical, emotional and mental health (All about, 2004/5), may be influenced by certain individual and organisational factors, including Emotional Intelligence (as

individual factor) and Supervisor and co-worker support (as organisational factor) (Grandey, 2000). Emotional Intelligence may have a positive influence on the effect of Emotion Work, seeing as it is the single biggest factor in producing engaged employees (All about, 2004/5). Supervisor, co-worker and family support are critical to emotional Well-being and professional effectiveness (Caplan, Cobb, French, Harrison, & Pinneau, 1975; Slattery, 2004), and may relate to job satisfaction, diminished stress and turnover, as well as higher team performance (Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, & Toth, 1997).

- *To determine the validity and reliability of the measures of Emotion Work, Well-being, Emotional Intelligence and organisational factors for a sample of client service workers in small and medium enterprises.*

According to the descriptive statistics, the scores on the questionnaires GEIS, FEWS, OLBI, UWES and Social Support Scale have a normal distribution, except for Disengagement, Supervisor Support and Extent Client Interaction. The Cronbach alpha coefficients of all the measuring instruments are considered to be acceptable, compared to the guidelines of  $\alpha > 0,70$  (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), except for the alpha coefficient of the Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking – scale which is below the accepted 0,70 guideline. It, therefore, appears as if most of the measuring instruments have acceptable levels of internal consistency. The Cronbach alpha coefficients of the different scales are as follows: Work Engagement (0,93); Disengagement (0,70); Emotional Exhaustion (0,77); Social Support – Co-worker (0,86); Social Support – Supervisor (0,95); Social Support – Family (0,88); Emotional Dissonance (0,81); Display of Client Care (0,81); Extent Client Interaction (0,73); Emotion Expression/Recognition (0,73); Emotion Control (0,80); Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking (0,67); Caring and Empathy (0,77).

- *To determine the relationship between Emotion Work, Well-being, Emotional Intelligence and organisational factors among client service workers in small and medium enterprises.*

Product-moment correlations indicate that Disengagement is positively correlated with Emotional Exhaustion (medium effect) and negatively correlated (medium effect) with Emotion Expression/Recognition, Emotion Control, Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking and Work Engagement. Emotional Exhaustion is positively correlated with Emotional Dissonance (medium effect) and negatively correlated with Emotion Expression/Recognition (medium effect). Emotional Dissonance is positively correlated with Display of Client Care (medium effect), while Display of Client Care is positively correlated with Extent of Client Interaction (medium effect) as well as Caring and Empathy (medium effect).

Emotion Expression/Recognition is positively correlated (medium effect) with both Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking and Work Engagement. Emotion Control is positively correlated with Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking (medium effect), while it in turn is positively correlated with Work Engagement (medium effect). Finally, Social Support from co-workers is positively correlated with Social Support from supervisors and family (large effect), and Social Support from supervisors is positively correlated with Social Support from family (medium effect).

It is evident from the research that if client service workers in small and medium enterprises do not understand or recognise their own feelings, are not able to appropriately manage and control their emotions, and cannot use their emotions in a positive and creative way to facilitate thinking when having to solve problems (in other words have lower Emotional Intelligence), but are required by the organisation to engage in Emotional Dissonance through expressing emotions towards clients which are not genuinely felt (such as Caring and Empathy), they will experience Emotional Exhaustion and Disengagement.



- *To determine differences in the experience of Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Social Support and Well-being constructs according to demographic variables for a sample of client service workers in small and medium enterprises.*

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) which was used to determine differences between the department, age, race, qualification, language and gender groups for a sample of client service workers in small and medium enterprises, with regard to Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Well-being and Burnout, indicated no statistical significant differences.

- *To determine if Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence and Social Support predict Well-being for a sample of client service workers in small and medium enterprises.*

Regarding the regression analysis with Engagement as dependent variable, the conclusion can be drawn that the presence of Emotional Intelligence, and more specifically Emotion Expression/Recognition and Emotion Use to Facilitate Thinking, can predict the level of Engagement among client service workers in small and medium enterprises. In the regression analysis with Disengagement as dependent variable, the prediction can be made that Emotional Intelligence, and more specifically Emotion Expression/Recognition and Caring and Empathy, can predict the level of Disengagement among client service workers in small and medium enterprises. Finally, in the regression analysis with Emotional Exhaustion as dependent variable, the prediction can be made that the presence of Emotion Work, and more specifically Extent of Client Interaction and Emotional Dissonance, can predict the level of Emotional Exhaustion among client service workers in small and medium enterprises.

### **3.2. LIMITATIONS**

A cross-sectional survey design was used, which makes it impossible to prove the causality of the obtained relationship. It is necessary to conduct further study on the

relationship between Emotion Work, Emotional Intelligence, Social Support and Well-being (Burnout and Engagement).

Causal inferences could not be drawn based upon self-report questionnaires. Seeing as the results are mainly based on the feelings and opinions of the participant, the causal relationships between variables are interpreted, rather than established, which consequently makes it difficult to examine more complex relationships between variables. Since self-report questionnaires were used, descriptions given by participants are likely to be inaccurate in comparison to a description an outsider would give of the same person (Hofstee, 1994). Some of the items with regards to biographical detail seemed more subjective in that no clear guidelines were given with regards to division of industry sectors and departments.

The study was conducted solely in the Secunda/Bethal region in Mpumalanga and can, therefore, not be generalised to the whole public, especially since the population consisted mainly of white females, which is not representative of the multi-cultural society of South Africa.

The size of the sample was another limitation. Generalization of findings to the rest of the population may be questionable.

Language seemed to be a major hazard seeing as the questionnaires were only available in English. The study population and geographical area comprised of mostly Afrikaans speaking people, of which some had very limited knowledge of English and could, therefore, have misinterpreted some of the questions.

Another limitation is that of confidentiality. Although assurance was given to all participants with regards to confidentiality, some may still have had suspicions as to whether their results would be discussed with supervisors, colleagues or family, increasing the fear of possible dire consequences for themselves should they respond to the questions honestly.

Finally, the length of the questionnaire could have influenced the results. Participants may have become confused, grown tired and lost interest because of having to

complete too many items.

### **3.3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are made to the profession as well as for future research in South Africa.

#### **3.3.1. Recommendations for the profession**

Small and medium enterprises are critical to South Africa's economy, seeing as they form the basis from which the economy expands (The secrets of successful business, 2007). Furthermore, small and medium enterprises drive much of today's global job creation, and are viewed by many South Africans as a means of survival in the current economic climate (Clark, 2007). Unfortunately, it is difficult for small and medium enterprises to compete, because the market is saturated and highly competitive. This competitiveness makes the conduct of the employee even more important in ensuring the success of the company, especially since customers' perceptions of quality service are significantly affected by the nature of the interaction with front line staff (Deery, Iverson & Walsh, 2002). It is, therefore, of vital importance for client service workers to be able to manage both their own emotions and their interactions with other people (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Their inability to do so may result in stress as well as physical and emotional exhaustion, also known as Burnout (Bakker, Schaufeli, Sixma, & Bosveld, 2001; Zapf, Seifert, Schmutte, Mertini, & Holtz, 2001).

- In practice, the results obtained in this study could definitely be beneficial to small and medium enterprises, seeing as once the levels of Emotional Intelligence and Well-being of client service workers are determined, interventions can be put in place to increase Well-being and consequently the performance of employees.
- These interventions should focus on exactly what Emotion Work and Emotional Intelligence entail, and the employees should also be thoroughly educated on how to manage and appropriately express their emotions, as well as prevent Emotional Dissonance and Exhaustion. Interventions can take the form of training sessions

specifically in using of emotions to facilitate thinking, how to manage effectively, express, recognise and control emotions, as well as educate employees on consequences and preventative strategies of Burnout. These interventions will contribute greatly in diminishing Emotional Dissonance and Emotional Exhaustion – two factors which seemed to have a strong correlation with each other as well as Disengagement during the course of this study.

- Based on the findings, and the fact that the smaller the workplace, the less likely it is to offer health promotion programmes (Collins, 2004), the recommendation is made that small and medium enterprises should implement Wellness programmes. These programmes can include strategies, action plans and methods used to promote the physical, emotional and mental health of employees to ensure a productive workforce (All about, 2004/5). This can be done through implementing changes such as re-arranging equipment for safety and optimum human efficiency, developing a clear policy on absenteeism, attending workshops on stress management, developing an Employee Assistance Programme policy and strategy, introducing work-life balance programmes, dealing proactively with potential Burnout and celebrating achievements (All about, 2004/5).

### **3.3.2. Recommendations for future research**

In order to guarantee the survival of small and medium enterprises in South Africa, it is critically important to ensure the Well-being of the client service workers employed by them. Therefore, research should focus more on the determinants that cause Burnout and Disengagement through a qualitative study on the experience of Emotion Work by client service workers, not only in the Mpumalanga region, but nationwide. This will also result in larger samples, enabling the generalisation of findings to other similar groups.

Based on the fact that English was a second or even third language for most of the participants, a strong need exists to translate the questionnaires into other official languages in South Africa, in order to ensure clarity on the content and meaning of the questions.

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