

**BURNOUT, JOB STRESS AND PERSONALITY TRAITS
IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE**

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REMARKS

The reader is reminded of the following:

- The references as well as the style as prescribed by the *Publication Manual (4th edition)* of the American Psychological Association (APA) were followed in this mini-dissertation. This practice is in line with the policy of the Programme in Industrial Psychology and WorkWell: The Research Unit for People, Policy and Performance, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa.
- The mini-dissertation is submitted in the form of a research article. The editorial style specified by the *South African Journal of Industrial Psychology* (which agrees largely with the APA style) is used, but the APA guidelines were followed in constructing tables.

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SUMMARY

Subject: Burnout, job stress and personality traits in the South African Police Service.

Key terms: Burnout, exhaustion, cynicism, professional efficacy, job stress, occupational stress, stress, personality, police.

A healthy, productive and motivated police service is an important contributor to the stability and resulting economic growth and development of countries. Burnout is a recognised health risk in law enforcement agencies but notwithstanding the stressful nature of police work, relatively few studies focused on burnout of police officials. For this reason it seems necessary to investigate burnout in the South African Police Service (SAPS) in order to understand and predict this risk factor more effectively. The objective of this study was to establish to what extent burnout, job stress and personality traits were related. We also wanted to find out which components of job stress and personality traits best predicted the components of burnout .

A cross-sectional survey research design was used. The study population ($N = 2153$) includes samples of police officials across South Africa. The Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey (MBI-GS), Police Stress Indicator (PSI) and Personality Characteristics Inventory (PCI) were administered. Descriptive statistics, product-moment correlation coefficients and stepwise multiple regression analysis were used to analyse the data.

The results indicated that burnout was significantly correlated to job stress and personality traits. Job stress and personality traits were also significantly correlated to one another. Multiple regression analysis showed that exhaustion is best predicted by stress due to job demands and lack of resources, introversion, low conscientiousness and low emotional stability. Cynicism was best predicted by stress because of job demands, lack of resources, police demands, low emotional stability and low conscientiousness. Professional efficacy was best predicted by low job stress, emotional stability, agreeableness as well as conscientiousness.

Recommendations for future research were made.

OPSOMMING

Onderwerp: Uitbranding, werkstres en persoonlikheidseienskappe in die Suid-Afrikaanse Polisieagents.

Slutelwoorde: Uitbranding, uitputting, sinisme, professionele doeltreffendheid, werkstres, beroepstres, stres, persoonlikheid, polisie.

'n Gesonde, produktiewe en gemotiveerde polisieagents is 'n noodsaaklike bydraer tot die stabiliteit, ekonomiese groei en ontwikkeling van 'n land. Uitbranding is geoormerk as 'n risikofaktor in polisieorganisasies, maar ten midde van die stresvolle aard van polisieagents, is daar min studies gedoen wat fokus op uitbranding by polisieagents. Dit blyk dus noodsaaklik om uitbranding in die Suid-Afrikaanse Polisieagents te ondersoek ten einde hierdie risikofaktor beter te verstaan en meer effektief te voorspel. Die doelstelling van hierdie studie was om vas te stel of daar 'n verband bestaan tussen uitbranding, werkstres en persoonlikheidseienskappe. Ons wou verder vasstel watter komponente van werkstres en persoonlikheidseienskappe voorspel komponente van uitbranding die beste.

'n Deursneeopname navorsingsontwerp is gebruik. Die studiepopulasie ($N=2153$) het bestaan uit steekproewe van polisieagents regoor Suid-Afrika. Die Maslach Uitbrandingsvraelys – Algemene Opname, die Poliestres-indikator en die Persoonlikheidskenmerke-vraelys is gebruik. Beskrywende statistiek, produk-moment korrelasies en stapsgewyse meervoudige regressie-analise is gebruik om die data te analiseer.

Die resultate toon dat uitbranding betekenisvol korreleer met werkstres en persoonlikheidseienskappe, Werkstres en persoonlikheidseienskappe korreleer ook betekenisvol. Meervoudige regressie-analise het aangetoon dat uitputting die beste verklaar word deur hoë stres a.g.v. werkeise en 'n gebrek aan hulpbronne, introversie, lae emosionele stabiliteit asook lae konsensieusheid. Sinisme is die beste voorspel deur stres a.g.v. werkeise, gebrek aan hulpbronne en polisieagents, lae emosionele stabiliteit en lae konsensieusheid. Professionele doeltreffendheid is die beste voorspel deur lae werkstres, emosionele stabiliteit, insiklikheid asook konsensieusheid.

Aanbevelings vir toekomstige navorsing is aan die hand gedoen.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This mini-dissertation deals with the relationship between burnout, job stress and personality traits in the South African Police Service (SAPS).

In this chapter the problem statement is discussed. Research objectives are set out and the research method is explained. Finally, the division of chapters is given.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

A healthy, productive and motivated police service is an important contributor to the stability and resulting economic growth and development of countries (Rothmann & Van Rensburg, 2002). Burnout is a recognised health risk in law enforcement agencies but notwithstanding the stressful nature of police work, relative few studies focused on burnout of police officials (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). According to Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998), burnout is 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 behaviours at work". The dimensions of burnout are conceptualised differently, depending on the nature of the job concerned. In the helping professions (including education), three dimensions of burnout are distinguished, namely emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and low personal accomplishment. In jobs other than the helping professions, for example, the police service, the dimensions of burnout are labelled as exhaustion, cynicism and low professional efficacy (Maslach et al., 1996).

According to Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998), law enforcement constitutes only 3,4% of all burnout research on occupations. The need for burnout research in the police service is therefore paramount. For this reason it seems necessary to investigate burnout in the South African Police Service (SAPS) in order to understand and predict this risk factor more effectively.

Organisational stressors can be divided into two groups, namely job demands and lack of job resources (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Job demands include situational factors such as role

ambiguity, role conflict, stressful events, heavy work load and work pressure. Major job resources include social support from various sources, job enhancement opportunities such as control, participation in decision making and autonomy; and reinforcement contingencies (Burke & Richardsen, 1993). Anshel (2000) referred to law enforcement as one of the most stressful occupations world-wide. According to Kirkaldy, Cooper and Ruffalo (1995), physical assault, the violent death or suicide of a police member, response to the death of a child, overt violence, work overload, time pressure and inadequate resources are stressors frequently confronting police officials. In a high-risk organisation such as the SAPS, burnout, if left unchecked, could reap havoc in an already traumatised community of police members. Taris, Schreurs and Schaufeli (1999) report that there is a strong correlation between burnout and job stress (situational factors).

It is widely accepted in theory that occupational stress presupposes burnout (Lazarus & Folkmann, 1984). Limited research has been done that indicates correlations between burnout and job stress in the police service (Taris et al., 1999). A concerted effort to address the lack of burnout research in the SAPS has ensued in the past four years. The results echo that which are found in other police agencies around the world. According to Kleyn, Rothmann, Louw and Makgala (2003), canonical analysis indicates that stress, because of job demands, lack of resources as well as police-specific demands, combined with extrinsic and intrinsic job dissatisfaction, correlate with exhaustion and cynicism. Storm and Rothmann (2003b) report in a survey of eight provinces in South Africa with a sample of ($N = 1910$) police members, that stress because of job demands, stress because of lack of resources and coping strategies predicted exhaustion. Furthermore, exhaustion and coping strategies (non-active coping and avoidance) predicted cynicism. According to Storm and Rothmann (2003b) stress because of a lack of resources and coping strategies (non-active coping and avoidance) also predicted low professional efficacy. Wiese, Rothmann and Storm (2003) report that stress because of job demands is associated with exhaustion, passive coping strategies contributed to exhaustion and cynicism and that seeking emotional support leads to lower exhaustion in the SAPS. Furthermore, exhaustion contributes to cynicism. Stress because of lack of resources, active coping strategies and not coping passively, seem to impact positively on professional efficacy in the SAPS (Wiese et al., 2003). The independent variable, job stress, is therefore included in this study because of its relatedness to burnout.

The personality traits of an employee could have an effect on that employee's susceptibility to burnout (Grundy, 2000). Working under stressful conditions could bring out the best in some

personality types, whilst others struggle to cope (Fruyt & Mervielde, 1999). It is virtually impossible to give a single, coherent definition of personality. Each author's meaning of the term tends to be coloured by his or her theoretical biases, and by the empirical tools used in evaluation and testing of the theory. For the purpose of this study, personality is defined from the theoretical paradigm of the trait theories. The theoretical assumption of this paradigm states that one's personality is a compendium of traits or characteristic ways of behaving, thinking, feeling and reacting (Reber, 1995). Emerging from the trait theories, the Five-Factor Model/Big Five have in the past two decades shown its robustness across different theoretical frameworks, using different personality measures, and in different cultures (Barrick & Mount, 1991). The five dimensions of the Big Five model are: Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

According to Storm and Rothmann (2003a) introversion seems to have a moderating effect on emotional exhaustion. Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) cite that neuroticism is positively related to emotional exhaustion. Storm and Rothmann (2003a) are of the opinion that emotional stability is associated with higher personal accomplishment. Emotional Stability is also related to lower depersonalisation (Storm & Rothmann, 2003a). According to De Vries and Van Heck (2002), low scores of emotional stability are a predictor of higher emotional exhaustion. Agreeableness is significantly correlated with lower emotional exhaustion (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). According to Storm and Rothmann (2003a), agreeableness is associated with higher personal accomplishment and negatively related to depersonalisation. Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) and Storm and Rothmann (2003a) report that conscientiousness correlates significantly with lower emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation and is also associated with higher personal accomplishment. De Vries and Van Heck (2002) state that low scores of conscientiousness predict higher emotional exhaustion. Openness to experience is associated with lower emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation and correlates practically significantly (medium effect) with higher personal accomplishment (Storm & Rothmann, 2003a). Higher scores on openness to experience are a predictor of higher emotional exhaustion (De Vries & Van Heck, 2002). According to Storm and Rothmann (2003a), low openness to experience seems to have a moderating effect on low personal accomplishment, when job demands exceed coping resources. A limited amount of studies have been done on burnout and personality traits and

this study aims to clarify which personality traits are related to, and predict components of burnout.

It can thus be argued that burnout can be predicted by the presence of certain situational and dispositional factors. If multiple studies report that specific job stressors and personality traits are shown to correlate strongly to burnout on a continuous basis in the police service, burnout can possibly be prevented or minimised by means of screening during entry level selections.

In considering the aforementioned results the researchers wish to pose the following research questions:

- Does stress as a result of high job demands, stress because of lack of resources, introversion, low emotional stability and low conscientiousness predict exhaustion in the SAPS?
- Does stress because of high job demands, stress because of lack of resources, low emotional stability and low conscientiousness predict cynicism in the SAPS?
- Does lower stressful job demands, stress because of lack of resources, emotional stability, conscientiousness and agreeableness predict professional efficacy in the SAPS?

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.2.1 General objectives

The general objectives of this study are:

- to determine the relationship between burnout (dependent variable) and job stress and personality traits (independent variables);
- to determine which components of job stress and personality traits predict components of burnout best.

1.2.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the research are:

- to determine whether stress because of high job demands, stress because of lack of resources, introversion, low emotional stability and low conscientiousness predict exhaustion in the SAPS;

- to determine whether stress because of high job demands, stress because of lack of resources, low emotional stability and low conscientiousness predict cynicism in the SAPS;
- to determine whether lower stressful job demands, stress as a result of lack of resources, conscientiousness, emotional stability and agreeableness predict professional efficacy.

1.3 RESEARCH METHOD

Next, the research method is discussed. The research method includes the research design, the participants, the measuring instruments and the statistical analysis to be followed.

1.3.1 Research design

A survey design is used to reach the research objective. The specific design is the cross-sectional design, whereby a sample is drawn from a population at one time (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1997).

1.3.2 Participants

In this study an availability sample of functional South African Police Service members from eight provinces are used.

1.3.3 Measuring instruments

Three questionnaires are used namely the *Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey* (MBI-GS) (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter 1996), the *Police Stress Inventory* (PSI) (Pienaar, 2002) and the *Personality Characteristics Inventory* (PCI) (Mount & Barrick, 2002).

The *Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey* (MBI-GS) (Maslach et al., 1996) is used to measure burnout. This inventory consists of three sub-scales namely Exhaustion (five items), Cynicism (five items) and Professional Efficacy (six items). These three sub-scales provide a three-dimensional perspective on burnout. All items are scores on a 7-point frequency rating scale, ranging from 0 (*never*) to 6 (*daily*). Schaufeli et al. (1996) report Cronbach alpha coefficients that vary between 0,87 and 0,89 for Exhaustion, 0,73 and 0,84 for Cynicism and

0,76 and 0,84 for Professional Efficacy. According to Schaufeli et al. (1996) test-retest reliabilities after one year were 0,65 for Exhaustion, 0,60 for Cynicism and 0,67 for Professional Efficacy. Storm (2002) confirmed the three-factor structure of the MBI-GS in a sample of ($N=2396$) SAPS members. According to Storm (2002), the structural equivalence of the MBI-GS is acceptable for different race groups in the SAPS.

The *Police Stress Inventory* (PSI) (Pienaar 2002) is used to measure the participant's level of organisational stress. This questionnaire focuses on common work situations that often result in psychological strain. The PCI has 44 items and each item describes a job-related stressor. Each item assesses both the perceived severity and frequency occurrence of the stressor. The severity of each item is scored on a 9-point scale. The frequency is measured by the question: "How many times in the last six months did you experience the source of stress?" Pienaar (2002) extracted three internally consistent factors namely Job demands (17 items), Lack of resources (14 items) and Police-specific demands (8 items).

The *Personality Characteristics Inventory* (PCI) (Mount & Barrick, 2002) assesses the five factor model (FFM) personality dimensions. It was designed to measure the characteristics of the environment adequately, including a description of the activities involved, the traits and abilities acquired and the personal styles and values that are rewarded in the environment. Barrick (2003) conducted an exploratory factor analysis on the 150 items of the PCI in a sample of 2396 police officers in South Africa. Four factors were extracted, including Conscientiousness (15 items), Emotional Stability (10 items), Agreeableness (14 items) and Extroversion (8 items). Each item is rated on a Likert type scale varying from 1 (*disagree*) to 3 (*agree*). Barrick (2003) reported alpha coefficients of 0,86 for Conscientiousness, 0,80 for Emotional Stability, 0,81 for Agreeableness and 0,71 for Extraversion. The PCI scales also demonstrate adequate convergent validity and divergent validity with the Neo-Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

1.3.4 Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis is carried out with the help of the SAS programme (SAS Institute, 2000). Descriptive statistics (e.g. means, standard deviations, range) as well as skewness and

kurtosis are used to analyse the data. Cronbach alpha coefficients, inter-item correlation coefficients and confirmatory factor analysis are used to assess the reliability and validity of the measuring instruments (Clark & Watson, 1995).

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients are used to specify the relationships between the variables. In the case where the distribution of scores is skew, Spearman correlation coefficients are computed. A cut-off point of 0,30 (medium effect) (Cohen, 1988) is set for the practical significance of correlation coefficients.

Stepwise multiple regression analysis is used to determine which independent variables best predict the dependent variables.

1.4 CHAPTER DIVISION

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

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Research article

Chapter 3: Conclusions, Limitations and Recommendations.

1.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter the problem statement and motivation were discussed. The general and specific objectives of research were formulated. The method of research was described as well as the way in which the statistical analysis was to be performed.

In Chapter 2 a research article on the relationship between burnout, job stress and personality traits is presented.

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BURNOUT, JOB STRESS AND PERSONALITY TRAITS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to determine the relationship between burnout, job stress and personality traits. A cross-sectional survey design was used. The participants ($N = 2153$) consisted of police personnel in South Africa. The Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey (MBI-GS), Police Stress Indicator (PSI) and Personality Characteristics Inventory (PCI) were administered. Multiple regression analysis showed that exhaustion is best predicted by stress due to job demands and lack of resources, introversion, low conscientiousness and low emotional stability. Cynicism was best predicted by stress because of job demands, lack of resources and police work, low emotional stability and low conscientiousness. Professional efficacy was best predicted by low job stress, emotional stability, agreeableness as well as conscientiousness.

OPSOMMING

Die doelstelling van hierdie studie was om vas te stel of daar 'n verband bestaan tussen uitbranding, werkstres en persoonlikheidseienskappe. 'n Dwarssnee opname-ontwerp is gebruik. Die deelnemers ($N = 2153$) het bestaan uit polisiepersoneel in Suid-Afrika. Die Maslach Uitbrandingsvraelys – Algemene Opname, die Poliestres-indikator en die Persoonlikheidskenmerke-vraelys is gebruik. Meervoudige regressieanalise het aangetoon dat uitputting die beste verklaar word deur hoë stres a.g.v. werkeise en 'n gebrek aan hulpbronne, introversie, lae emosionele stabiliteit asook lae konsensieusheid. Sinisme is die beste voorspel deur stres a.g.v. werkeise, gebrek aan hulpbronne en polisiewerk, lae emosionele stabiliteit en lae konsensieusheid. Professionele doeltreffendheid is die beste voorspel deur lae werkstres, emosionele stabiliteit, insiklikheid asook konsensieusheid.

A healthy, productive and motivated police service is an important contributor to the stability and resulting economic growth and development of countries (Rothmann & Van Rensburg, 2002). Burnout is a recognised health risk in law enforcement agencies but notwithstanding the stressful nature of police work, relative few studies focused on burnout of police officials (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). According to Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998), law enforcement constitutes only 3,4% of all burnout research on occupations. The need for burnout research in the police service is therefore paramount. For this reason it seems necessary to investigate burnout in the South African Police Service (SAPS) in order to understand and predict this risk factor more effectively.

Anshel (2000) referred to law enforcement as one of the most stressful occupations world-wide. According to Kirkaldy, Cooper and Ruffalo (1995), physical assault, the violent death or suicide of a police member, response to the death of a child, overt violence, work overload, time pressure and inadequate resources are stressors frequently confronting police officials. In a high-risk organisation such as the SAPS, burnout, if left unchecked, could reap havoc in an already traumatised community of police members. According to Taris, Schreurs and Schaufeli (1999), there is a strong correlation between burnout and job stress (situational factors). It is widely accepted in theory that occupational stress presupposes burnout (Lazarus & Folkmann, 1984). The independent variable, job stress, was therefore included in this study because of its relatedness to burnout.

Working under stressful conditions could bring out the best in some personality types, whilst others struggle to cope (Fruyt & Mervielde, 1999). Personality traits (dispositional factors) are also related to burnout (Storm & Rothmann, 2003a). Few studies have been done on burnout and personality traits and this study aimed to clarify which personality traits were related to and predicted components of burnout. It can thus be argued that burnout can be predicted by the presence of certain situational and dispositional factors. If multiple studies report that specific job stressors and personality traits are shown to correlate strongly to burnout on a continuous basis in the police service, burnout can possibly be prevented or minimised by means of screening during entry level testing.

Burnout, job stress and personality traits

Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) define burnout as: "a persistent, negative, work-related state of mind in 'normal' individuals that is primarily characterised by exhaustion, which is accompanied by distress, a sense of reduced effectiveness, decreased motivation, and the development of dysfunctional attitudes and behaviours at work". For the purposes of this study, Schaufeli and Enzmann's (1998) definition of burnout will be employed. It is fitting, however, to allude briefly to the contributions made by earlier researchers.

Although Maslach and Jackson (1982) confined burnout to individuals who do 'people work', researchers currently acknowledge that employees in almost any job can develop burnout (Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2002). Subsequently, in the third edition of the manual of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996), the concept of burnout is defined as a crisis in one's relationship with work in general and not necessarily as a crisis in one's relationship with people at work. The dimensions of burnout are conceptualised differently, depending on the nature of the job concerned. In the helping professions (including education), three dimensions of burnout are distinguished, namely emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and low personal accomplishment. In jobs other than the helping professions, for example, the police service, the dimensions of burnout are labelled as exhaustion, cynicism and low professional efficacy (Maslach et al., 1996).

According to Maslach (1998), exhaustion is a necessary but not sufficient criterion for burnout. Chronic exhaustion can lead people to distance themselves emotionally and cognitively from their work so that they are less involved with, or responsive to the needs of other people or the demands of the task. Maslach (1998) postulates that distancing is such an immediate reaction to exhaustion that a strong relationship from exhaustion to depersonalisation/cynicism is consistently found in burnout research. Maslach (1998) continues that a work situation with chronic, overwhelming demands that contribute to exhaustion or cynicism is likely to erode an individual's sense of accomplishment or effectiveness. In some situations the lack of efficacy seems to arise more clearly from a lack of relevant resources (Storm & Rothmann, 2003b). Exhaustion and cynicism appear from the presence of work overload and social conflict (Maslach, 1998).

The Transactional Process Model (Lazarus, 1991) and the Spielberger State-Trait (STP) model of occupational stress (Spielberger, Vagg, & Wasala, 2003) conceptualise stress as a complex process that consists of three major components, namely sources of stress that are encountered in the work environment, the perception and appraisal of a particular stressor by an employee and the emotional reactions that are evoked when a stressor is appraised as threatening.

The STP model of occupational stress focuses on the perceived severity and frequency of occurrence of two major categories of stressor events, namely job pressures and lack of support (Spielberger et al., 2003). The STP model recognises the importance of individual differences in personality traits in determining how workplace stressors are perceived and appraised. Occupational stress is defined as the mind-body arousal resulting from the physical and/or psychological demands associated with the job. The appraisal of a stressor as threatening leads to the emotional arousal of anxiety and anger and the associated activation of the autonomic nervous system. If severe and persistent, the resulting physical and psychological strain may cause adverse behavioural consequences (Spielberger et al., 2003). Employees evaluate their work environment in terms of the severity and frequency of occurrence of specific job demands and pressure and the level of support provided by other employees (supervisors and co-workers) as well as organisational features (policies and procedures). Failing to take the frequency of occurrence of a particular stressor into account may contribute to overestimating the effects of highly stressful situations that rarely occur, while underestimating the effects of moderately stressful events that are frequently experienced.

Kop, Euwema and Schaufeli (1999) report that two categories of potential stressors in police work are often distinguished: Firstly, various aspects of the very nature of police work, for example, physical threat, violence, exposure to danger and facing the unknown. The second category comprises of organisational stressors such as management style, poor communication and lack of support. It thus comes as no surprise that there is an increase in the rates of illness, absenteeism, post-traumatic stress, burnout, alcohol abuse, psycho-social stress, stress reactivity and suicides. Members of the South African Police Service (SAPS) are challenged by various potential stressors such as high levels of crime, violence, organisational transformation and a lack of resources (Van der Walt, 2002).

Various studies indicate a relationship between job demands, job resources (or the lack thereof) and burnout (Taris, Schreurs & Schaufeli, 1999). It is widely accepted in theory that occupational stress presupposes burnout (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) but the specific causal route is, however, still debated. Maslach (1998) conceptualised a model, suggesting the causal route to be: Overwhelming job demands lead to exhaustion or cynicism, which leads to low professional efficacy. On the other hand, various cross-sectional studies support the assumption that overwhelming job demands cause exhaustion (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998) which in turn leads to depersonalisation/cynicism (Bakker, Schaufeli, Sixma, Bosveld & Van Dierendonck, 2000). In a longitudinal study, Van Dierendonck, Schaufeli and Buunk (2001) report that reduced personal accomplishment, as a result of overwhelming job demands, leads to depersonalisation, which then leads to emotional exhaustion.

Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli (2001) developed the Job Demand-Resources JD-R) model and confirmed that job demands (e.g. physical demands, time pressure and shift work) are associated with exhaustion, whereas lacking job resources (e.g. feedback, participation in decision-making and supervisory support) are associated with disengagement. The JD-R model assumes two processes, namely an energetic process of wearing out in which high job demands exhaust the employee's energy, as well as a motivational process in which lacking resources preclude dealing effectively with job demands and foster mental withdrawal. Studies in South Africa confirm that burnout is related to job demands (Storm & Rothmann 2003a). In a sample of educators in South Africa, Pretorius (1994) found that role conflict and number of students explained 25% of the variance in emotional exhaustion. Number of students and role ambiguity explained 15% of the variance in depersonalisation, while participation in decision-making explained 8% of the variance in personal accomplishment. Levert, Lucas and Ortlepp (2000) reported that emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation of psychiatric nurses were predicted by work load, lack of collegial support, role conflict and role ambiguity.

Limited research has been done that indicates correlations between burnout and job stress in the police service (Taris, Schreurs & Schaufeli, 1999). A concerted effort to address the lack of burnout research in the SAPS has ensued in the past four years. The results echo that which are found in other police agencies around the world. According to Kleyn, Rothmann, Louw and Makgala (2003), canonical analysis indicates that stress because of job demands, lack of resources as well as police-specific demands, combined with extrinsic and intrinsic

job dissatisfaction correlate with exhaustion and cynicism. Storm and Rothmann (2003b) report in a survey of eight provinces in South Africa with a sample of ($N = 1910$) police members, that stress because of job demands, lack of resources and coping strategies predicted exhaustion. Furthermore, exhaustion and coping strategies (non-active coping and avoidance) predicted cynicism. According to Storm and Rothmann (2003b) stress, because of a lack of resources and coping strategies (non-active coping and avoidance) also predicted low professional efficacy. Wiese, Rothmann and Storm (2003) report that stress as a result of job demands are associated with exhaustion, passive coping strategies contributed to exhaustion and cynicism and that seeking emotional support leads to lower exhaustion in the SAPS. Furthermore, exhaustion contributes to cynicism. Stress because of lack of resources, active coping strategies and not coping passively, seem to impact positively on professional efficacy in the SAPS (Wiese et al., 2003).

The personality traits of an employee could have an effect on that employee's susceptibility to burnout (Grundy, 2000). It is virtually impossible to give a single, coherent definition of personality. Each author's meaning of the term tends to be coloured by his or her theoretical biases, and by the empirical tools used in evaluation and testing of the theory. For the purpose of this study, personality will be defined from the theoretical paradigm of the trait theories. The theoretical assumption of this paradigm states that one's personality is a compendium of traits or characteristic ways of behaving, thinking, feeling and reacting (Reber, 1995).

Emerging from the trait theories, the Five-Factor Model/Big Five have in the past two decades shown its robustness across different theoretical frameworks (Goldberg, 1981), using different personality measures (McCrae & Costa, 1989), and in different cultures (Noller, Law & Comrey, 1987). However, some researchers have reservations about the Five-Factor Model. The imprecise specification of these dimensions is in particular a cause of concern (Briggs, 1989). Barrick and Mount (1991) regard the emergence of the five-factor model as having important implications for the field of personnel psychology. It shows that personality consists of five relatively independent dimensions, which provide a meaningful taxonomy for studying individual differences, namely Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Agreeableness, Openness to Experience and Conscientiousness.

According to Barrick and Mount (1991) extraversion is a construct originally advanced by Eysenck (1990). Reber (1995) defines this characteristic as a hypothesised dimension of

personality with two theoretical poles. On the one side is extraversion and at the other, introversion. Extraversion is generally used in the personality theory when the tendency occurs to direct one's energies outwards. Such persons are concerned with and derive gratification from the physical and social environment i.e. people and events. Extraversion has also been called Surgency (Judge, Martocchio & Thoresen, 1997). Traits associated with extraversion-introversion are sociability, need for recognition, enterprising, warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, leadership-orientation, boldness, self-sufficiency, talkativeness, impulsivity and being active. According to Hogan (1986), extraversion-introversion consists of two components, namely ambition i.e. initiative, surgency ambitious and impetuous, and sociability i.e. sociable, exhibitionistic and expressive. Watson and Clark (1997) note that extraverts are less dysphoric, less introspective and less self-preoccupied than introverts.

According to Storm and Rothmann (2003a) introversion seems to have a moderating effect on emotional exhaustion and low openness to experience and a moderating effect on low personal accomplishment when job demands exceed coping resources. A pattern of neuroticism, low extraversion, low openness to experience, low agreeableness and low conscientiousness probably contributes to emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation/cynicism and low personal accomplishment (Grundy, 2000).

Extraversion is significantly correlated with emotional exhaustion (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). According to Storm and Rothmann (2003a), extraversion is significantly practically (medium effect), negatively related to exhaustion. Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998), report that extraversion is related to reduced personal accomplishment, but Storm and Rothmann (2003a) found that extraversion is associated with higher personal accomplishment. Extraversion is also associated with lower depersonalisation (Storm & Rothmann, 2003a). According to De Vries and Van Heck (2002), low scores of extraversion are a predictor of higher emotional exhaustion. Storm and Rothmann (2003a) are of the opinion that introversion seems to have a moderating effect on emotional exhaustion when job demands exceed coping resources.

Fruyt and Mervielde (1999) cite that extraverts prefer higher levels of cognitive task demands, pace of task demands, cognitive closure, extrinsic rewards and intrinsic rewards. In a longitudinal study, Judge, Higgins, Thoresen and Barrick (1999) report a relationship between high extraversion and extrinsic career success. Boudreau, Boswell, Judge and Bretz

(2001) cite that extraversion relates positively to perceived organisational success and job satisfaction. Extraversion positively predicts absenteeism (Judge et al., 1997).

According to Mayes, Johnson and Sadri (2000), extraversion relates significantly to three coping factors, namely physical activity, active emotional control and the tendency to complain and quit. Extraversion does not appear to be highly associated with social desirability (Ones, Reiss & Viswesvaran, 1996). According to Judge et al. (1997) and Costa and McCrae (1992), extraversion is positively related to openness to experience and conscientiousness.

The second factor is emotional stability or neuroticism (Cortina, Doherti, Schmitt, Kaufman & Smith, 1992). Emotional stability refers to emotional reactions that are appropriate for the situation and are consistent from one set of circumstances to another (Reber, 1995). Being anxious, depressed, angry, embarrassed, emotional, worried and insecure are traits frequently associated with this factor (Judge, Thoresen & Martocchio, 1997).

Schaufeli (1998) cites that neuroticism (i.e. the opposite of emotional stability) is positively related to emotional exhaustion. Storm and Rothmann (2003a) found that emotional stability is associated with higher personal accomplishment. Emotional stability is also related to lower depersonalisation (Storm & Rothmann, 2003a). According to De Vries and Van Heck (2002), low scores of emotional stability are a predictor of higher emotional exhaustion. No study using structural equation modelling, to investigate causality between exhaustion and emotional stability could be found.

Judge, Higgins, Thoresen and Barrick (1999) report that neuroticism negatively predicted extrinsic career success. Barrick and Mount (1991) postulate that neuroticism is significantly negatively related to the job preferences: cognitive task demands, pace of task demands, cognitive closure and intrinsic rewards. Boudreau et al. (2001) report a positive correlation between neuroticism and job search and a significant negative correlation to compensation and job satisfaction. Fruyt et al. (1999) found that although unemployed individuals have higher neuroticism, this factor is not an independent predictor of employment status. They also report that neuroticism did not predict the nature of employment. According to Mayes, Johnson and Sadri (2000), neuroticism is strongly related to coping behaviour. To this end, Morrison (1997) states that subjective wellbeing and locus-of-control are strongly correlated

to emotional stability. Ones, Reiss and Viswesvaran (1996) report a correlation between emotional stability and social desirability. There is a significant and positive correlation of job stress with neuroticism in both men and women (Al-Mashaan, 2001). According to Judge et al. (1997), neuroticism (lack of positive psychological adjustment and emotional stability) correlates negatively with agreeableness and conscientiousness.

Agreeableness is the third dimension (Morrison, 1997). Others have labelled it compliance versus hostile non-compliance (Digman & Takemoto-Chock, 1981) or love (Peabody & Goldberg, 1989). Traits associated with this dimension include being courteous, flexible, trusting, good-natured, co-operative, forgiving, soft-hearted and tolerant. According to Ones et al. (1996) there is a correlation between agreeableness and social desirability. There is also a positive relation between agreeableness and scores of locus-of-control and subjective wellbeing. Agreeableness and type-A behaviour (high self-monitoring, competitive, aggressive, more hostile, more prone to conflict, high energy, achievement oriented and control of others and environment), on the other hand, have a negative relation (Morrison, 1997). Agreeableness negatively correlates with neuroticism and positively correlates with conscientiousness (Judge et al., 1997). Agreeableness is significantly correlated with lower emotional exhaustion (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). According to Storm and Rothmann (2003a), agreeableness is associated with higher personal accomplishment and negatively related to depersonalisation.

The fourth factor is most frequently called conscientiousness (Cortina, Goldstein, Payne, Davison & Gilliland, 2000). Dependability, hardworking, achievement oriented and persevering are traits most commonly associated with conscientiousness. Conscientiousness has been positively associated with job performance (Mount, Barrick & Strauss, 1999). Training proficiency (Barrick & Mount 1991), learning (Martocchio & Judge, 1997), role clarity and contextual performance (Miller, Griffin & Hart, 1999) and extrinsic career success (Judge et al. 1999) also appear to correlate positively to conscientiousness. Fallon, Avis, Kudisch, Garret and Frost (2000) report a positive correlation between overall performance and conscientiousness.

Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) and Storm and Rothmann (2003a) report that conscientiousness correlates significantly with lower emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation and is also associated with higher personal accomplishment. De Vries and

Van Heck (2002) found that low scores of conscientiousness predict higher emotional exhaustion.

The last dimension, intellect/intelligence or openness to experience has been the most difficult to identify (Cortina et al., 1992). Traits commonly associated with this dimension include being imaginative, cultured, curious, original, broad-minded, intelligent and artistically sensitive. Openness to experience is associated with lower emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation and correlates practically significantly (medium effect) with higher personal accomplishment (Storm & Rothmann, 2003a). Higher scores on openness to experience are a predictor of higher emotional exhaustion (De Vries & Van Heck, 2002). According to Storm and Rothmann (2003a), low openness to experience seems to have a moderating effect on low personal accomplishment, when job demands exceed coping resources.

The following revised model of DuBrin (1981) illustrates in a simplified way how stress and personality influence job behaviour and performance.

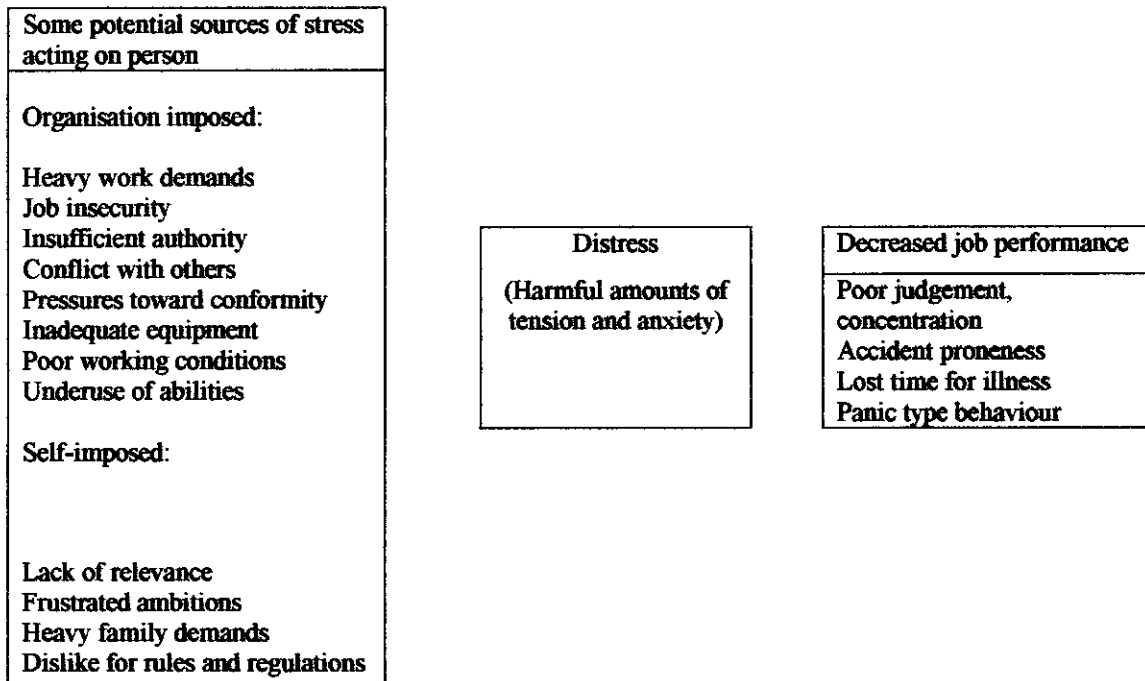


Figure 1. Revised model of DuBrin (1981): Stress influencing job behaviour and performance.

In Figure 1, the stressors mentioned under "Organisation imposed" are examples of situational factors, and the personal attitudes mentioned under "Self-imposed" are examples of dispositional factors. When these factors are experienced in harmful amounts of tension and anxiety, it could lead to a decrease in job performance. From the research mentioned above, it is clear that job distress (harmful amounts of tension and anxiety) can lead to burnout. If burnout is added to the model, then it can be said that certain situational and dispositional factors can lead to distress, which in turn can lead to burnout and subsequently a decrease in job performance. The objective of this study was to establish to what extent burnout, job stress and personality traits were correlated. We also wanted to find out which components of job stress and personality traits best predicted components of burnout.

METHOD

Research design

A survey design was used to reach the study objectives. The specific design is the cross-sectional design, whereby a sample is drawn from a population at one time (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1997).

Participants

The study population ($N = 2153$) includes samples of police officials across South Africa. The mean age was 34,60 years and 57,08% of the participants were between the ages of 25 and 35. A total of 1724 (80,07%) of the participants were males while 429 (19,93%) were females. The majority (71,57%) of the study population held the ranks of sergeant and inspector.

Table 1

Characteristics of the Participants (N = 2153)

Variable	Category	Percentage
Gender	Male	80,07
	Female	19,93
Race	1	37,76
	2	41,48
	3	16,21
	4	3,67
	5	0,88
Age (years)	19-24	2,93
	25-30	22,43
	31-35	34,65
	36-40	22,47
	41-45	9,94
	46-50	3,53
	51-55	1,63
Rank	56-66	0,42
	1	6,97
	2	19,09
	3	52,48
	4	16,67
	5	3,20
Province	6	1,58
	2	12,35
	3	8,13
	4	9,48
	5	11,84
	6	15,65
	7	12,73
	8	14,03
Educational level	9	15,79
	1	0,88
	2	10,78
	3	4,74
	4	56,62
	5	2,93
	6	20,58
	7	2,00
		2,37

Measuring instruments

Three questionnaires were used, namely the Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey) (MBI-GS) (Maslach et al., 1996), the Police Stress Inventory (PSI) (Pienaar, 2002) and the Personality Characteristics Inventory (PCI) (Mount & Barrick, 2002).

The *Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey* (MBI-GS) (Maslach et al., 1996) was used to measure burnout. This inventory consists of three sub-scales namely Exhaustion (five items), Cynicism (five items) and Professional Efficacy (six items). These three sub-scales provide a three-dimensional perspective on burnout. All items are scored on a 7-point frequency rating scale, ranging from 0 (*never*) to 6 (*daily*). Schaufeli et al. (1996) reported Cronbach alpha coefficients that varied between 0,87 and 0,89 for Exhaustion, 0,73 and 0,84 for Cynicism and 0,76 and 0,84 for Professional Efficacy. According to Schaufeli et al. (1996) test-retest reliabilities after one year were 0,65 for Exhaustion, 0,60 for Cynicism and 0,67 for Professional Efficacy. Storm (2002) confirmed the three-factor structure of the MBI-GS in a sample of ($N=2396$) SAPS members. She recommended that item 13 be dropped from the questionnaire since it did not load satisfactory. According to Storm (2002), the structural equivalence of the MBI-GS is acceptable for different race groups in the SAPS. In this study the following Cronbach alpha coefficients were obtained for the MBI-GS: Exhaustion 0,87; Cynicism 0,78 and Professional Efficacy 0,79. All these values are acceptable ($\alpha > 0,70$) as prescribed by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) and thus confirms the internal consistency of the MBI-GS.

The *Police Stress Inventory* (PSI) (Pienaar, 2002) was used to measure the participants' level of organisational stress. This questionnaire focuses on common work situations that often result in psychological strain. The PSI has 44 items and each item describes a job-related stressor. Each item assesses both the perceived severity and frequency occurrence of the stressor. The severity of each item is scored on a nine-point scale. The frequency is measured by the question: "How many times in the last six months did you experience the source of stress?" Pienaar (2002) extracted three internally consistent factors, namely Job demands (17 items), Lack of resources (14 items) and Police-specific demands (8 items). In this study, the Cronbach alpha coefficients of the three scales were 0,92, 0,92 and 0,89 respectively. All these values are acceptable ($\alpha > 0,70$) as prescribed by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) and thus confirm the internal consistency of the PSI.

The *Personality Characteristics Inventory* (PCI) (Mount & Barrick, 2002) assesses the five factor model (FFM) personality dimensions. It was designed to measure the characteristics of the environment adequately, including a description of the activities involved, the traits and abilities acquired, and the personal styles and values that are rewarded in the environment. Barrick (2003) conducted an exploratory factor analysis on the 150 items of the PCI in a

sample of 2396 police officers in South Africa. Four factors were extracted, including Conscientiousness (15 items), Emotional Stability (10 items), Agreeableness (14 items) and Extroversion (8 items). Each item was rated on a Likert type scale varying from 1 (*disagree*) to 3 (*agree*). Barrick (2003) reported alpha coefficients of 0,86 for Conscientiousness, 0,80 for Emotional Stability, 0,81 for Agreeableness and 0,71 for Extraversion. The PCI scales also demonstrate adequate convergent validity and divergent validity with the Neo-Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992). In this study, the Cronbach alpha coefficients of Extraversion, Emotional Stability, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness were 0,71, 0,81, 0,80 and 0,86 respectively.

Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis was carried out with the help of the SAS programme (SAS Institute, 2000). Descriptive statistics (e.g. means, standard deviations, range) as well as skewness and kurtosis were used to analyse the data. Cronbach alpha coefficients, inter-item correlation coefficients and confirmatory factor analysis were used to assess the reliability and validity of the measuring instruments (Clark & Watson, 1995).

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were used to specify the relationships between the variables. In the case where the distribution of scores was skew, Spearman correlation coefficients were computed. A cut-off point of 0,30 (medium effect) (Cohen, 1988) was set for the practical significance of correlation coefficients.

Stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to determine which independent variables best predicted the dependent variable.

RESULTS

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics and Cronbach alpha coefficients of the measuring instruments.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and Alpha Coefficients of the MBI-GS, PSI and PCI (N = 2153)

Item	Mean	SD	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
MBI-GS						
Exhaustion	11,12	7,63	30,00	0,57	-0,38	0,87
Cynicism	7,85	5,89	24,00	0,72	-0,04	0,78
Professional Efficacy	27,02	7,57	36,00	-1,23	1,53	0,79
PSI						
Stress – Job demands	56,89	18,81	96,00	-0,15	-0,18	0,92
Stress – Lack of Resources	62,78	18,85	88,00	-0,45	-0,09	0,92
Stress – Police Demands	33,88	12,97	48,00	-0,46	-0,71	0,89
PCI						
Extroversion	28,66	4,59	32,00	-0,38	0,85	0,71
Emotional Stability	31,37	6,71	40,00	-0,11	-0,07	0,80
Agreeableness	52,49	6,77	56,00	-0,74	2,62	0,81
Conscientiousness	60,79	7,23	56,00	-1,12	3,26	0,86

* High skewness and kurtosis

Table 2 indicates that acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficients were obtained since all the values exceeded 0,70 as prescribed by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). It is evident from Table 2 that most of the scales of the measuring instruments have relatively normal distributions, with low skewness and kurtosis. It is only Professional Efficacy (measured by the MBI-GS) that shows relatively high skewness and kurtosis.

The product-moment correlation coefficients between the PCI, PSI and MBI-GS are reported in Table 3.

Table 3

Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients between the MBI-GS, PSI and PCI, (N = 2153)

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Exhaustion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 Cynicism	0,62 ⁺⁺⁺	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3 Professional Efficacy	0,05	-0,04	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4 Stress: Job demands	0,44 ⁺⁺	0,33 [~]	0,08 [*]	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 Stress: Lack resources	0,37 ⁺⁺	0,26 [*]	0,26 [*]	0,67 ⁺⁺⁺	-	-	-	-	-
6 Police demands	0,21 [*]	0,09 [*]	0,22 [*]	0,48 ⁺⁺	0,60 ⁺⁺⁺	-	-	-	-
7 Extraversion	-0,18 [*]	-0,18 [*]	0,15 [*]	-0,12 [*]	-0,03	-0,07 [*]	-	-	-
8 Emotional stability	-0,35 ⁺⁺	-0,32 ⁺⁺	0,18 [*]	-0,21 [*]	-0,15 [*]	-0,09 [*]	0,12 [*]	-	-
9 Agreeableness	-0,11 [*]	-0,18 [*]	0,20 [*]	-0,11 [*]	0,01	0,03 [*]	0,46 ⁺⁺	0,02	-
10 Conscientiousness	-0,22 [*]	0,29 [*]	0,34 ⁺⁺	-0,14 [*]	0,09 [*]	0,08	0,52 ⁺⁺⁺	0,15 [*]	0,57 ⁺⁺⁺

* $p \leq 0,01$ statistically significant

⁺ $r > 0,30$ practically significant, medium effect

⁺⁺ $r > 0,50$ practically significant, large effect

Table 3 shows that exhaustion is practically significantly related to cynicism (large effect), stress because of job demands (medium effect) and stress because of lack of resources (medium effect). Exhaustion is also statistically significantly related to stress because of police demands. Exhaustion correlates statistically significantly negatively with extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness, and practically significantly negatively with emotional stability (medium effect). Cynicism is practically significantly related to stress because of job demands (medium effect) and negatively related to emotional stability (medium effect). Cynicism correlates statistically significantly with stress because of lack of resources, stress because of police demands and conscientiousness. Cynicism is statistically significantly negatively related to extraversion and agreeableness. Professional efficacy correlates practically significantly to conscientiousness (medium effect). Professional efficacy is statistically significantly related to low stress because of job demands, stress because of lack of resources, stress because of police demands, extraversion, emotional stability and agreeableness.

Stress because of job demands correlates practically significantly with stress because of lack of resources (large effect) and stress because of police demands (medium effect). Stress because of job demands is statistically significantly negatively related to extraversion, emotional stability, agreeableness and conscientiousness. Stress because of lack of resources

correlates practically significantly with stress because of police demands (large effect) and statistically significantly with conscientiousness. Stress because of lack of resources is statistically significantly negatively related to emotional stability, while stress because of police demands correlates statistically significantly negatively with extraversion and emotional stability.

Separate stepwise multiple regression analyses with Exhaustion, Cynicism and Professional Efficacy respectively as measured by the MBI-GS (as dependent variables) and job stress (as measured by the PSI) as well as personality traits (as measured by the PCI) as independent variables are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis with Exhaustion, Cynicism and Professional Efficacy as Dependent Variables

Item	Parameter	SE	F	p
DV= Exhaustion $F=198,98^*$ $R^2=0,30$				
Intercept	20,91	1,42	219,14	0,0001
Stress: Job demands	0,10	0,01	101,00	0,0001
Stress: Lack resources	0,07	0,01	56,38	0,0001
Conscientiousness	-0,15	0,02	43,11	0,0001
Emotional stability	-0,28	0,02	190,19	0,0001
Extraversion	-0,08	0,03	5,60	0,0181
DV= Cynicism $F=148,31^*$ $R^2=0,24$				
Intercept	20,87	1,11	354,38	0,0001
Stress: Job demands	0,05	0,01	45,32	0,0001
Stress: Lack resources	0,06	0,01	54,09	0,0001
Stress: Police demands	-0,05	0,01	24,98	0,0001
Conscientiousness	-0,20	0,02	162,62	0,0001
Emotional stability	-0,20	0,02	149,28	0,0001
DV= Professional efficacy $F=98,62^*$ $R^2=0,20$				
Intercept	-4,42	1,58	7,88	0,0050
Stress: Job demands	-0,02	0,01	4,11	0,0427
Stress: Lack resources	0,10	0,01	77,55	0,0001
Stress: Police demands	0,05	0,01	14,49	0,0001
Conscientiousness	0,26	0,02	114,58	0,0001
Emotional stability	0,19	0,02	79,87	0,0001
Agreeableness	0,05	0,03	4,09	0,0433

* Statistically significant $p<0,0001$

The results in Table 4 indicate that exhaustion (as measured by the MBI-GS) was best predicted by job stress as a result of high job demands and lack of resources (as measured by the PSI), low conscientiousness, low emotional stability and introversion (as measured by the PCI). The R^2 indicates that 30% of the variance in exhaustion was predicted by these independent variables.

Cynicism (as measured by the MBI-GS) was best predicted by stress because of job demands, stress because of lack of resources and low police demands (as measured by the PSI) and two personality factors: low conscientiousness and low emotional stability (as measured by the

PCI). The R^2 indicates that 24% of the variance in cynicism was predicted by these independent variables.

Professional efficacy (as measured by the MBI-GS) was best predicted by three stress factors: low stress because of job demands, stress because of lack of resources and police demands (as measured by the PSI) and three personality factors: conscientiousness, emotional stability and agreeableness (as measured by the PCI). The R^2 indicates that 20% of the variance in professional efficacy was predicted by these independent variables. The personality components, namely low conscientiousness and low emotional stability thus best predicted the three components of burnout: exhaustion, cynicism and professional efficacy.

DISCUSSION

We set out to establish to what extent burnout, job stress and personality traits were correlated. We also wanted to find out which components of job stress and personality traits best predicted components of burnout. Acceptable alpha coefficients were obtained for each of the sub-scales, ranging from 0,71 to 0,92. Burnout correlated significantly with the independent variables, namely job stress and personality traits. The results indicated that exhaustion was best predicted by job stress as a result of high job demands and lack of resources, low conscientiousness, low emotional stability and introversion (30% of variance explained). Cynicism was best predicted by three stress factors, namely stress because of job demands, stress because of lack of resources and low stress because of police demands, and two personality factors: low conscientiousness and low emotional stability (24% of variance explained). Professional efficacy was best predicted by three stress factors, namely low stress because of job demands, stress because of lack of resources and stress because of police demands and three personality factors: conscientiousness, emotional stability and agreeableness (20% of variance explained). Two personality traits, namely low conscientiousness and low emotional stability thus best predicted the three components of burnout: exhaustion, cynicism and lack of professional efficacy.

When interpreting these results, it must be remembered that there were three times more males than females in this sample. More than 80% of the police officials in this sample also represented the lower ranks of constable, sergeant and inspector. Police officials in these

lower ranks are operating on police station level where contact with the communities and pressure from middle and senior management cause high levels of job stress.

Strong correlations between burnout and job stress were found in this study. Exhaustion was practically significantly related to high stressful job demands. This correlation did not come as a surprise as Maslach (1998) and Wiese, Rothmann and Storm (2003) reported similar findings. It thus appears that high stressful job demands (because of role ambiguity, role conflict, stressful events, heavy work load and work pressure) were related to a significant level of exhaustion in this sample of SAPS members. Exhaustion was also found to be strongly correlated to stress because of a lack of resources. Kleyn et al. (2003) and Storm and Rothmann (2003b) confirmed this association in previous studies. It can thus be said that stress because of a lack of resources (social support from various sources, job enhancement opportunities such as control, participation in decision-making and autonomy and reinforcement contingencies) largely contributed to a significant level of exhaustion in this study. Exhaustion was statistically significantly correlated to stress because of police demands. Storm and Rothmann (2003b) reported similar findings. It thus appears that stress because of police specific demands contributed to a significant level of exhaustion in this sample of SAPS members.

Cynicism strongly correlated with stress because of job demands and similar findings were reported by Maslach (1998) and Wiese et al. (2003). This makes sense because a job environment characterised by chronic and extreme job demands (such as the SAPS) could in all probability lead to the psychological distancing of its members, as was indeed reported in this sample. A positive association between cynicism and stress because of a lack of resources was found. Demerouti et al. (2001) remarked that lack of resources is often associated with cynicism. This finding does not come as a surprise for stress as a result of lack of personnel and equipment is often quoted in the media as problematic factors, inhibiting effective service delivery. A statistically significant correlation was found between cynicism and stress because of police demands. Storm and Rothmann (2003b) reported similar findings and it can thus be said that stress because of police-specific demands contributed to a significant level of cynicism in this sample of police personnel. Professional efficacy was statistically significantly correlated to lower stress because of job demands and confirmed earlier findings by Storm and Rothmann (2003b). It can thus be argued that lower levels of stress because of job demands contributed to more efficacious feelings and

behaviour in this sample. Low professional efficacy was positively related to stress because of lack of resources, which confirmed the findings of Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) and Storm and Rothman (2003b). It can be argued that stress because of a lack of personnel, equipment and recognition led to lower levels of professional efficacy in this sample of SAPS members.

Exhaustion and cynicism correlated strongly. Maslach (1998) indicated that the correlation between these two burnout components is to be expected, since distancing is such an immediate reaction to exhaustion.

Significant correlations were found between burnout and personality traits. Exhaustion and extraversion were negatively correlated. This echoes a previous finding of Storm and Rothmann (2003a) and thus implies that a positive correlation exists between exhaustion and introversion. It makes sense that a positive correlation between exhaustion and introversion was found, because introverts have a preference for internalising own energy and do not speak their minds as freely as extraverts (Watson & Clark, 1997). Not ventilating own experiences of stressors, increases the risk of exhaustion. It can thus be argued that introverted police officials of the SAPS in this sample were more likely to suffer from exhaustion. Exhaustion was significantly negatively related to emotional stability. Conversely, a positive correlation between exhaustion and neuroticism was found. This correlation is consistent with findings in previous studies. De Vries and Van Heck (2002) and Schaufeli (1998) indicated that low scores on emotional stability accurately predicted exhaustion.

Exhaustion and agreeableness were negatively related in this study and confirmed the finding of Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998). The implication is thus that a police member who is flexible and tolerant by nature will less likely present with high levels of exhaustion. A negative correlation was found between exhaustion and conscientiousness. Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) and Storm and Rothmann (2002a) reported similar findings. It could thus be argued that, in this sample, SAPS personnel who are hard working, achievement oriented and persevering by nature are less likely to suffer from high levels of exhaustion.

A negative correlation was found between cynicism and extraversion. This finding was also reported by Storm and Rothmann (2003a). It thus seems as if SAPS officials who are

sociable, assertive, bold and self-sufficient are less likely to become cynical. Cynicism was significantly negatively related to emotional stability in this study. This confirms the finding of Storm and Rothmann (2003a) who reported that cynicism was related to lower scores on emotional stability. It makes sense that SAPS members who are constantly cynical will be prone to feelings of anxiety, anger and depression. A negative correlation between cynicism and agreeableness were found and concurred with similar findings made by Storm and Rothmann (2003a). It could thus be argued that flexible, co-operative and tolerant SAPS officials in this sample will less likely be cynical. Cynicism was significantly negatively related to conscientiousness. This was no surprise as Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) and Storm and Rothmann (2003a) reached similar conclusions. It follows then that, hard working and achievement oriented SAPS members will less likely be cynical.

Professional efficacy and extraversion correlated significantly, which confirmed the findings of Storm and Rothmann (2003a). A possible explanation could be that those SAPS officials who are sociable, bold and self-sufficient would experience more feelings of professional efficacy. A significant association was found between professional efficacy and emotional stability and once again Storm and Rothmann (2003a) confirmed this result. It could thus be argued that SAPS members who are not by nature emotional, anxious, worried and insecure, would experience more feelings of professional accomplishment. Professional efficacy and agreeableness correlated positively in this study. A similar result was found by Storm and Rothmann (2003a). Thus, participants in this study who were more flexible, trusting, co-operative and tolerant, would most likely experience higher feelings of professional efficacy. A significant relation between professional efficacy and conscientiousness was found, which comes as no surprise since Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) and Storm and Rothmann (2003a) reported similar findings. In can be argued that SAPS officials who are hard working and achievement oriented will experience a higher feeling of professional accomplishment.

A correlation, though not of medium or large practical significance, between job stress and personality traits was found. Stress because of job demands and extraversion correlated negatively and this result seems to differ from other research findings. Fruyt and Mervielde (1999) cited that extraverts prefer higher levels of cognitive task demands and pace of task demands. A possible explanation could be that extroverted SAPS members view certain aspects of their jobs as laborious i.e. paperwork and routine tasks. Such time consuming and laborious tasks are a far cry from the preferred activities of extraverts that include boldness,

sociability, gregariousness and self-sufficiency. Another possible explanation for this finding could be the sample size. With a sample of ($N = 2153$) and a statistically significant coefficient of ($p \leq 0,01$), it is possible that this correlation was detected by the computerised statistical software programme, which would otherwise escape detection in the case of a smaller sample. A negative association between stress because of job demands and emotional stability was found in this study. Barrick and Mount (1991) reported a similar finding. It makes sense to us that SAPS members who are less anxious, emotional and depressed will cope better with the stressful demands of their jobs. Stress because of job demands and agreeableness related negatively and no substantive or contradictory evidence in the literature could be found in this regard. It could be that SAPS officials find it increasingly difficult to remain soft-hearted, good-natured, flexible, tolerant and trusting in a police service environment comparable to a peace-keeping force. A negative correlation was found between stress because of job demands and conscientiousness. Although no study could be found to verify this finding, it is our opinion that excessive and chronic stress as a result of job demands could have a negative effect on SAPS members' willingness to be hard-working and achievement oriented.

No significant correlation was found between stress because of a lack of resources on the one hand and extraversion and agreeableness on the other hand. Stress because of a lack of resources related negatively to emotional stability in this study. It makes sense to us that SAPS personnel who experience high levels of stress as a result of lack of resources will experience more feelings of anger, anxiety and emotionality. A positive correlation was found between stress because of a lack of resources and conscientiousness. Cortina et al. (2000) refer to traits such as hard-working, achievement oriented and perseverance as synonymous with conscientiousness. Conscientious (hard-working and achievement oriented SAPS personnel will persevere in a job environment even when resources are not readily available.

The multiple regression analysis showed that exhaustion is best predicted by high levels of stress because of job demands, stress because of lack of resources, low conscientiousness, low emotional stability and introversion. Similar findings were reported in other studies. Levert et al. (2000) reported that exhaustion was best predicted by workload, lack of collegial support, role conflict and role ambiguity. Storm and Rothmann (2003b) reported in a survey of eight provinces in South Africa with a sample of ($N = 1910$) police members, that stress

because of job demands and a lack of resources predicted exhaustion. It can thus be concluded from this sample that introverted members of the SAPS who are anxious and emotional by nature or prone to depression and who are not achievement oriented and hard-working, stand a greater chance of experiencing exhaustion in the organisation.

Cynicism was best predicted by high levels of stress because of job demands, stress because of a lack of resources, low conscientiousness and low emotional stability. Demerouti et al. (2001) remarked that lack of resources is often associated with cynicism. Maslach (1998) cited that cynicism was best predicted by work overload and social conflict. According to Storm and Rothmann (2003b) exhaustion and coping strategies (non-active coping and avoidance) predicted cynicism. Low conscientiousness and neuroticism could contain elements similar to non-active coping and avoidance. For this reason low conscientiousness and neuroticism also partially predict cynicism. It could thus be argued that SAPS members in this study who are more anxious, emotional and depressed and who are less achievement oriented and hard-working, would be more prone to cynicism in the organisation.

Professional efficacy was best predicted by three stress factors, namely low stress because of job demands, stress because of lack of resources and police demands and three personality factors, namely conscientiousness, emotional stability and agreeableness. This result partially confirms the research finding of Storm and Rothmann (2003b) who reported that professional efficacy was best predicted by stress caused by a lack of resources. It could be that SAPS members who are not suffering from burnout still experience high levels of stress as a result of lack of resources because of their conscientiousness and emotional stability. Another possible explanation could be that stress because of job demands and stress because of lack of resources might be highly related. This relatedness could lead to a problem of multicollinearity. According to Tabachnek and Fidel (2003), regression will be best when each independent variable is strongly correlated with the dependent variable but uncorrelated with other independent variables. A general goal of regression then is to identify the fewest independent variables necessary to predict a dependent variable where each independent variable predicts a substantial and independent segment of the variability in the dependent variable (Tabachnek & Fidel, 2003). It could thus be concluded that emotionally stable, good-natured, soft-hearted, forgiving, flexible and tolerant police officials will experience higher feelings of professional efficacy in the SAPS. Conversely, personnel who are anxious, worried and emotional by nature, often depressed, rigid, intolerant and unforgiving will most

likely experience feelings of a lack of professional efficacy in the SAPS with its high job demands and lack of resources.

In conclusion, it can be deduced that burnout (exhaustion, cynicism and lack of professional efficacy) can be predicted by job stress (high levels of stress because of job demands, stress because of lack of resources and stressful police demands) and personality traits (introversion, neuroticism, agreeableness and conscientiousness). It can be argued that the situational organisational stress factors together with the dispositional personality components, namely low conscientiousness and low emotional stability, lead to burnout of police officials in this sample. High levels of conscientiousness and emotional stability thus played an important role to prevent burnout in the SAPS in this sample. Agreeableness, together with conscientiousness and emotional stability, were also important components to maintain professional efficacy in this sample of police officials. According to Watson (1997), an introvert who is low on emotional stability stands a greater chance to develop a negative affect (a state of negative feeling and mood).

The present study has certain limitations. The research design was a cross-sectional survey design, which makes it difficult to prove causal relationships. The use of other designs such as longitudinal designs can aid in establishing causality. A further limitation was the fact that the research exclusively relied on self-reporting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that this study be replicated in order to confirm our research findings. If it is repeatedly shown that specific job stressors and personality traits predict burnout accurately in the SAPS, preventative measures can be taken in order to minimise the occurrence of burnout.

Tertiary interventions such as counselling and psychotherapy should be used to help police officials, from the eight provinces of this study, to cope better with the negative effects of burnout and job stress. Secondary interventions such as stress management and prevention of burnout workshops can be engaged to enhance police members' capacity to cope with stress in the workplace.

The management of the SAPS should take cognisance of the fact that high job demands (e.g. excessive paperwork and insufficient personal time) and lack of resources e.g. inadequate salary, personnel shortages and other members not doing their job) increase the chances of burnout. If these factors are not addressed, productivity, efficiency, customer service (batu phele) and moral will be affected negatively. More research, especially longitudinal studies, which investigate the development of stress and burnout in the SAPS are needed.

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CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter the conclusions of the study are presented. Secondly, the limitations of the study are presented. Lastly, recommendations to solve the research problems as well as recommendations for future research are presented.

3.1 CONCLUSION

A healthy, productive and motivated police service is an important contributor to the stability and resulting economic growth and development of countries (Rothmann & Van Rensburg, 2002). Burnout is a recognised health risk in law enforcement agencies but notwithstanding the stressful nature of police work, relative few studies focused on burnout of police officials (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). According to Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998), burnout is 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 behaviours at work".

We set out to establish to what extent burnout, job stress and personality traits were related, and found that the dependent variable, burnout, strongly correlated to the independent variables, job stress and personality traits. Exhaustion was practically significantly related to stress because of job demands. This correlation did not come as a surprise, as Maslach (1998) and Wiese, Rothmann and Storm (2003) reported similar findings. It thus appears that high levels of stress because of job demands (role ambiguity, role conflict, stressful events, heavy work load and work pressure) were related to a significant level of exhaustion in this sample of SAPS members. Exhaustion was also found to be strongly correlated to stress because of lack of resources. Kleyn et al. (2003) and Storm and Rothmann (2003b) confirmed this association in previous studies. It can thus be said that stress because of lack of resources (social support from various sources, job enhancement opportunities such as control, participation in decision-making and autonomy and reinforcement contingencies) largely contributed to a significant level of exhaustion in this study. Cynicism was strongly correlated to stress as a result of job demands and similar findings were reported by Maslach

(1998) and Wiese et al. (2003). This makes sense because a job environment characterised by chronic stressful job demands (such as the SAPS) could in all probability lead to the psychological distancing of its members, as was indeed reported in this sample. A positive association between cynicism and stress because of lack of resources was found. Demerouti et al. (2001) remarked that lack of resources is often associated with cynicism. This finding does not come as a surprise, for stress because of lack of personnel and equipment is often quoted in the media as problematic factors, inhibiting effective service delivery. Professional efficacy was positively related to stress as a result of lack of resources, which confirmed the findings of Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) and Storm and Rothman (2003b). It can be argued that stress because of lack of personnel, equipment and recognition could lead to diminished feelings and behaviour of professional efficacy in this sample of SAPS members.

Exhaustion and cynicism correlated strongly. Maslach (1998) indicated that the correlation between these two burnout components is to be expected, since distancing is such an immediate reaction to exhaustion.

Significant correlations were found between burnout and personality traits. Exhaustion and extraversion were negatively correlated. This echoes a previous finding of Storm and Rothmann (2003a) and thus implies that a positive correlation exists between exhaustion and introversion. It makes sense to us that a positive correlation between exhaustion and introversion was found, because introverts have a preference for internalising own energy and do not speak their minds as freely as extraverts (Watson & Clark, 1997). In our view, not ventilating own experiences of stressors, increases the risk of exhaustion. It can thus be argued that introverted police officials of the SAPS in this sample were more likely to suffer from exhaustion. Exhaustion was significantly negatively related to emotional stability. Conversely, a positive correlation between exhaustion and neuroticism was found. This correlation is consistent with findings in previous studies. De Vries and Van Heck (2002) and Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) indicated that low scores on emotional stability accurately predicted exhaustion. It thus seems as if neuroticism (lack of positive psychological adjustment and emotional stability) is strongly related to the significant level of exhaustion in this sample of SAPS members. Exhaustion and agreeableness were negatively related in this study, which confirms the finding of Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998). The implication is thus that a police member who is flexible and tolerant by nature will less likely present with high levels of exhaustion. A negative correlation was found between exhaustion and

conscientiousness. Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) and Storm and Rothmann (2003a) reported similar findings. It could thus be argued that, in this sample, SAPS personnel who are hard working, achievement oriented and persevering by nature are less likely to suffer from high levels of exhaustion.

A negative correlation was found between cynicism and extraversion. This finding was also reported by Storm and Rothmann (2003a). It thus seems as if SAPS officials who are sociable, assertive, bold and self-sufficient are less likely to become cynical. Cynicism was significantly negatively related to emotional stability in this study. This confirmed the finding of Storm and Rothmann (2003a) who reported that cynicism was related to lower scores on emotional stability (neuroticism). It can thus be argued that cynical SAPS members of this sample are more likely to experience feelings of anger, anxiety and emotionality. A negative correlation between cynicism and agreeableness was found and concurred with similar findings made by Storm and Rothmann (2003a). It could thus be argued that flexible, co-operative and tolerant SAPS officials in this sample would less likely be cynical. Cynicism was significantly negatively related to conscientiousness. This was no surprise as Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) and Storm and Rothmann (2003a) reached similar conclusions. It follows then that hard working and achievement oriented SAPS members will less likely be cynical.

Professional efficacy and extraversion correlated significantly, which confirms the findings of Storm and Rothmann (2003a). A possible explanation could be that those SAPS officials who are sociable, bold and self-sufficient would experience more feelings of professional efficacy. A significant association was found between professional efficacy and emotional stability and once again Storm and Rothmann (2003a) confirmed this result. It could thus be argued that SAPS members, who are not by nature emotional, anxious, worried and insecure, would experience more feelings of professional accomplishment. Professional efficacy and agreeableness correlated positively in this study. A similar result was found by Storm and Rothmann (2003a). Thus, participants in this study who were more flexible, trusting co-operative and tolerant would most likely experience higher feelings of professional efficacy. A significant relation between professional efficacy and conscientiousness was found, which comes as no surprise, as Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) and Storm and Rothmann (2003a) reported similar findings. It can be argued that SAPS officials who are hard-working and achievement oriented will experience higher feeling of professional accomplishment.

A significant correlation between job stress and personality traits was found. Stress because of job demands and extraversion correlated negatively and this result seems to differ from other research findings. Fruyt and Mervielde (1999) cited that extraverts prefer higher levels of cognitive task demands and pace of task demands. A possible explanation could be that extroverted SAPS members view certain aspects of their jobs as laborious i.e. paperwork and routine tasks. Such time consuming and laborious tasks are a far cry from the preferred activities of extraverts that include boldness, sociability, gregariousness and self-sufficiency. Another possible explanation for this finding could be the sample size. With a sample of ($N=2153$) and a statistically significant coefficient of ($p \leq 0.01$), it is possible that this correlation was detected by the computerised statistical software programme, which would otherwise escape detection in the case of a smaller sample. A positive association between stress because of job demands and emotional stability was found in this study. Barrick and Mount. (1991) reported a similar finding. It makes sense to us that SAPS members who are less anxious, emotional and depressed will cope better with the stressful demands of their jobs. Stress because of job demands and agreeableness related negatively and no substantive or contradictory evidence in the literature could be found in this regard. It could be that SAPS officials find it increasingly difficult to remain tender-hearted, good-natured, flexible, tolerant and trusting in a police service environment comparable to a peace-keeping force. A negative correlation was found between job demands and conscientiousness and although no study could be found to verify this finding, it is our opinion that excessive and chronic stress because of job demands could have a negative effect on SAPS members' willingness to be hard-working and achievement oriented.

No significant correlation was found between stress because of lack of resources and extraversion as well as stress because of lack of resources and agreeableness. Stress because of lack of resources related negatively to emotional stability in this study. This finding seems to contradict that of Boudreau et al. (2001) who reported a significant negative correlation between neuroticism (positive correlation between emotional stability and compensation) and compensation. Compensation is, however, only one aspect of resources and this study also incorporated elements of social support, recognition, personnel strength and equipment. Another possible explanation for this finding could be that anxiety, depression and emotionality are not directly related to stress because of lack of resources. A positive correlation was found between stress because of lack of resources and conscientiousness. Cortina et al. (2000) refer to traits such as hard-working, achievement oriented and

perseverance, as synonymous with conscientiousness. We are of the opinion that conscientious (hard-working and achievement oriented SAPS personnel will persevere in a job environment even when resources are not readily available.

We also wanted to find out which components of job stress and personality traits best predicted components of burnout. The first specific objective was to determine whether stress because of high job demands, stress because of lack of resources, introversion, low emotional stability and low conscientiousness predicted exhaustion in the SAPS. The results indicated that exhaustion was indeed predicted by stress as a result of high job demands, stress because of lack of resources, introversion, low emotional stability and low conscientiousness. Similar findings were reported in other studies, for example, Levert et al. (2000) and Storm and Rothmann (2003b). It can thus be concluded from this study that introverted members of the SAPS who are anxious and emotional by nature or prone to depression and who are not achievement oriented and hard-working, stand a greater chance of experiencing exhaustion in the organisation.

The second specific objective was to determine whether stress because of high job demands, stress because of lack of resources, low emotional stability, and low conscientiousness predict cynicism in the SAPS. Cynicism was best predicted by three stress factors, namely stress because of job demands, stress because of lack of resources and low police demands, and two personality factors, namely low conscientiousness and low emotional stability (24% of variance explained). Stress because of police demands was thus found as an additional independent variable that predicted cynicism. Demerouti et al. (2001) remarked that stress because of lack of resources is often associated with cynicism. Maslach (1998) cited that cynicism was best predicted by work overload and social conflict. According to Storm and Rothmann (2003b), exhaustion and coping strategies (non-active coping and avoidance) predicted cynicism. Low conscientiousness and neuroticism could contain elements similar to non-active coping and avoidance. For this reason low conscientiousness and neuroticism also partially predict cynicism. It could thus be argued that SAPS members in this study who are more anxious, emotional and depressed and who are less achievement oriented and hard-working would be more prone to cynicism in the organisation.

The third specific objective was to determine whether lower levels of stress because of job demands, stress because of lack of resources, conscientiousness, emotional stability and

agreeableness predict professional efficacy. The results indicated that professional efficacy was best predicted by three stress factors, namely lower levels of stress because of job demands, stress because of lack of resources and stress because of police demands and three personality factors, namely conscientiousness, emotional stability and agreeableness. Stress because of police demands was thus identified as an additional independent variable that predicted professional efficacy. This result partially confirms the research finding of Storm and Rothmann (2003b) who reported that professional efficacy was best predicted by stress because of lack of resources. It could thus be concluded that emotionally stable, good-natured, soft-hearted, forgiving, flexible and tolerant police officials will experience higher feelings of professional efficacy in the SAPS. Conversely, personnel who are anxious, worried and emotional by nature, often depressed, rigid, intolerant and unforgiving will most likely experience feelings of a lack of professional efficacy in the SAPS with its high stressful job demands and stress because of lack of resources.

In conclusion, it can be said that burnout (exhaustion, cynicism and lack of professional efficacy) can be predicted by job stress (stress because of job demands, stress because of lack of resources and stress because of police demands) and personality traits (introversion, neuroticism, agreeableness and conscientiousness).

3.2 LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

On a meta-theoretical level the literature was presented from a pathogenic perspective. The basic assumptions are that health and sickness are dichotomies and that more emphasis is placed on sickness. This study focused exclusively on pathogens like exhaustion, cynicism, lower professional efficacy, high levels of stress because of job demands, stress because of lack of resources and personality traits that were found to be strongly correlated to these pathogens. It would be interesting, however, to study factors that are strongly correlated to work engagement in the SAPS. In the pathogenic paradigm, factors that cause sickness are referred to as risk factors and these risk factors are studied in order to better understand and predict the sickness. No attention was given to factors (salutogens or psychofortogens) that cause health. The pathogenic perspective views stressors as negative and detrimental to health. Not all stressors are inherently bad though. As long as adequate coping mechanisms are in place, stressors can even be opportunities for growth.

The empirical study is presented from the positivistic and functionalistic framework. The basic assumptions are that true and objective knowledge about nature can be obtained through analytic science. Knowledge is gained through formulation and empirical verification of logical statements, propositions and theories. The process of knowledge development is deductive and differentiative. The time perspective is trans-historical and it provides time-sliced/synchronic knowledge that does not formally take into account the evolving and changing aspects of social phenomena.

The survey, cross-sectional research design used in this study gives a snap shot view of the topic under investigation. The limitations of this research design, according to Kerlinger and Lee (2000), is that the depth of survey information is ordinarily poor as compared to the scope. Deductions from research results should also be limited to the research population and not be generalised to the larger population. Longitudinal studies that investigate the development of burnout and job stress in police officials with burnout-associated dispositional personality traits, such as introversion and low emotional stability, would be of greater scientific value.

The market of intellectual resources in this research comprised of, among others, the personality theory as theorised from the trait perspective with strong cognitive psychology influences. There are, however, other theoretical constructs of personality i.e. type theories, psychodynamic and psychoanalytic theories, social learning theories, behaviourism, humanism, situationalism and interactionalism that could also be studied in relation to burnout and job stress in the SAPS.

Other limitations of this study are that far more males (80%) than females were included in the sample. Furthermore, 80% of the study population represents the lower ranks of the SAPS i.e. constables, sergeants and inspectors. These moderating variables need to be taken into account when conclusions are drawn from this study. More research needs to be done on the relationship between personality, job stress and burnout in female SAPS members. In addition, more research also needs to be done on the relationship between personality, job stress and burnout in higher-ranking SAPS personnel.

3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

As stated in Chapter 2, Kop et al. (1999) identified two categories of potential stressors in police work. Firstly, various aspects of the very nature of police work, for example, physical threat, violence, exposure to danger and facing the unknown. The second category comprised of organisational stressors such as management style, poor communication and lack of support. It would only be fitting to make recommendations, as observed from this study, within the boundaries of the above-mentioned categories.

Concerning aspects of the very nature of police work, two categories of interventions are recommended, namely tertiary and secondary interventions. Tertiary interventions such as counselling and psychotherapy should be used to help police officials, from the eight provinces in this study, to cope better with the negative effects of job stress and burnout. Various internal and external resources are available to render such assistance. Internal resources refer to professional services within the SAPS such as Psychological Services, Social Work Services and Spiritual Services. The problems facing internal resources, however, include lack of human resources, lack of specialised training to effectively treat burnout and a strong organisational commitment towards a broad spectrum of prevention programmes. The implications of the above-mentioned problems facing internal resources are that there are not enough trained personnel and not enough scheduled time (due to other commitments) to effectively treat every burnout referral in the SAPS. External resources refer to counselling and clinical psychologists, psychiatrists and medical doctors outside the SAPS who can render professional services to police officials. The problem with external resources from the client's point of view is the financial implication with regard to payment for professional services and dealing with increasing limitations from the police medical scheme, Polmed.

Secondary interventions such as stress management, work wellness and prevention of burnout workshops can be held to enhance police members' capacity to cope with stress in the workplace. As indicated, strong emphasis is already placed on such prevention programmes in the SAPS. The shortage of employee assistance personnel, however, makes it very difficult to reach all the police stations, specialised units and support personnel.

Kop et al. (1999) refers to organisational stressors as the second identified category of police stressors. Task uncertainty, lack of resources (human and equipment), long working hours, insufficient remuneration, management style and lack of support from management are topics that feature frequently in SAPS organisational diagnosis/climate studies.

It is our opinion that the top management of the SAPS should take cognisance of the fact that high levels of stress because of job demands (e.g. excessive paperwork and insufficient personal time), stress because of lack of resources (e.g. inadequate salary, personnel shortages and other members not doing their job) and stress because of police specific demands, increase the chances of burnout. If these factors are not addressed productivity and efficiency, customer service (batho pele) and morale will be affected negatively. More research, especially longitudinal studies, which investigate the development of stress and burnout in the SAPS, are needed.

Another recommendation is that the relationship between personality, job stress and burnout be studied at both middle and senior management levels of the organisation. It would be interesting to see how seasoned SAPS personnel cope with job stress, how they would define job stress, whether they suffer from burnout and what role their personality traits play in relation to job stress and burnout. It might be that senior personnel (personnel with ranks from superintendent to commissioner) cope better with job stress because of dispositional traits such as hardiness, sense of coherence, psychological toughness, dispositional optimism, emotional intelligence, positive affect, efficacy, perceived social support and attitude towards reality. It might also be interesting to study work engagement versus job burnout in senior personnel who were exposed to high levels of job stress for a long period of time.

It is also recommended that burnout as a result of actual job demands and lack of resources be studied in the SAPS. An item response on job demands and lack of resources as perceived through the lens of stress, does not necessarily measure actual job demands and lack of resources.

A final recommendation for future research on burnout in the SAPS is the relationship between burnout and biodata. Objective measures of blood pressure, heart rate, blood glucose levels and respiratory rate could supplement subjective measures of burnout in order to provide a more clinical profile of burnout in the SAPS.

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