

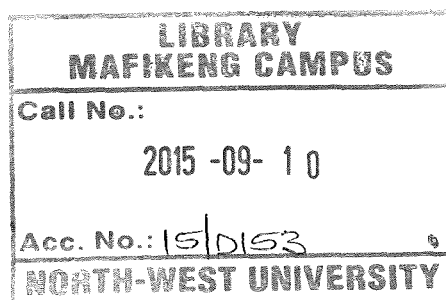
An investigation into the impact of a stressful work environment on
productivity and employee well-being

T.T. Malaka

Student Number 18036945

**Mini-Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Business Administration at the Mafikeng Campus of the North-West
University**

Supervisor: Prof. E Schmickl



Declaration

I Thuto Malaka, hereby declare that the contents of this dissertation submitted for the degree MBA at University of the Northwest Graduate School of Business, represents my own original unaided work, and that the dissertation has not previously been submitted to any other institution of higher education towards an qualification. I further declare that all sources cited or quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of a comprehensive list of references. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the this research document/dissertation is my own work and has not been copied or plagiarized University of the Northwest Graduate School of Business

Thuto Malaka

.....

University of the Northwest Graduate School of Business

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge the following individuals:

- My deepest gratitude is due to my creator and divine grace for the gifts and challenges of life.
- To Tshimologo Malaka for inspiring me and for giving me permission to dream again.
- To my mother and father, for the non-stop irksome and unconditional love.
- To my friends for allowing me to be a part of their individual successes and for inspiring me.
- To my grandparents, Mbaba Malaka, Nompoti Masuku, David Masuku, Phaswane Malaka, for instilling the fundamental love and appreciation of education within their children.
- To Dr Erik Schmickl for your, dedication and guidance; this completed document would not have been possible without you.
- To Ruwa for the early mornings and the late nights, your sacrifice and diligence.

ACRONYMS

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa Nations (BRICS)

Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG)

South African Breweries (SAB)

Maslach Burnout inventory (MBI)

Emotional exhaustion (EE)

Depersonalization or cynicism (DP)

Personal accomplish (PA)

Employee Wellness Program (EAP)

Meyers Brigg's Type Indicator (MBTI)

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

United States of America (USA)

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: ORIENTATION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.1 Introduction	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.2 Background to the study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.3 Problem Statement	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.4 Primary Investigative Question	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.4.1 Sub-Investigative Question	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.5 Primary objective of this study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.6 Delimitation of the study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.7 Summary	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Chapter 2 Literature Review	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2. 1 Introduction.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.2 Defining work stress and burnout.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.2.1 Stress.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.2.2 Identifying possible cause of stress	Error! Bookmark not defined.0
2.2.3 The impact of stress and burnout on performance	Error! Bookmark not defined.3
2.3 Depression.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.8
2.4 The relationship between stress, burnout and depression	19
2.5 The costs of burnout	Error! Bookmark not defined.2

2.5.1 The commercial costs.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	2
2.5.2 The invisible costs	Error! Bookmark not defined.	3
2.5.3 Absenteeism related to stress	Error! Bookmark not defined.	5
2.6 Techniques for dealing with stress.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	8
☐ What can people do for themselves to cope with stress?.....		29
☐ Employee Assistance Programs		33
☐ Decision making freedom, flexible work arrangements		33
☐ Physical activities as a possible coping mechanism	Error! Bookmark not defined.	
2.7 Personality and stress	Error! Bookmark not defined.	6
2.8 Summary	Error! Bookmark not defined.	6
CHAPTER THREE	Error! Bookmark not defined.	7
3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION DESIGN	Error! Bookmark not defined.	7
3.1 Introduction	Error! Bookmark not defined.	7
3.2 Research Design	Error! Bookmark not defined.	7
3.2.1 Population and Sampling		38
3.3 Data Collection		39
3.3.1 Questionnaires as data collection tools		39
3.3.2 The Questionnaire Techniques.		39
3.3.3 Development of the Questionnaire items	Error! Bookmark not defined.	0
3.3.4 The format and the content of the questionnaire.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	0
3.3.5 Pre-testing the questionnaire.	Error! Bookmark not defined.	1
3.3.6 Administrative procedures.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	2

3.4 Data Analysis	Error! Bookmark not defined.	3
3.4.1 Statistical Techniques.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	3
3.4.2 Statistical Test Method	Error! Bookmark not defined.	3
3.5 Ethics	Error! Bookmark not defined.	3
3.6 Limitation of the study	Error! Bookmark not defined.	4
3.7 Summary	Error! Bookmark not defined.	5
CHAPTER FOUR	Error! Bookmark not defined.	6
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	Error! Bookmark not defined.	6
4.1 Introduction	Error! Bookmark not defined.	6
4.2 Response rate.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	6
Part A Analysis of Biographic Data	Error! Bookmark not defined.	
4.2.1 Gender and age group	Error! Bookmark not defined.	
4.2.2 Race		48
4.2.3 Level of employment and service		48
Section B Analysis of Likert based research data		48
4.2.4 Questionnaire.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	0
4.3 Sub-investigative questions.....		51
Section C Correlations, between the variables		63
4.3 Correlations of key variables.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	3
4.4 Summary		69
CHAPTER 5.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	1
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	1

5.1 Introduction	Error! Bookmark not defined.	1
5.2 Summary of Chapters.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	2
5.3 Conclusion's drawn from the sub-investigative question.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	3
5.4 Recommendations	Error! Bookmark not defined.	6
5.5 Limitations.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	7
5.6 Suggestions for future research	Error! Bookmark not defined.	7
References.....		79

List of Tables

Table 4.1 Gender and Age	47
Table 4.2 Length of service vs level of employment	49
Table 4.3 Job satisfaction	52
Table 4.4 Remunerations	54
Table 4.5 Absenteeism and Leave	55
Table 4.6 Stress and work control	57
Table 4.7 Relationship with Supervision/Management.....	59
Table 4.8 Promotion	61
Table 4.9 Work environment.....	62
Table 4.10 Correlations	64
Table 4.11 Comments on any issues related to personal Burnout/Stress in SAB	65
Table 4.12 How secured do you feel in your job.....	66
Table 4.13 To what extent is your work responsible for your absence from work?	67
Table 4.14 Are there any general comments that you would like to make about your well being	68

List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Performance increases when stress levels increase.....	15
Figure 2.2 Optimal Performance at the right Stress Level	16
Figure 2.3 Increased Stress leads to Decreased Performance	17
Figure 2.4 Race.....	48

ABSTRACT

The study involved an investigation of the relationship between job stress and burnout amongst a sample of 40 employees of South African Breweries. The primary aim of the study was to ascertain whether unchecked and prolonged exposure to stressful situations would result in eventual burnout, thus affecting the health of the employees and the productivity of the organisation. The secondary aim of the study was to provide recommendations for possible proactive solutions that could be implemented by companies and individuals to mitigate the onset of stressful situations. A Likert design was used. The data was collected using a purposefully developed questionnaire. The sample consisted of 40 employees from different racial groups. The results of the study showed that workloads, meeting target deadlines and extremely competitive market conditions all continuously add incremental amounts of stress. Continued exposure to prolonged stress can result in serious consequences for employees. If the stressors continue unchecked they can lead to eventual burnout and loss in productivity. Organisations therefore need to ensure that various proactive measures are implemented in order to mitigate the impact of stress on the well-being of their employees. These stress mitigation strategies will have a positive impact on the overall performance of the business.

Keywords: burnout, stress, stressors, growth opportunities, health; stress and gender, stress and personality type

Chapter 1 ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an orientation and background to this study. In particular it focuses on the problem to be investigated, the problem statement, the primary and sub-investigative questions addressed by the research study, the objectives of the study and the delimitation of the research.

1.2 Background to the study

In a world characterised by continuous change and globalisation, companies are increasingly required to do more with less, as the fight for market share and the hearts and minds of consumers intensifies. The past 10 years have been a tumultuous time for business across the globe. Growth in the first world economies seems to have reached a ceiling and has begun to taper and even shrink, while at the same time shareholders have become more fickle and tend to have unrealistic performance expectations. As a result companies' employees bear the brunt of additional pressure to ensure that companies achieve their bottom line expectations.

This additional pressure appears to be responsible for the increase of psychological and physiological disorders among workers. These disorders are the direct result of the constant onslaught of change and ambiguity within the workplace (Wheatley, 2006). Employees suffer from a wide array of physical and psychological disorders. These disorders are known to adversely influence employees' levels of productivity (Rothmann & Barkuizen, 2008). According to the Centre for Disease Control (CDC), located in Atlanta in the United States, 90% of all health issues are related to stress. In addition, studies by Dr Bruce Lipton based on research conducted in 1998 by Stanford University Medical School, found that over 95% of all illness and disease is linked to stress (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011). The relationship between illness and stress is of particular interest to organizations or companies where

employees' personal issues are regarded as significant for the development and maintenance of employees as an asset to the company.

The relationship between stress and illness receives frequent attention from the media. According to *The New York Times online Health Guide* "stress can come from any situation or thought that makes you feel frustrated" (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011, p.42). The disorders with which employees are diagnosed include eye twitches, mild headaches, chronic migraines, depression, irritable bowel syndrome, and substance abuse. These disorders have been directly linked to increased pressure to deliver results within an organisation. The presence of these disorders amongst employees results in decreased organisational productivity.

Employee sick leave and absenteeism costs organisations across the globe enormous sums of money (Aadmodt, 2010). When employees are absent from work due to pressure related illness their work load is then taken up by their colleagues, which only exacerbates the situation. Stress could result from, job related issues, financial insecurity, fear of failure or of performing badly, uncertainty about the future, health problems, family issues, relationships problems, dealing with negative attitudes, feeling powerless, low self-esteem, losing something or someone important (Pg Lloyd & Johnson, 2011; Aswegen et al, 2011).

With the current credit crunch, down grading of countries credit ratings and the impending non-payment of number of countries in the European Union, loans which were secured, initially to help strengthen the respective countries performance, the situation is becoming increasingly dire.

The threat posed by the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) countries, with their relatively low input costs that immediately translate into lower selling prices in the market, places the current market leaders under greater pressure to do more with less. The

demands on employees within the fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) environment have therefore grown exponentially. These changes in the global market place have highlighted the need for increasingly proactive programs in order to assist employees in managing their overall well-being. The literature makes it clear that almost all health issues are the direct result of stress. In fact, over the last 10-15 years the relationship between illness and stress has become so universally accepted that even the United States federal government has come out publicly in agreement. In the US employees can sue organisations for work related stress (McLeod, 2002).

This study aims to explore the relationship between stress and illness and provide updated and fresh information regarding stress in the workplace. Stress interferes with thinking processes, making individuals inefficient and vulnerable to mistakes, which results in increased levels of distress. Over time stress levels can build to the point where immune systems are compromised, thus resulting in illness (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011).

In this study potential stressors, work systems and methods that currently exist within the working environment and that add to the employees' stress levels will be identified. It is hoped that the results of this study will enable employers to identify the initial signs or stages of stress within their employees. Employee stress can have various detrimental effects on an organisation, including loss of productivity as a result of absenteeism, sick leave, unhealthy/hostile working environment, poor morale, muddled thinking, inefficient action, and increased errors. Stress can also result in employees experiencing irritability, insomnia, tension, anxiety, anger, mild depression, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, heart disease, ulcers, allergies, asthma, migraine headaches and premature aging.

Gebauer (2011:56) describes a dramatic study concerning the effects of unrelieved stress on mice, and avers:

“When mice are placed on an electric grid and given very mild shocks, they are given enough time to recover from stress of the shocks. But if these mild shocks are too frequent, the mice are not able to recover from this harmless stress, and they die from old age within a few short days. Even though each electrical shock itself was harmless, the accumulative effect of frequent stress without ‘enough recovery time causes the body to just give up and die .”

This research study will also focus on the progression of stress into burnout. Specifically, it is hoped that the recommendations of this study will assist management of organisations in the development of methods for countering the effects of stress and eventual burnout.

1.3 Problem Statement

The problem statement accompanying a research investigation pertains to an identified problem within the research environment, and forms the primary focus of the research (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001:60), research questions “provide another means for guiding and directing a researchers’ thinking and are more common in qualitative (phenomenological) studies.” The research problem for this study is stated as:

The impact of work stress on overall organisation performance, work productivity and employee well-being.

1.4 Primary Investigative Question

The primary aim of this study is to understand the true impact of stress as an organisational disorder. In addition, the study aims to investigate the causes of stress. Finally, the study aims to make recommendations regarding programs that companies can establish to assist in the mitigation of stress. The relationship between stress and burnout will be explored with the aim of understanding the causes of stress and the relationship between stress and burnout.

Within this context the primary investigative question is being posed as:

“Does working in a fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) company, in particular a sales division, create counter-productive levels of stress?”

1.4.1 Sub-Investigative Questions

Similar to the research question, sub-investigative (or sub-questions) questions need to be formulated in clear unambiguous terms. These sub-investigative questions are formulated in support of the main research question or hypothesis (Watkins, 2010).

The study will focus on investigating the Human Resources (HR) issues listed below in terms of their relationship to the development of stress within the employees working within an FMCG company, namely:

- What role does job security play in the development of stress?
- What role does job fulfilment play in the development of stress?
- How does absenteeism increase the development of stress within an organisation?
- How do the employees' perceptions of empowerment impact on their level of stress?
- What role does leadership play in the development of stress?

1.5 Primary objective of this study

The primary objective of this study is to establish the nature of the relationship between job-stressors in a sales division within an FMCG company and stress burnout. In addition, the study will investigate the impact of this relationship on employee productivity and organisational performance. Finally, the ultimate purpose of the study is to provide recommendations to management regarding appropriate interventions which might mitigate the problem of excessive counter-productive stress.

1.6 Delimitation of the study

This is an explorative and restrictive study, which involves a case study focusing on South African Breweries located in the Tshwane District of Gauteng Province in South Africa. The findings of this research study are not generalizable to other districts or to the rest of the South African Breweries divisions, as only 60 people will be targeted for the research.

1.7 Summary

This chapter provided the background to the study, the problem statement, the primary and sub-investigative questions as well as the objectives of the study and the delimitation of the research.

The next chapter will review the existing body of knowledge relating to the primary and sub-investigative questions addressed by this research. In the third chapter the research design and data collection instrument will be discussed. In chapter four the data analysis will be presented, and finally, chapter five of this research report will provide an integrated discussion of the findings as well as providing conclusions for the research and recommendations for management and future research.

Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses relevant literature in relation to stress and burnout. In particular, the chapter focuses on the detrimental impacts of stress on the individual and the environment in which he or she operates. The causes of stress and its relation to burnout, particularly within FMCG companies, is also a specific focus. This literature review serves as a backdrop to this study, which involved a case study of SAB (District Tshwane) with the aim of making recommendations regarding effective and efficient future stress and burnout management.

This literature review attempts to provide an overview of the issues that were outlined in chapter 1. Through assessing previous research pertaining to the formulated primary research problem and sub-investigative questions this chapter serves as the basis to the research design and data collection that are discussed in the following chapter. The chapter focuses on the following specific issues:

- Defining the concept of work stress.
- Identifying possible work stressors:
 - Work systems
 - Work methods
 - Situational stress
- Identifying the initial stages or steps of stress:
 - Absenteeism
 - Sick leave
 - Unhealthy/hostile work environment
 - Poor morale
- Progression of stress into burnout.
- Personality types and the different ways in which stress effects them.

2.2 Defining work stress and burnout

The following discussion focuses on developing a comprehensive definition of stress, as well as investigating the root causes of stress. The emphasis is on work stress and work stressors, with a particular focus on work systems and work methods. The following topics are discussed in detail:

- The impact of stress on performance within the workplace.
- The costs of stress and burnout to the workplace.
- Determining the relationship between stress, burnout and depression; and
- The various coping methods used by employees to deal with excessive exposure to stressors.

2.2.1 Stress

Stress is an inevitable part of life. The term originated in physics and refers to the application of sufficient force to an object to distort it. Stress is therefore seen as originating from 'outside' the organism, causing the body to respond through either 'fight' or 'flight'. Studies suggest that stress is a contributing factor in 90% of all diseases. Half of all visits to doctors are stress-related. Research suggests that anxiety reduction may now be the largest single business in the western world. Stress occurs when the mind believes that it is in some kind of danger, whether emotional or physical. Stress therefore occurs when the demands of a situation outweigh the available resources. When responding to a stressful situation the body pumps adrenaline into various bodily systems in order to assist in dealing with the situation. This adrenaline boost is intended to be used for physical activity; however, this rarely occurs in response to stressful situations in modern society. If the adrenaline is not burnt off by fleeing or fighting it remains in the body, creating tension and emotional distress. Too much

stress without relief can leave an individual feeling strained and drained, unable to meet daily demands with the balance and clear thinking that is necessary. This results in feelings of tension, irritability and tiredness (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011).

According to Lloyd and Johnson (2011) people are continually bombarded with demands, expectations and unmet wants as they go through their daily lives. As a result the unused adrenaline leaves the body exhausted, resulting in a low-functioning immune system and a pervasive depletion of physical, emotional and spiritual resources.

Hiebert (1988) and Lazarus and Folkman (1984) defined stress as the reactions of persons who feel that external demands are beyond their endurance. According to these authors stress results in physiological, psychological and behavioural changes. Arnold et al. (1998) defined stress as any force that pushes a psychological or physical factor beyond its range ability, producing strain within an individual. Stress is the body's natural and sometimes appropriate of reacting to a situation that causes fear or seems overwhelming. Stress is necessary as it allows people to rise to meet the challenges of life (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011). According to Tennant (2001) understanding work stress is of increasing importance due to continuing changes in the workplace, with employees experiencing increasing job demands as well as increasing job insecurity. Karasek and Theorell (1990) found that psychological job demands, time pressure and conflicts are all significant sources of risk for stress-related illness. Job demands involve the pre-determined aspects of work, such as deadlines, challenges and expected performance. In addition, other factors such as personal conflicts resulting from role conflict and task pressure may also lead to work place stress (Karasek & Theorell, 1990). Situational stress is pervasive and influences relationships, work, and the ability to enjoy life to the fullest. High levels of stress result in irritability and anger (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011).

In the work place, one important risk factor for mental disorders is work stress. The concept was first put forward by Freudenberg (1974) to describe the mental and physical exhaustion caused by excessively long hours of work, heavy workload, and excessive work intensity in workers. Long term stress and anxiety inevitably deplete enthusiasm, lower their physical fitness, affect their mental health, and results in work burnout (Schaufeli et al., 1993). When situational stress builds up overtime, it creates a level of physiological stress and physiological stress, where physiological stress causes almost all illness and disease shuts down important functions in body cells and health suffers (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011).

2.2.2 Identifying possible causes of stress

Swanevelder (2010) outlines the following causes of stress:

- **Fast Foods** - Partially hydrogenated fats, trans-fats, artificial colouring agents, artificial taste enhancers, artificial appetite appeasers, artificial aromatic agents, artificial sweetening agents and artificial preservatives are all toxic to the human organism, thereby causing stress. Lloyd and Johnson, (2011) Over emphasised in their Book “The Healing Code” about the dangers of Energy Drinks. Nearly everywhere you turn, drinks (and pills) are being touted for giving an added boost in energy whenever needed. It is a multi-billion dollar industry. What they promise is hours of energy. But if you look closely at the ingredients, you see that it’s another case of swapping a short-term solution (a temporary boost in energy) for long-term complications. Even vitamins and herbs can cause side effects when you take too much. Some energy drinks even issue a warning as to how many can you can consume without harmful effects. These drinks and pills actually add stress to the body by over-stimulating it and masking fatigue that is supposed to lead you to rest

and relax, not get more hyped up. Most contain sugar, which suppresses, the immune system, or sugar substitutes, which many believe are harmful.

- **Family** – Questions exist regarding whether family is a help or a hindrance to success. A study by Marx and Spray, (1976) found that married professionals are far more likely to be highly successful than unmarried professionals.
- **Workload** - Research shows that work overload is a serious problem in a number of organisations. Many organisations design jobs poorly and provide insufficient resources to prevent work overload. A study by Galinsky, Kim and Bond (2001) found that about two thirds of stressed employees occupy managerial and professional positions, while the remaining third are spread across all other levels of employment. It is therefore important to acknowledge the severity of stress and its impact on all employees within the workplace. Extensive research by Gryna (2004) resulted in the identification of the following causes of work stress:

- **Insufficient resources to handle the normal workload** - Organisations do not always ensure that they have the necessary resources available to perform a job. Employers should spend time investigating ways in which to reduce the amount of wasted resources in a process due to errors, corrections, and non-value added steps.
- **Unclear policies and procedures in place** -Organisations often do not have clear procedures in place, resulting in wasting of time and resources. This means that employees have to consult with different individuals in order to accomplish their tasks. If these individuals are unable to assist the employees then need to devise their own ways of managing the situation. Having to devise new means of handling situations takes up considerable amounts of time and impacts negatively on productivity.

- **Lack of control in setting priorities, deciding work methods, and the use of resources.** - Action plans regarding the setting of priorities and work methods should be of great importance for all organisations. However, this is sometimes not the case. This may result in employees spending significant amounts of time on less important activities.
- **Work process is not capable of meeting the quantity and quality requirements** – Organisations sometimes do not have plans in place to enable employees to identify whether work processes are capable of reaching the end goal. In addition, many organisations do not have mechanisms that enable employees to identify possible sources from which they can access the resources to redesign the work process.
- **Unclear performance goals and responsibilities** - Although performance management has been implemented in many organisations, employees and employers have frequently still not mastered the art of setting clear goals. As a result, employees tend to take on more than they can cope with and/or may be required of them.
- **Inputs from internal/external customers** - Employees sometimes find themselves in difficult situations when interacting with customers, both internally and externally. They often do not know what actions to take to prevent the problems experienced by the customers. This means that unnecessary time is spent on resolving customer complaints. This time wasting could have been prevented if appropriate actions were taken prior to the incident.
- **Inadequate selection and training of personnel** - The recruitment process often takes a long period of time and existing employees find themselves assuming the responsibility of the vacant job. In other instances employees are not matched to

the right positions. The employee thus finds him/herself struggling in the job, resulting in the experience of strain.

- **Information overload – e-mail and other** – It is difficult for individuals to set priorities in responding to information when everything is flagged as important. Individuals need to find a way to priorities e-mails, as well as retrieved information from journals or the internet. Employees require time to read through information and find relevant solutions.
- **Computer hardware/software problems** - Employees often identify computer hardware problems, but have to present the information to the Information Technology department before any action can be taken. Proper lines of communication need to be established between the Information Technology department and the employees in order to ensure that employees' time is used optimally.

Based on the above discussion it would appear that improper diet, family instability, and a poor working environment all contribute to the development of stress. When employees feel paralysed and unable to make decisions they experience themselves as unempowered. If this occurs repeatedly it could lead to the development of stress. Leadership is defined as a social process in which people are influenced to work voluntarily, enthusiastically and persistently towards attaining a group goal (Werner, 2003). The lack of good quality leadership could result in employees finding themselves in a number of ambiguous scenarios. Without clear direction from above these ambiguous scenarios result in employees being vulnerable to stress

2.2.3 The impact of stress and burnout on performance

Over the last two decades there has been a growing interest in work-related stress. This interest is premised on the assumption that happy workers are also productive workers

(known as the happy-productive worker hypothesis) and has a long history, starting with the Human Relations movement in the 1930s. There is a general belief that improving employee well-being should result in higher productivity (Fisher, 2003). In keeping with this view research has found a positive relationship between job satisfaction (as a measure of worker happiness, and well-being) and overall job performance. The most comprehensive review to date included 312 studies involving more than 50000 workers in total and found a mean correlation of .30 between satisfaction and performance (Judge, Thoresen, Bono & Patton 2001). The existence of negative relationships between work stressors and physical and psychological well-being is also well established (Schabarcq, Winnubst & Cooper, 2003). Research suggests that stress contributes to increasing psychosomatic and psychosocial distress, absenteeism, high employee turnover and productivity losses (Sonnentag & Frese, 2003).

Sullivan and Bhagat (1992) outlined four main hypotheses regarding the association between stressors and work performance. The first model suggests that performance is greatest when employees experience moderate amounts of stressors. The second hypothesis claims that stressors and work performance have a positive linear relationship. Within this model stressors are viewed as 'challenges' (Meglino, 1977). In this model low levels of stressors result in low performance, whereas high levels of stressors result in high performance. Studies by Arsenault and Dolan (1983) and Kahn and Long (1988) have provided support for this hypothesis. According to the third hypothesis stressors and work performance have a negative linear relationship, in that high levels of stressors are related to low performance. In this hypothesis stressors are viewed as distracting employees from their work, which consequently diminishes performance (Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985; Motowidlo et al., 1986; Siu, 2003). The fourth model argues that there is no association between stressors and performance (Matteson, Ivancevich, & Smith, 1984; Orpen & Welch, 1989).

Just as circumstance and lifestyles differ widely, so do the degrees to which people find events and situations to be stressful (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011). Events that elicit fear and feelings of being overwhelmed in one person may not impact another person in the same way. Different individuals have different triggers and circumstances that elicit stress responses. These triggers are referred to as situational stress (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011).

Moch (2010) explained the different stages of stress levels experienced by individuals, as well as the effects of these levels on performance. This relationship is illustrated with the help of what Moch (2010) terms a 'u' shaped curve. If performance is to increase than stress levels or demands also need to increase. This implies that individuals need to be confronted with regular challenges in order to increase stress levels sufficiently to improve overall performance. Moch's (2010) stages are depicted in Figure 2.1.

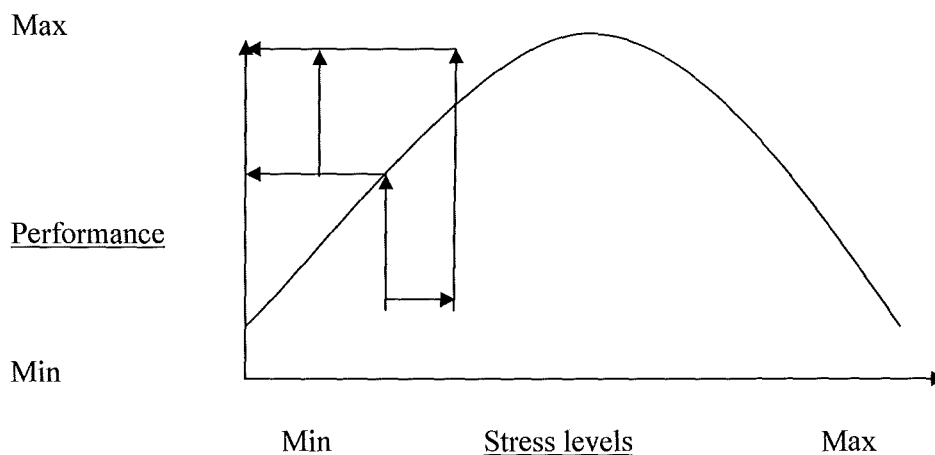


Figure 2.1 Performance increases when stress levels increase (Source: Moch, 2010)

On the other hand if there is insufficient stress this can result in boredom over a period of time. This frequently occurs when work is performed repetitively. This form of stress can become very severe and is sometimes referred to as the silent killer. In contrast, maximum performance is achieved when stress levels are at a point where individuals are coping

satisfactorily with all the demands that they face. This stage is referred to the peak performance stage and is also known as the ideal zone. However, if stress levels increase beyond this point personal performance begins to decrease. Individuals at this stage move to the distress zone, which means that the individual is experiencing increasing strain. This increased strain is normally signalled by symptoms such as headaches, tiredness, irritability, concentration difficulties, flu-like illnesses, and increased consumption of refined sugars and caffeine. These signals of distress often lead to self-medication with chemical substances such as analgesics, alcohol, nicotine and tranquillizers. In this case prescriptions of medication can lead to further masking of symptoms. Ignoring chronic stress responses can lead to the development of stress-related illnesses.

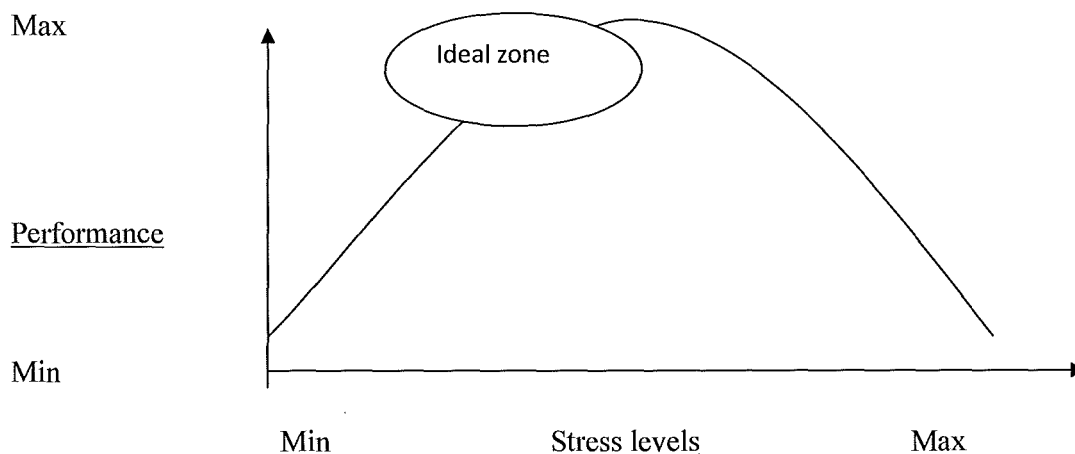


Figure 2.2 Optimal Performance at the right stress levels (Source: Moch, 2010)

If individuals are in the distress zone and do not receive treatment they are at risk of moving into the burnout zone. At this stage performance has decreased tremendously. This stage is also frequently marked by social withdrawal. During this stage individuals experience symptoms such as exhaustion, aggression, aches and pains and memory disturbance.

Individuals may also experience feelings of depression or anxiety disorders as well as somatic disorders such as chronic fatigue syndrome and Fibromyalgia.

For some individuals performance becomes non-existent when they are burnt out. This could result in a psychological breakdown, which could include symptoms such as suicidal thoughts, panic attacks or psychosis. In contrast, other individuals experience social breakdown, which is characterised by symptoms such as homicidal actions and physical breakdowns such as heart attacks, strokes or asthma attacks.

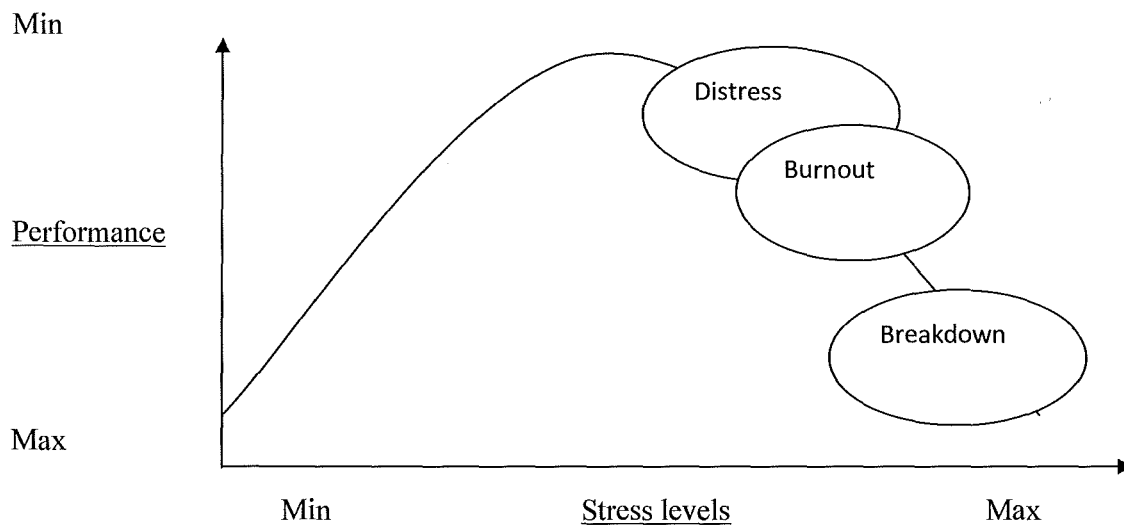


Figure 2.3 Increased Stress leads to Decreased Performance (Source: Moch, 2010)

Based on the discussion above it is clear that stress can lead to positive outcomes and can be used as an energiser. However, it is also clear that if the demands become too much for an individual to handle and mechanisms are not put in place to cope with these demands, stress can become negative. The experience of negative stress holds dangerous implications for individuals and organisations.

Bakker, Demerouti, Schaufeli and Nachreiner, (2001), presented a dominant theoretical model, which highlights that persistent work stress is generated by a combination of high job demands and low control at work: job strain. While some studies have found an association between high strain, high demands, low control.

2.3 Depression

Depression is an illness that involves the body, mood, and thoughts. It influences the way a person eats and sleeps, the way a person feels about him or herself as well as the way he or she thinks about things. A depressive disorder is not the same as a passing blue mood. It is also not a sign of personal weakness or a condition that can be wished away. People suffering from depression cannot merely 'pull themselves together' and get better. Without treatment depressive symptoms can last for weeks, months, or even years. However, with appropriate treatment most people are able to recover from depression (Cherniss, 1995).

Depressive symptoms that contribute to suicide include lasting sad, anxious or empty moods, feelings of hopelessness or pessimism, guilt, worthlessness, and helplessness. In many cases, suicide in people with depression occurs due to lack of treatment or inadequate treatment. This is often the direct result of the fact that depression is not recognized and the symptoms are not taken seriously Bakker, Demerouti, Schaufeli and Nachreiner, (2001),. People who suffer from depression have suicidal thoughts because the long-term effects of continual stress are dangerous-evenly deadly-to our health and happiness (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011).

Depression is common in the general population. According to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in the USA in 2001 estimated 5.3% of all adults are depressed annually. Women are more likely than men to experience depression. On an annual basis 12% of women and 7% of men experience depressive symptoms. The lifetime risk of a depressive episode is 7% for men and 20% for women. Depression has a significant impact on vocational functioning. Research suggests that 17% to 21% of the workforce experiences

short term disability during any given year. In addition, between 37% and 48% of workers with depression experience short-term disability. However, employees are generally unaware of the extent of the indirect costs of untreated depression. Studies have also shown that women tend to report higher levels of job strain and general day to day stress than men. A large body of research has focused on understanding the relationship between depression and burnout in order to design and implement solutions to prevent burnout from developing into depression (Lieter & Maslach, 2005).

2.4 The relationship between stress, burnout and depression

Various authors have attempted to accurately define the concept of burnout, as well as to ascertain the detrimental impacts of this phenomenon on the individual as well as on the environment in which they operate. Pines and Aronson (1988) defined work burnout as a long-term emotional state resulting in physical, emotional and physiological exhaustion. Farber (1991) defined work burnout as a work-related syndrome stemming from the individual's cognition of serious imbalances between input and output. Burnout is currently most often measured using the Maslach Burnout inventory (MBI; Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996). The MBI views burnout as a three-dimensional phenomenon, including emotional exhaustion (EE, the feeling of being overextended and depleted of emotional and psychological resources), depersonalization or cynicism (DP, referring to a negative, callous and excessively detached response to the job), and reduced personal accomplishment or professional efficacy (PA, referring to feelings of incompetence and lack of achievement and productivity at work). Emotional exhaustion is a key characteristic of the burnout syndrome (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). An emotional labour perspective may be useful in trying to understand the development of emotional exhaustion. Hochschild (1983) first noted that, especially in service jobs, employees are often required to show certain emotions in order to please the customer. Emotional labour therefore consists of having to show certain

emotions while one is not actually feeling them or having to suppress one's own emotions when their expression does not seem appropriate (Hochschild, 1983).

According to Karasek (1989), strain results from the combination of three aspects of work: high job demands, low decision latitude or job control, and a lack of social support. In addition to their impact on worker strain, control and social support are also thought to moderate the stress-inducing effects of job demands (De Jonge et al., 2000; De Lange et al., 2003). Kalker (1984) maintained that when there is constant expenditure, but insufficient acknowledgement or recompense, the most competent enthusiastic, capable, and dedicated employees are the most likely to become burned out. Burnout leads to employee discontent with their work and inability to devote themselves wholehearted to their occupation thereby influencing the quality of their output. Employees becoming burnt out results in low morale and produces a 'snowball' effect, which could spread throughout the workplace. Burnout results in low productivity and high absenteeism. Therefore, in order to reduce absenteeism and increase productivity it is necessary to manage burnout.

Burnout (or at least its core dimension, emotional exhaustion) is often the most appropriate response to prolonged exposure to stressors on the job (Maslach et al., 2001). As it is a common response to stress most general job stress models account for the occurrence of burnout. These models include Karasek's (1989) Demand –Control model and Leiter and Maslach's (2005) Conservation of Resources Theory. However, few theories directly address the relationship between burnout and performance. Empirical research on this issue often relies on the assumption that burnout affects organisational outcomes, stating that dimensioned performance could be among these outcomes. One possible pathway linking job stressors and performance involves the notion that job stressors reduce an individual's capacity to exert control over their work environment, thus adversely affecting their ability to function effectively.

The significance of burnout research for both the worker and the workplace lies in the links to the outcomes of burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). Previous research has linked burnout to individual outcomes such as physical complaints and depression, as well as organisational level outcomes such as turnover and decreased commitment (see, for example, Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Shirom 2003). Interestingly, evidence on job performance, which may be the most organisationally salient outcome of burnout, remains limited. In addition, the limited research on this issue has often relied on self-report data, with participants judging their own performance. The shortcomings of such 'subjective' data are well known and include the risk that associations between concepts are inflated due to factors such as negative affectivity, halo effects, and the wish to provide consistent answers (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). It is therefore important that the relationship between burnout and performance be studied through the use of so-called 'objective' (i.e. non-self-reported) performance data. The distinction between self-reported (or subjective) versus non-self-reported (or objective) is based on the measurement method used. Frese and Zapf (1988) argued that measures can be classified along an objective versus subjective dimension, with more independent data sources being viewed as more objective.

Burnout can have an enormous impact on an organisation and can manifest in a number of ways such as increased absenteeism and burnout related illnesses. All of these symptoms have the capability of negatively impacting the company's bottom line, as well as hampering the employees' overall quality of life. Various authors have linked burnout to other occupational factors, including depression, stress, and anxiety.

2.5 The costs of burnout

Stress can have various cost implications for businesses and individuals. Stephen Williams and Lesley Cooper (2002) divide these costs into commercial and invisible costs.

2.5.1 The commercial costs

Litigation - When employees are overworked they are in danger of hurting themselves, especially in a factory environment. The employer is thus liable for payouts to employees who are able to bring a successful case against the employer. There are also costs involved in terms of the time taken by managers and staff in preparing and defending a case as well as in terms of the legal fees. A good example of litigation costs involves the case of Beverly Lancaster vs. Birmingham Country Council in the United Kingdom (UK). In this case the plaintiff was granted a payout of £67 000 in July 1999 as compensation for the stress she suffered following a job transfer as a housing officer. Litigation is very expensive not just because of the financial burden companies have to carry but also through the indirect costs of the time spent defending cases as well as the damage to the brand public relations.

Staff turnover - High staff turnover is one of the clearest signs of organisational stress. People who are unable to cope with their workload or who find their jobs unfulfilling will leave the organisation if they are able find other employment. The cost of recruitment is high.

Organisations frequently invest large sums of money in recruitment, training and development programmes only to lose all these skills when the employees leave the company. Employees frequently leave to pursue similar roles with competitors. The cost of staff turnover becomes even more dramatic when the impact of the loss of human or intellectual capital is taken into account. The true market value of the knowledge that is lost

when employees leave is almost incalculable. The employees' individual experience and insight into the workplace cannot be replaced simply by hiring new staff members. According to Thomas Stewart "intellectual capital – not natural resources, machinery or even financial capital - has become the one indispensable asset of corporations."

Accidents – Accidents are yet another easy-to-measure consequence of stress at work. Although not all accidents are stress-related, many accidents do have a stress component. The direct costs of an accident include the time taken to deal with the accident, the absence from work, damage done to the plant, machinery and stock, compensation payments and the corresponding insurance loading.

Mental illness is associated with decreased productivity, increased absenteeism, increased accidents, and increased workforce turn over, unemployment, increased long and short-term disability, and lower morale. In the USA the NIMH noted that decreased productivity as a result of employee depression has been estimated to cost employers \$44 billion annually, of which 81% is accounted for by decreased productivity at work and 19% by absenteeism. An equally concerning finding is that less than one third of employees suffering from depression reported receiving antidepressant medication in the previous 12 months. This finding is consistent with previous data showing that only 20% to 30% of Americans suffering from mental illnesses obtain adequate treatment each year.

2.5.2 The invisible costs

Well-being, motivation and performance – At any given point in time an employee occupies a space somewhere along the slope of the stress/performance curve, which runs from ill-health (maximum stress levels) through to fulfilment (ideal stress levels). This means that some people are made ill by their work while others are fulfilled by work. During

the course of individuals' employment various events will occur to move them temporarily in either direction. However, stress plays a vital role in accelerating an employee's movement along the curve, either positive or negatively. Pressure can be a major stimulus for personal growth and development and therefore has the potential to increase the chances of people feeling fulfilled. In contrast, when pressure becomes stress the progression turns away from fulfilment towards ill-health. The point at which employees are positioned on the curve is critical as employees should not be made ill by their work. Each stage along the curve represents a breaking point in terms of energy, enthusiasm, creativity, innovation and motivation. Although there are exceptions to the rule, in general the closer employees are to fulfilment the greater the chances of them being able to deliver all the subtle innovations and creative ideas that are necessary for an organisation's survival.

One of the least observable but most dangerous costs to the business is the loss of creativity and innovation that occurs when employees move away from fulfilment and towards unhappiness. This can result in stress-related illness. However, when an employee experiences an appropriate amount of pressure this can stimulate creative insights. For example, when employees are under pressure and are placed in a difficult position they often develop original and innovative ideas and solutions. In contrast, once pressure has become stress levels of motivation decrease and performance deteriorates. At this stage employees feel tired, experience low energy levels, and perceive all work to require too much effort. As a result customers' problems are not solved innovatively. Productivity can also be influenced as stress negatively influences employees' concentration, resulting in poor quality products being produced by manufacturing companies.

Competitive advantage – The impact that stress has on creativity and innovation also damages an organisation's competitive advantage. Companies differentiate themselves in the

marketplace through the quality of service they provide. This service is usually delivered by people, and the quality of the customers' experience is therefore linked to the quality of their contacts and relationships with the employees. Companies have generally been slow to recognize the impact of stressed employees on the overall customer experience. Organisations need to recognise that stress drains the creative energy and collective contribution of the workforce and that a stressed workforce cannot be a competitive workforce. According to Williams (2002:98): "The paybacks are there – for competitive advantage lives or dies in the wellbeing of the workforce".

Poor decision making – When people are under stress they start to doubt their own abilities and fail to take sufficient notice of what goes on around them. As a result errors in decision-making may occur. People who experience stress are likely to encounter one of two scenarios:

- Not being able to think when a response is needed; or
- Avoiding making decisions when a decision is necessary.

Unfortunately decisions need to be taken even when individuals are stressed. However, the quality of the decision-making deteriorates when pressure exceeds people's ability to cope. People who are under pressure tend to make decisions without fully considering the consequences or spending sufficient time considering the decision itself. It is therefore unsurprising that many poor decisions are made when people are exposed to stress.

2.5.3 Absenteeism related to stress

Different people experience stress at different levels and it is therefore not possible to clearly state that a particular level of stress leads to absenteeism. However, when stress has reached the level of burnout and breakdown discussed above it is likely that it will influence

employees' work attendance. Employees may be prevented from going to work by the symptoms of stress-related illnesses. Some of these employees may simply feel physically, emotionally or mentally unable to face another day at work. These circumstances result in employees being absent from work for long periods of time (Landy & Conte, 2008).

When an employee is absent from work the department is often forced to hire a temporary person from a recruitment agency. If a temporary employee is not hired then the employee's colleagues need to handle his or her workload for the period of absenteeism. This has cost implications for the company, either through the cost of employee a temporary worker or through paying existing workers overtime to insure that the absent employee's work is completed. In addition, training a temporary worker costs time and money.

Over the past four decades significant changes have occurred within the workplace. The increase in information communication technology, the globalisation of many industries, company restructuring, and changes in job contracts and workplace patterns have all contributed to the transformation of the nature of work (Sparks, Faragher & Cooper, 2001). In 2003 Jones, Huxtable, Hodgson, and Price estimated that up to 5 million British employees felt 'very' or 'extremely' stressed by their work. They estimated that on average each person affected took 28.5 days off work per year and that stress, depression, and anxiety were the second most prevalent type of work-related ill-health after musculo-skeletal disorders.

Employee absenteeism, which involves unplanned and missed time from work, has negative implications for an organisation (Korttraba, 2003). Employees are not always able to control the amount of sick leave they take. Workplace stress results in illness, causing employees to miss work (Tomey, 1999).

According to Korttraba (2003) absenteeism in the workplace is the most common problem faced by managers. According to Korttraba (2003) social role theory provides a theoretical framework for conceptualising the ways in which absenteeism impacts an organisation's effectiveness. Social role theory states that each employee holds various roles at work and he or she performs an array of tasks in those roles. These tasks are largely dictated by the organisational culture or sub-culture of the workplace. Psychological models of attendance view the interactions between degree of control and autonomy of worker skills and workload as particularly important. Allen (1999) argues that workplace autonomy, control, the latitude permitting dependent decision making, as well as participatory versus centralised workplace hierarchies can all influence absenteeism.

Brook and Price (2002) analysed the unscheduled absence survey and found that the direct cost of unscheduled absenteeism amounts to R9000.00 per employee per annum. This costs small companies as much as R6000.00 a year, while larger employers lose up to R3, 6 million. In addition, Burke (1993) found that organisations spend an average of 2.3% of their payroll on unscheduled absenteeism per annum. This is an increase from the previously reported figure of 1.7%. Absenteeism forces managers to make changes to normal operations (Toomingas, 1998). These changes may include forcing staff to work longer and harder, allowing work to build up or deferred, eliminating certain services, hiring temporary replacements, or permanently maintaining an extra work-force to cover absenteeism.

Empirical studies suggest that a range of factors influence absenteeism due to sickness. These factors include conditions that are specific to a certain workplace (personnel policy, size and type of workplace), the individual's work environment (physical) and chemical agents, qualification requirements, role clarity, fairness in division of work tasks, wage systems, and monotony of work..

In Sweden, sickness absence rates have increased dramatically since the 1980s. This increase was particularly dramatic during the 1990s and continues to rise for both men and women. Research suggests that stressful episodes in private life, such as economic difficulties, poor social network and support, divorce, serious illness of a family member, or having children at home also predict work absences, especially for women (Gunilla & Lundberg, 2006).

It has been suggested that women's higher sickness absence rates are related to high total workload and double-exposure situations (i.e. being in paid employment and also bearing the main responsibility for household chores and child care). Further, a relationship between occupational gender segregation and sickness absence rates has been shown for women, with higher incidence and duration of sickness absence for women in male dominated occupations when compared to women in gender-integrated occupations.

2.6 Techniques for dealing with stress

From the above discussion it is evident that the current environment leaves the general population susceptible to stress. It is therefore important to discuss current theories concerning coping with stress and preventing it from escalating into burnout or depression. Over the years a number of effective tools have been developed to help people deal with situational stress. These include physical approaches such as vigorous aerobic exercise that promotes cardiovascular changes, deep breathing techniques, and energy medicine. These techniques have all been proven to release situational stress. Non-physical approaches to situational stress management, chiefly prayer and meditation, have also been proven to be effective. The vast majority (99%) of the self-help material available focuses on either a physical or non-physical approach and combination approaches are rarely offered (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011).

- **What can people do for themselves to cope with stress?**

According to Moch (2010), individuals should make use of the ten commandments of stress management in order to cope with stress. These commandments are outlined below.

Time leadership – Each individual can only be in one place at a time. It is therefore important for people to start prioritizing and to stick to those priorities in order to provide enough time to complete a specific demand. According to Dr Moch prioritizing is a component of time leadership, which is defined as the amount of influence a person has over time and the degree to which he or she uses time to its maximum. Time leadership occurs when individuals are able to make use of time efficiently by discarding things that waste time. Successful people usually have spare time to complete important tasks. In order to achieve this goal employees must try to remove unimportant activities from their daily schedules. This will eventually result in employees having more time to spend on things that are important and necessary.

Attitude - The emotions people experience also play a significant role. Emotions can unleash enormous energy and feelings that can allow individuals to look past limitations. People with set views and emotions tend to experience things in a rigid manner. Therefore, in order to be successful individuals not only have to manage their time they also need to control the manner in which they approach different circumstances. This can only be achieved if individuals have a certain mind set. If an individual decides to go to the gym three times a week he or she can accomplish this if they apply their mind.

Relationships – Research conducted by Ornish (2006) suggests that people who have healthy relationships in two directions (with oneself and with others), are less likely to become burnt out or experience breakdown. Relationships promote good self-esteem and the ability to

bounce back from adversity. This is because these individuals understand themselves and know how to handle various situations. In addition, they have supportive people in their lives. In contrast, people who do not have positive relationships in their lives often have low self-esteem and lack resilience. Developing a good support network is therefore a crucial component of stress management. Communication is a vital component of all good relationships.

Toxins - Nicotine is a particularly hazardous toxin. Excessive use of nicotine is the leading cause of lung cancer and heart disease. Other toxins such as alcohol and air pollution can also harm the body, making it difficult to fight stress-related illness. In addition, emotional toxins such as anger, guilt, depression, fear and shame can negatively influence a person's health.

Lotions/potions - People should exercise caution when using readily available remedies. No single remedy is effective for everyone (Weil, 1998) Any medication prescribed for chronic medical conditions such as diabetes, depression, hypertension, arthritis or asthma must be prescribed by a recognised health professional. It is also important to have regular medical check-ups in order to ensure continued healthy functioning and early treatment of any medical conditions.

Rest – Human beings all experience tiredness. However, each individual needs to ensure that he or she gets enough rest. This includes getting sufficient sleep at night and taking appropriate breaks during the day. In addition, taking annual holidays also contributes to optimal functioning. Where possible, sabbaticals can assist individuals in obtaining the requisite amount of rest. Individuals who get sufficient rest are less stressed because they make the time to relax.

Meditation – Various misperceptions of meditation exist. However, meditation is defined as focusing attention on any specific object or image, such as a candle or a mental image. Meditation is effective because it switches off the neuro-chemical pathways of stress response. According to Kabat-Zinn people who meditate feel renewed after having spent that time with themselves (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011).

Various studies have shown and continue to show that meditation reduces stress and increases both physiological and psychological health (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011). It is becoming an accepted medical fact that meditation enhances and increases a person's overall well-being. There is a global trend towards doctors, counsellors and therapists recommending various mediation techniques to their clients as part of their healing and as a regular daily practice (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011).

A study led by Kabat-Zinn, a neuro-scientist at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, found that mediation shifts a person's brain activity from the right frontal cortex, which is more active when a person is calm. This shift decreases the negative effects of stress, as well as of mild depression and anxiety. In other words, mediation literally moves focus from fear and anxiety to peace (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011).

Diet – Although the importance of healthy eating is a well-known medical fact, many people still fail to eat properly. Eating the right types of food is of crucial importance in helping an individual manage stress. Individuals need to consume foods that contain vitamins, iron, carbohydrates, fibre and various essential minerals. Poor eating habits can result in feelings of exhaustion, a short concentration span and can lead to individuals making mistakes.

Exercise - Exercise and diet are both important in the management of stress. The type of exercise that is engaged in will vary between individuals. Research has shown that people

who exercise for about twenty to thirty minutes every day have a clear health advantage over their peers.

Financial management – Economic research shows that most of the world's population lives below the poverty line. People often have lifestyles that are in excess of their means. This results in financial strain and constant worry. Individuals need to cultivate a healthy balance between material desires and a realistic appraisal of their circumstances.

- **The Power of Breathing**

According to the physical law of inertia states nothing changes unless it is acted on with enough energy. In this regard power breathing creates tremendous internal physiological power (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011).

Power breathing addresses shallow breathing, which is one of the effects of chronic stress (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011). Shallow breathing begins with specific incidents that startle or alarm an individual but eventually becomes a habit. Chronic shallow breathing is like living in a state of constant apprehension (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011).

Hendricks quoted in the healing code maintains that: "When an emotion is very painful, our first reaction is to stop breathing. It is a protective fight – or – flight reflex triggered by the nervous system. Immediately after you are flooded with adrenaline, and the sympathetic nervous system, which controls blood circulation, kicks in, making your heart beat faster and your breath quicken." Short, shallow breathing is the leftover of this response. Some people also habitually hold their breath when doing even small tasks. All shallow breathing reduces the amount of oxygen one takes in and the carbon dioxide one expels, and this leads to stress at the cellular level.

As early as 1981, *The Journal of Science News* reported findings by the National Institute of Aging regarding lung function and longevity. A thirty-year clinical study of 5200 individuals showed that a person's pulmonary functioning is a reliable indicator of general health and vigour.

With regular use power breathing can also:

- Stimulate the cardio-vascular system.
- Increase the intake of oxygen.
- Detoxify the system of carbon dioxide.
- Stimulate the immune system by increasing energy to the endocrine system; and
- Improve the functioning of the lymphatic system.

• **Employee Assistance Programs**

The availability of a proactive Employee Wellness Program (EAP) is of vital importance and this program can help employees' to identify, the early signs of excessive exposure to stressors, within the working environment. A study by Anderson (2007) found that screening and treatment of employees with depression could lower costs. In addition, the study found that employees who received treatment recovered from depression, while those who did not receive treatment did not recover. It is therefore important to screen employees for depression, and ensure that they receive the necessary care. This should reduce the incidence of depression in the workplace.

• **Decision making freedom, flexible work arrangements**

High levels of job control and a supportive work and family climate both seem serve as valuable protective job resources at times when a high level of work-to-family conflict is experienced. Consequently, organisations should provide their staff with more decision-

making latitude and task authority in their jobs (Frese, 1989; Karasek & Theorell, 1990). However, it should be noted that too much job control can also harm an employee's health. According to Warr (1987), many job characteristics (including job control) act like 'vitamins' and an overdose of these vitamins can have negative rather than positive outcomes (see also Bakker et al., 2005). The 'optimal' level of job control will vary between individuals and this should be taken into consideration in job re-design and enrichment processes.

In addition high job control also includes the various forms of flexible working arrangements (or policies) that are offered to personnel. Previous studies have shown that such arrangements (e.g., flexible working hours, working from home, reduced hours, annualized hours, job share), if accompanied by a supportive work-family climate (or culture) may reduce work and non-work conflict (see Allen, 2001; Campbell Clark, 2001; Kinnunen et al., 2005; Thompson et al., 1999). Some studies have found that a supportive family and working environment might be even more important than flexible policies. These flexible policies are only effective if the working climate supports their take-up (Allen, 2001; Anderson, Coffrey, & Byerly, 2002). It is therefore important to consider how working climates can be made more family supportive.

Furthermore, three additional issues need to be addressed (Mauno et al., 2005a, 2005b; Thompson et al., 1999). First, managers' and supervisors' behaviour and attitudes should become more family responsive (management climate). Managers should also be provided with training and consultation regarding how to act and think in a family-supportive way. The training may include the dissemination of information about family-friendly measures and behaviour as well as information regarding the beneficial effects of a family-supportive atmosphere and policies on the work family interface and on general employee well-being.

Second, negative career outcomes (career development climate) related to a low take-up of flexible and care-related arrangements should be reduced. Human resource (HR) strategies and policies should be formulated on a more long-term basis. This could be achieved, for instance, by increasing permanent job contracts and by adopting a much longer-term perspective in HR management. Third, three issues must be taken into consideration when changing a working climate characterised by long hours. Work family conflict, well-being, and job attitudes.

- **Physical activities as a possible coping mechanism**

Physical activity has been shown to alleviate state and trait anxiety and to improve physical self-perception and mental well-being. In addition, studies have found positive associations between physical activity and good work capacity and healthy lifestyle. A study by Aldana et al. (2004) found that employees who participated in moderate physical activity had approximately half the rate of perceived stress compared with more passive individuals. A study by Sorensen et al. (2002) reported non-significant correlations between physical activity and work ability or perceived physical or mental job stress in police officers during a 15-year follow-up.

Good aerobic capacity is associated with low blood pressure and low heart rate at rest and during sub-maximal exercise. This suggests that aerobically fit individuals require less sympathetic activation to perform the same absolute physical workload as unfit individuals. However, there is no consensus that aerobic power can protect against the kind of stress that is related to lifestyle or occupation. Several studies have attempted to investigate the effects of physical fitness on physiological stress responses in simulated mentally demanding tasks in the laboratory. These findings suggest that high levels of aerobic fitness alleviate muscle tension during work, exerting a positive buffering effect on stress, and thus may reduce musculoskeletal problems such as tight muscles.

2.7 Personality and stress

Personality has been known to have an influence on how people respond to stress. Stated differently, an individual's personality is the precursor to how they react to various stimuli. Personality is defined as the overall structure associated with a certain degree of consistency in behaviour across time and situation (Pervin & John, 1999). Simply put, personality traits are those differences between individuals, in their thoughts, feeling and behaviour which are relatively stable overtime (Church, 2000).

Personality types are dynamic in their own way and they will respond to the same contextual situation somewhat differently. They will therefore also react to stress differently and therefore can each only contain so much work pressure as their personality make-up allows. Each will react and respond differently to the same changing events around them and the people they interact with (Pearman, 2002).

2.8 Summary

The chapter dealt with stress and its relation to performance. Burnout and depression were also investigated in an attempt to determine their relationship with stress and the impact they could have on the individual and the organisation. The potential costs of stress to an organisation were analysed through defining the commercial and invisible costs of stress, with an emphasis on absenteeism. Coping strategies that could possibly alleviate the early onset of stress were discussed, concluding with a brief discussion of the dichotomy which exists between personality and stress. The Literature reviewed indicates that the medical field and the field of Psychology have ongoing research regarding the aspect called 'stress and burnout'.

The next chapter will cover the research design and data collection instrument to be used.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to outline the rationale and purpose behind the methodology that will be used in this research. The chapter also contains a detailed description of the population sample, and the processes to be undertaken to ensure the validity and reliability of the research. The concept of ‘research design and methodology’ includes critical aspects pertaining to ‘data collection design and methodology’. However, a discussion of data collection design is often omitted in research proposals, thus creating a gap in the research strategy, which would ultimately culminate in extensive rework being demanded from the researcher (Watkins, 2010:42). According to Yin (1994:19), a research design can be defined as “the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study’s initial research question and ultimately, to its conclusions”. Colloquially, a research design is an action plan regarding how to get from here to there. In this formulation ‘here’ may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered while ‘there’ refers to some set of conclusions (answers) about these questions (Watkins, 2010).

The main aim of this study is to investigate whether working at an FMCG induces strain and burnout within the sales staff. This is an exploratory study that will be conducted as a case study at District Tshwane, of the North Region, South African Breweries Limited. The study further aims to make possible recommendations for the efficient and effective management of the problem.

3.2 Research Design

Devos (1999) referred to a research design as the structural framework within which the study is implemented. In this study, the research design is both qualitative and quantitative in

nature, with the aim of reaching a truly holistic understanding of the problem. Focusing on merely quantitative or purely qualitative research techniques would not provide the quality of data necessary to make recommendations. The study made use of an explorative case study design. According to Kotler et al. (2006:122) “The objective of exploratory research is to gather preliminary information that will help define problems and suggest hypotheses”. The researcher will not act in any way which might result in doubt, within the quality of the data collected.

Exploratory research helps determine the best research design, data collection method and selection of subjects (Myers, 2011). Given its fundamental nature, exploratory research often concludes that a perceived problem does not actually exist. The goal of this research project is to determine whether a relationship exists between the FMCGs and stress and burnout within their sales fraternity, and furthermore if it does exist, to describe the relationship in relation to the literature presented in chapter 2 of this project.

The research design gives impetus to the manner in which the research project is structured, giving a clear outline regarding how to gather, organise and analyse data for investigation in such a way that validity is maximized.

3.2.1 Population and Sampling

The term population refers to the entire number of units under study (Treece & Treece 1999). This study makes use of the non-probability sampling method using convenience sampling, which is also known as accidental sampling. In convenience sampling a subset of the population is not identified and the researcher simply makes use of readily available participants. The total population of the South African Breweries sales teams consists of members in 21 districts. This study only focuses on the sales force in the Tshwane District. The population of this study therefore consists of the sales fraternity in the Tshwane District of SAB. Due to the small size of the population all of the sales staff will be included in the

sample. This includes the job categories of Sales Reps, Key Account Managers, Sales Managers, Team Leaders and Sales Coordinators as well as nurse educators, support staff and administration staff. The selected sample size comprises of 60 people.

3.3 Data Collection

Data will be collected by means of a survey questionnaire administered at The South African Breweries District Tshwane. Devos (1999:60) refers to data collection “as the process of collecting information to be used during the study”.

3.3.1 Questionnaires as data collection tools

There are many possible ways of gathering information directly from participants if such information cannot be obtained from observation. These various methods have specific advantages and disadvantages. Questionnaires and interviews are commonly used to collect data in survey research. Questionnaires and interviews both utilise the question-asking approach and are used to obtain information concerning facts, beliefs, feelings and intentions. In a structured interview the questions are pre-determined. The basic aim of a structured interview is to obtain information from the interviewee. Within a structured interview the questions may be put in a specific sequence and the responses are recorded. The structured interview includes precise questions that are relevant to the research and are intended to obtain detailed knowledge relating to the subject or topic (Mc Beath, 1999). Structured interviews are more scientific in nature than unstructured interviews.

3.3.2 The Questionnaire Techniques

The research questions posed in a questionnaire should be asked in such a way that the respondents feel free and are willing to divulge the required information. Questionnaires should also create a feeling of importance on the part of the respondents. Sensitive items should be included at the end of the questionnaire in order to avoid arousing hostility in the

respondent early on in the questionnaire. Sensitive issues should be introduced after ‘warming up’ a respondent with items related to sensitive issues. A well-constructed questionnaire is more likely to elicit good responses. A questionnaire should therefore be of a good quality and should be as brief as possible in order to require a minimum of the respondent’s time. However, constructing a good questionnaire is not an easy task. The researcher opted to only use the questionnaire method for this study due to resource and time constraints. Questionnaires form part of ‘survey research’ or ‘descriptive survey’ (Van Tonder & Roodt, 2009). For absolute clarity, the concept of ‘survey’ is defined by Remenyi et al. (2002:119) as “... the collection of a large quantity of evidence usually numeric, or evidence that will be converted to numbers, normally by means of a questionnaire”. A questionnaire is a list of carefully structured questions, chosen after considerable testing with a view to elicit reliable responses from a chosen sample, the aim of a questionnaire is to establish what a selected group of participants do, think or feel (Remenyi et al., 2002).

3.3.3 Development of the Questionnaire items

For this research study, a questionnaire will be developed around the sub-investigative questions to be answered by the research and their related themes covered in the literature review. Long complex questions and leading questions will be avoided in order to reduce the chances of confusing the participants. This also helps to ensure that the answers obtained were meaningful. The questions in the survey focus within the topic under research, while ensuring a high level of reliability and validity.

3.3.4 Format and structure of the designed questionnaire

The questionnaire comprised of four parts. The first part of the questionnaire serves as an introduction and outlines the purpose of the survey. In addition, it encourages the participants to answer honestly and assure them of anonymity. Part 1 of the actual questionnaire contains biographical questions regarding gender, race, age, designation, allocated sales area, level of

employment and the length of service. Part 2 provides example questions that were designed to help the respondents familiarise themselves with the questionnaire. Part 3 consisted of 47 questions based on the Likert method using a 5-point scale. The Likert method refers to a method of attitude-scale construction developed by Rensis Likert (Likert, 1932:1-55), which uses item analysis to select the best items (Remenyi, Williams, Money & Swartz, 2002). The research questions posed focus on assessing the attitudes of staff towards the organisation in which they work and towards their jobs. The questions also focus specifically on issues of burnout and stress in a work situation. Part 4 consisted of 3 open-ended questions. The open-ended questions were included in order to validate the responses in Part 3. The questions included in the questionnaire were placed in a random order to avoid manipulation of the items.

3.3.5 Pre-testing the questionnaire

The questionnaire was initially administered to 3 sales representatives currently employed at District Tshwane and who are not part of the sample surveyed. The aim of pre-testing was to ensure that there are no ambiguous questions or problems in the study that the researcher had not noticed (Legotlo, 1996:28). According to Collis and Hussey (2003) validity is concerned with the extent to which the research findings accurately represent what is happening. More specifically, validity refers to whether the data is a true picture of what is being studied. Cooper and Schinlder (2006) distinguish between three major forms of validity:

- **Content validity:** This type of validity refers to the extent to which the measuring instrument provides adequate coverage of the investigative (sub-) questions guiding the study. If the instrument contains a representative sample of the universe of subject matter of interest, then content validity is high.

- **Criterion-related validity:** Reflects the success of measures used for prediction or estimation. Any criterion measure must be judged in-terms of the following four qualities:
 - **Criterion is relevant:** If the criterion is defined and scored in terms that can be judged the proper measure of success.
 - **Freedom from bias:** When the criterion gives each respondent the opportunity to serve well.
 - **Reliability:** A reliable criterion is stable and reproducible; and
 - **Availability:** The information specified by the criterion must be available.
- **Construct validity:** Construct validity concerns both the theory and the measuring instrument being used. According to Collis and Hussey (1979:59) construct validity relates to the problem that there are a number of phenomena that are not directly observable (for example, motivation, satisfaction, ambition and anxiety). These are hypothetical constructs that are assumed to exist as factors that explain observable phenomena. For example, one may observe someone shaking or sweating before an interview. What is being observed is not actual anxiety but claimed to be a manifestation of anxiety.

3.3.6 Administrative procedures

60 questionnaires were handed out personally or through the use of a third party to the sales fraternity of District Tshwane. Copies of the questionnaires were numbered and a record was kept in order to determine the responses received as well as the non-responses.

3.4 Data Analysis

3.4.1 Statistical Techniques

The captured data will be analysed making use of a social science statistical computer package.

3.4.2 Statistical test method

The researcher will make use of frequency analysis, means, median and mode, and standard deviations. A Chi – Square test, which is a non-parametric test for determining whether there is a statistically significant relationship between two categorical variables that have been cross tabulated (Parasuman, 1991), and an analysis of variance (ANOVAs) will be conducted in order to determine whether significant differences existed.

The researcher initially also planned to make use of the Cronbach Alpha in order to assess the validity and reliability of the assessment instrument. However, this statistical execution could not be undertaken as the electronically tabulated results were lost due to the hard disc having become corrupted on which the data was stored.

3.5 Ethics

According to Saunders et al. (2000:113), in the context of research “ethics refers to the appropriateness of your behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work, or are affected by it”. Most ethical issues in research fall into one of four categories namely protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy, and honesty with professional colleagues (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:107-108).

- **Protection from harm:** In cases where the nature of a study involves creating a small amount of psychological discomfort, participants should know about it ahead of time, and necessary debriefing or counselling should follow immediately after their participation.

- **Informed consent:** Participants should be informed of the nature of the study in advance and be given the choice of either participating or not participating. Furthermore, they should be given the right to withdraw from the study at any time, as participation in a study should be strictly voluntary. It is suggested that an informed consent form that describes the nature of research as well as the nature of the required participation be presented to participants in research.
- **Right to privacy:** The research study should respect participants' right to privacy. In general, a researcher must keep the nature and quality of participants' performance strictly confidential.
- **Honesty with professional colleagues:** Researchers must report their findings in a complete and honest fashion, without misrepresenting what they have done or intentionally misleading others as to the nature of their findings. Under no circumstances should a researcher fabricate data to support a particular conclusion, even if the conclusion appears to be 'noble'.

All the aspects mentioned above will be adhered to, whilst conducting the data gathering.

3.6 Limitation of the study

Research constraints (also commonly referred to as 'limitations' and 'delimitations' of the research) relate to any inhibiting factor that would in any way constrain the research student's ability to conduct the research in a normal way.

According to Collis and Hussey (2003), limitations identify weaknesses in the research, while delimitations explain how the scope of the study is focused on only one particular area or entity. The limitations will be addressed in the final chapter. The delimitation of this investigative study is focused in the Northern region of Tshwane.

3.7 Summary

This chapter outlined the research methodology, which was used to conduct this research. The manner in which the research was designed, population and sampling method used, development and formulation of the questionnaire as the data collection tool, data analysis methods, ethical considerations and concluding with the delimitation of the study.

The next chapter will cover the data analysis and the interpretation of the research.

CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher reports on the results of the investigation conducted to determine the factors that may contribute towards stress and burnout in SAB. Empirical data obtained from the survey are presented in tables and this presentation incorporates brief contextualisation and comments on causal connections and/or similarities.

4.2 Response rate

As mentioned in chapter 3 a questionnaire was distributed to 60 subjects. Of these questionnaires 40 (67%) were returned for analysis. None of the questionnaires had missing responses. As there are only 60 employees in the District Tshwane, the full sample served as unit of analysis.

The data analysis was carried out in three parts, namely parts A, B and C.

- Part A – Biographic information;
- Part B – The Likert based research questions aligned to the themes of the sub-investigative questions; and
- Part C - analysis of open ended questions.

Part A: Analysis of Biographic Data

4.2.1 Gender and age group

The gender differences in the biographical data are reflective of prevailing inequalities within the workplace. The respondents were also asked to indicate their age for the purpose giving an indication of the average age of sales population of SAB District Tshwane.

Table 4.1 reflects the data for gender and age.

Age	Male		Female		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
20 - 30 years	17	43.0	5	13.0	22	55.0
31 - 40 years	9	23.0	4	10.0	13	33.0
41 - 50 years	3	8.0	1	3.0	4	10.0
51 - 60 years	0	0.00	1	3.0	1	2.0
Total	29	100.0	11	100.0	40	100.0

A minority of respondents was aged between 41-60 years (2% of the sample). This group included only 1 female respondent. The 41-50 years age group was also relatively small (10% of the sample), and 8% of this group were male. The age group 31 – 40 years accounted for 10% of all female respondents and 23% of all male respondents. Finally, the 20 – 30 year age group accounted for 13% of the female respondents and 43% of the male respondents.

The total sample consisted of 72% males and 28% females. The low level of female participation in the study might suggest that SAB needs to focus more on empowerment programmes for women. In order to achieve gender equity the SAB should develop special capacity building programmes in order to accelerate the empowerment of women in organisations.

55% of the respondents were between the ages of 20-30, reflecting SAB's recruitment strategy for the sales function. SAB favours young employees in the sales division as it believes that that these individuals are normally resilient and able to adapt to change.

4.2.2 Race

The respondents were asked to indicate their race status. Figure 4.1 depicts the results.

Figure 2.4 Race

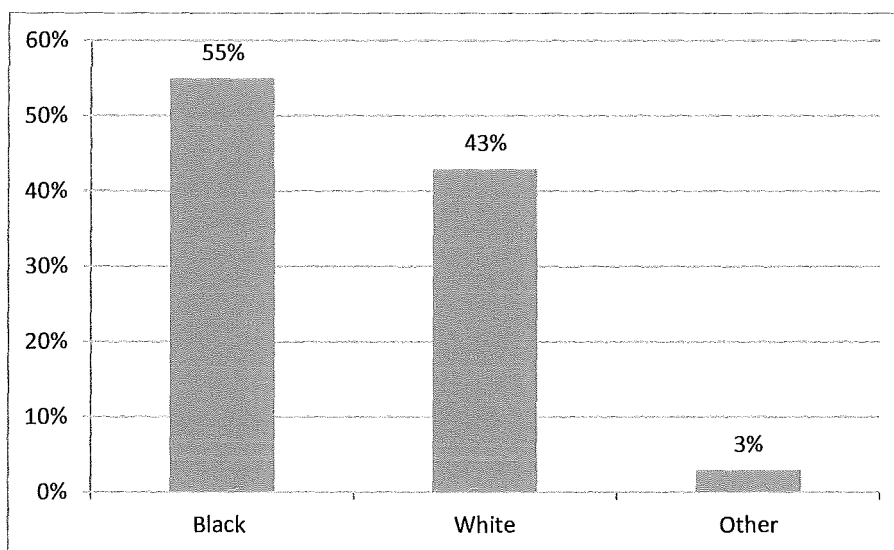


Figure 4.1 reveals that the majority of the respondents were Black (55%), followed by Whites (43%). These findings suggest that SAB embraced and encourages cultural diversity. However, 80% of SAB's turnover comes from the black market (often referred to as the main market). The racial distribution of the sales team is therefore a reflection of their business reality and strategy.

4.2.3 Level of employment and service

Table 4.2 reflects the cross tabulation of length of services and level of employment for the sample respondents.

Table 4.2

Table 4.2 Length of service vs Level of Employment

Length of service		Level of Employment					
		Management/ Supervisor		Professional/ Technical		Total	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
<i>Length of service</i>	<i>6 months to 2 years</i>	2	5.0	17	43.0	19	48.0
	<i>3 years to 5 years and above</i>	12	30.0	9	23.0	21	52.0
	<i>Total</i>	14	35.0	26	65.0	40	100.0

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of employment and length of service at SAB. Table 4.2 reveals that the majority of the respondents are at professional/technical level (43%) with a duration of 6 months to 2 years employment at SAB. This is followed by 30% who are at management/supervisory level within a period of 3 to 5 years, and 23% are at professional/technical level within the same period of service. This clearly shows that majority of the respondents are at middle and senior management level with relatively few years of service at SAB.

43% of the sales representative's respondents have been employed at SAB for 6 -24months, again indicative of the relatively young age of the SAB sales representatives. This fact is also indicative that there is a relatively high turnover within the sales rep department, as only 23% of the sales representatives have been there for longer than 3 years and the latter are in the management/supervisor category.

From the figures above it is fair to conclude that SAB promotes performers, given the length of service of their management. It is also fair to deduce that SAB has a high turnover rate within in their sales rep staff, given the age and length of service of their sales staff. A false assumption might be made that given the high level of pressure and complexity, the younger employees might be better suited for this type of environment. Further research is needed to understand the dichotomy which exists between age, length of service and the ability to cope with a stressful environment.

When examining length of service it is found that the majority of respondents appear to be 3-5 years in their jobs. This raises concern and may require review of the organisation recruiting and pay policies as it suggests that the organisation is not building sufficient long term experience in their sales force.

Part B: Analysis of Likert based research data

4.2.4 Questionnaire items (Part B)

In order to obtain the necessary information to answer each of the sub- investigative questions that have been posed in chapter 1 and need to be answered by this research study, the various questions appearing in the 47 item questionnaire have been extracted and grouped into their relevant themes that pertain to each of the sub-investigative question. Each sub-investigative question will now be addressed one-by-one.

- **Vulnerability to stress questions**

The scale was developed to measure vulnerability to stress by asking the respondents to reflect on certain habits and lifestyle choices. The scale consisted of numerous items that were scored on a Likert-type scale ranging from Strongly Agree (1) to Strongly Disagree (5).



To promote greater consistency of answers to the research questions formulated for each sub-investigative question the researcher chose to mix the question in the data capturing instruments to avoid transparency, over accentuation of any particular issue, and ensure improved criterion validity.

4.3 Sub-Investigative Questions

The purpose of the following section is to determine the relationship between the sub-investigative questions and the items which were surveyed on the questionnaire. With the aim of determining whether the questionnaire addressed the sub investigative questions which were outlined in chapter 1.

- **Sub-investigative Question 1:**

The following section covers the analysis of the data for sub-investigation question 1.

This sub-investigative question comprised of 2 constructs, namely:

- a) What role does job security play in the development of stress?
- b) What role does job fulfilment play in the development of stress?

Question number	Theme 1 Job Security and Job Role Security
1	I am happy with my job right now
2	I have control of my job
3	I feel secured in my job.
10	I feel confident at work and I can pace my work well
11	I am currently searching for other employment
14	I love my job
15	I do not think about leaving SAB
17	I do not want to lose my job
23	I enjoy my work.
34	I experience stress at work
36	I have sufficient control of my work
39	I am happy with my achievement at work
40	I am able to concentrate in my work

Table 4.3, reflects the data of the perceptions of the respondents regarding the aspect pertaining to Job Satisfaction. This aspect provides more insight, to sub-investigative question

Table 4.3) Job Satisfaction

Questionnaire Items ITEMS 1-5	Strongly Agree		Agree		Not Sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
I love my job	6	15.0	31	77.5	2	5.0	2	2.5	0	0.00
I am happy with my job right now	12	30.0	23	57.5	3	7.5	2	5.0	0	0.00
I have control of my job	2	5.0	26	65.0	6	15.0	6	15.0	0	0.00
I feel secured in my job	4	10.0	28	70.0	7	17.5	1	2.5	0	0.00
I have sufficient time to do my job	2	5.0	16	40.0	7	17.5	1	30.0	0	0.00

Empirical findings by Nel (1999) suggest that job characteristics such as pay, promotional opportunity, task clarity and significance, and skills utilization, as well as organisational characteristics such as commitment and relationship with supervisors and co-workers, have significant effects on job satisfaction.

The data in Table 4.3 reflects the responses from the participants regarding their feelings concerning their jobs. The study found that the majority 77.5% of the respondents love their

jobs, while 15% strongly agreed with this statement. In total the majority of the respondents (93%) stated that they love their jobs, while the remainder were unsure or did not love their jobs. In addition, 59.5% of the respondents are happy with their jobs and 30% also supported that. The majority of the respondents (65%) indicated that they have control of their job. The data furthermore indicates that 70% of the respondents felt that they are secure in their jobs. 10% of the respondents strongly agreed with this statement, while 18% were not sure and one respondent disagreed. Finally, 40% of the respondents agreed that they have sufficient time to do their job and an additional 5% of respondents supported (strongly agreed) this statement. In contrast, 30% of the respondents felt that they do not have sufficient time to do their job and about 18% were not sure how to respond to this item.

This aspect requires independent investigation and it is recommended that someone from senior management in charge of the region conducts an investigation, by having a meeting with the employees that are experiencing a lack of satisfaction, with regard to having insufficient time to complete their daily tasks. In conclusion, it is clear that majority of the respondents are happy with their jobs and even state that they love their jobs. The employees are empowered and have control of their.

Recommendation include capacity building of the individual representative's and sales staff by way of a training intervention, monthly meeting forum which will allow for the sales representative to voice out concerns before they become serious issues, and to give the sales staff an opportunity to share on how they cope with the complexity of various situations. Regular reviews of sales resourcing models to ensure that the sales staff compliment is sufficiently resourced to give great customer service.

Table 4.4, reflects the data of the perceptions of the respondents regarding the aspect pertaining to remuneration. This aspect provides more insight, to sub-investigative question 1.

Table 4.4 Remuneration

Questionnaire Items <i>ITEMS 24-28</i>	Strongly Agree		Agree		Not Sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>
My salary is good for the job I am doing	5	12.5	20	50.0	9	22.5	5	12.5	1	2.5
I do not want to lose my job	21	52.5	16	40.0	2	5.0	1	2.5	0	0.00
I look forward to go to work everyday	4	10.0	30	75.0	3	7.5	3	7.5	0	0.00
I enjoy my work	7	17.5	29	72.5	3	7.5	1	2.5	0	0.00
I will encourage a good friend to work for SAB	11	27.5	24	60.0	5	12.5	0	0.00	0	0.00

The table reflects that 50% of the respondents feel that their salaries are good whilst the reminder have different views. Further, the majority of the participants (52.5%) said that they do not want to lose their jobs, and 40% concurred with the afore. The majority of the respondents (75%) stated that they look forward to going to work every day. In addition, 72.5% of respondents indicated that they enjoy their work (18% strongly agree). Finally, 60% of participants indicated that they would encourage their friends to work for SAB (28% strongly agree).

The unhappiness of 23% of employees with regard to their salaries should be a warning bell for management and it deems urgent investigation, as this is normally an indication of employees who might become retention risks. The company could also implement a program in which it assist's employees with developing their financial intelligence, in which various personal financial management issues can covered such as, credit management and savings management.

The following section covers the analysis of the data for sub-investigation question 2.

- **Sub-investigative Question 2;**

This aspect covers the research questions: How does absenteeism increase the development of stress within an organisation?

Question number	Theme 2 Absenteeism & Job Stress
5	I have sufficient time to do my job
24	SAB has zero tolerance for absenteeism
31	I seldom take leave
32	I only take leave when necessary
41	SAB encourages staff to take leave
42	SAB grants sufficient leave for its employees
43	At SAB work receives preference over employee leave plans
45	I would look for any excuse not to go to work
46	I usually become absent from work because of stress

Table 4.5, reflects the data of the perceptions of the respondents regarding the aspect pertaining to remuneration. This aspect provides more insight, to sub-investigative question 1.

Table 4.5 Absenteeism and Leave

Questionnaire Items <i>ITEMS 29-36</i>	Strongly Agree		Agree		Not Sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
SAB has zero tolerance for absenteeism <i>Missing = 2.5%</i>	21	52.5	12	30.0	4	10.0	2	5.0	0	0.00
SAB genuinely tries to develop its entire people to the best of their ability	11	27.5	26	65.0	3	7.5	0	0.00	0	0.00
I seldom take leave	11	27.5	22	55.0	2	5.0	4	10.0	1	2.5
I only take leave when necessary	10	25.0	26	65.0	1	2.5	3	7.5	0	0.00
SAB encourages staff to take leave	7	17.5	30	75.0	3	7.5	0	0.00	0	0.00
SAB grants sufficient leave for its employees	5	12.5	33	82.5	0	0.00	2	5.0	0	0.00
Employees must always sacrifice their leave plans for work	7	17.5	21	52.5	4	10.0	7	17.5	1	2.5
At SAB work receives preference over employee leave plans	11	27.5	20	50.0	5	12.5	4	10.0	0	0.00

Of the respondents 52% indicated that SAB has zero tolerance for absenteeism the remainder had different views and perceptions. In addition, 65% of respondents indicated that SAB genuinely tries to develop its entire people to the best of its ability (28% strongly agree). In relation to leave days most respondents (55%) indicated that they seldom take leave without support (28% strongly agree, 10% disagree). Furthermore, 65% of respondents indicated that they only take leave when necessary (25% strongly agree). However, 75% of the respondents confirmed that SAB encourages staff to take leave (18% strongly agree). Further analysis shows that approximately 82.5% of the respondents agreed with the statement that SAB grants its employees sufficient leave (13% strongly agree). The majority of the respondents (52.5%) felt that employees are expected to sacrifice their leave plans in favour of work (18% strongly agree, 18% disagree). Given a good impression from majority of the respondents regarding their leave, 50% agreed that at SAB, work receives preference over employee leave plans with 28% supporting that, while 13% were not sure and 10% disagreed.

There is consensus amongst the respondents that, SAB does encourage staff to take leave. There is also a high percentage of employees that seem to think that their individual leave plans are often cancelled, as a result of business needs which cannot be good for the corporate climate. Manager's need to make sure that sufficient contingency plans are in place so that employees, are not made to cancel their leaves as this might result in increased stress.

The following analysis covers the data analysis for sub-investigative question 3.

Sub-investigative Question 3;

This aspect covers the research questions: How do the perceptions of employees towards empowerment, impact on their level of stress?

Question number	Theme 3 Work context and perception
6	I am happy with my work allocation/workload
7	SAB is my employer of choice.
16	My salary is good for the job I am doing
13	SAB is able to retain high quality staff.
18	It is not fun to work for SAB
20	I feel that my position is fair and equal to my job description
22	I look forward to go to work everyday
25	Compared with other companies, I know this is a good company to work for.
26	I have real opportunities for promotion within SAB.
30	I will encourage a good friend to work for SAB.
33	SAB staff structure is well-planned.
35	My work is not related to any skills training
37	There is sufficient variety in my work
44	I tend to get bored at work
27	SAB genuinely tries to develop its entire people to the best of their ability.

Table 4.6, reflects the data of the perceptions of the respondents regarding the aspect pertaining to Stress and work control. This aspect provides more insight, to sub-investigative question 3.

The data for the above information is reflected in table 4.6.

Table 4.6 **Stress and work control**

Questionnaire Items <i>ITEMS 37-44</i>	Strongly Agree		Agree		Not Sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
I experience stress at work	21	52.5	19	47.5	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
My work is not related to any skills training	3	7.5	0	0.00	2	5.0	30	75.0	5	12.5
I have sufficient control of my work	2	5.0	24	60.0	6	15.0	7	17.5	1	2.5
I am happy with my achievement at work	5	12.5	25	62.5	5	12.5	5	12.5	0	0.00
I am able to concentrate in my work	3	7.5	29	72.5	2	5.0	5	12.5	1	2.5
I tend to get bored at work	2	5.0	0	0.00	1	2.5	11	27.5	26	65.0
I would look for any excuse not to go to work	1	2.5	2	5.0	1	2.5	22	55.0	14	35.0
I usually become absent from work because of stress	0	0.00	1	2.5	7	17.5	23	57.5	9	22.5

The majority of the participants (52.5%) indicated that they experience stress at work (47.5% strongly agree). Interestingly, a large percentage (75%) of respondents disagreed with the statement that their work is not related to any skills training. However, 60% emphasised that they have sufficient control of their work, the remainder had different views and perceptions.

In total 62.5% of respondents indicated that they are happy with their achievements at work (13% strongly agree). The table also suggests that 72.5% of the respondents are able to concentrate on their work, the data analysis reflects that the sample respondents hold a variety of perceptions regarding their ability to concentrate on their work. However, as the minority disagree's there is no issue regarding this aspect. 65% of the respondents indicated that they do not get bored at work. This may be related to the findings regarding the fact that employees enjoy working at SAB. In addition, 90% of the respondents indicated that they disagreed with the statement about looking for reasons not to go to work (only three respondents agreed). The respondents seem to be coping well with stress. This is supported by the finding that 79% of the respondents stated that stress does not influence their attendance at work.

The number of participants which claim to be currently under stress, are at a very high level. Interestingly, the individuals seem to be coping very well with their stress. Showing the high level of tolerance which they seem to have. Over 78% of the respondents say that they are coping well with their stress. A high number of respondents having expressed their happiness with working for SAB. This finding dovetails with the previous research by Dr. Moch, which highlighted the positive effects that stress, in moderate right levels could have on performance.

The above should not detract from the fact that, unmitigated continuous stressors are harmful, and if unencumbered could result in levels of distress, which has an inverse relationship with organizational effectiveness. Distress which manifest itself, by way of illness or chronic absenteeism. A considerable number of respondents had earlier raised concerns about the workload, being excessive, these workload concerns need to be addressed before they become distressors.

The following section will cover the analysis of the data for sub-investigative question 4

Sub-investigative Question 4;

What role does leadership play in the development of stress?

Question number	Theme 5 Leadership and stress
4	I am confident of my immediate supervisor's ability to make the right decisions about my job
9	Supervisors and managers treat me with dignity and respect.
8	SAB chooses the right people to become supervisors/managers.
12	In SAB the people who are promoted are the people who deserve promotion.

Table 4.7, reflects the data of the perceptions of the respondents regarding the aspect pertaining to Relationship with supervision/management. This aspect provides more insight, to sub-investigative question 4.

Table 1.7 Relationship with Supervision/Management

Questionnaire Items ITEMS 1-5	Strongly Agree		Agree		Not Sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
I love my job	6	15.0	31	77.5	2	5.0	2	2.5	0	0.00
I am happy with my job right now	12	30.0	23	57.5	3	7.5	2	5.0	0	0.00
I have control of my job	2	5.0	26	65.0	6	15.0	6	15.0	0	0.00
I feel secured in my job	4	10.0	28	70.0	7	17.5	1	2.5	0	0.00

I have sufficient time to do my job	2	5.0	16	40.0	7	17.5	1	30.0	0	0.00
-------------------------------------	---	-----	----	------	---	------	---	------	---	------

The respondents were asked about their confidence in SAB and their supervisors/managers. This information is displayed in Table 4.7. The data shows that the majority (63%) of the respondents indicated that SAB is their employer of choice. An additional 35% of respondents strongly agreed with this statement. In addition, 60% of the respondents indicated that SAB appoints the right people to be supervisors/managers, whilst about 28% also supports that. The data reflects that 70% of the respondents felt that their supervisors/managers treat them with dignity and respect, and this was supported by 23% of the respondents. 63% of the respondents indicated that they have confidence in their immediate supervisor's ability to make the right decisions about their job, and this was supported by 25% of the respondents. Finally, 75% of the respondents felt that the SAB staff structure is well-planned.

From the above analysis it can be inferred that the process of selection which SAB follows is fair and transparent, the majority of employees are happy with the current process. However, happiness and job satisfaction may be negatively correlated, to burnout and stress. I enjoy my work and I have high burnout.

Table 4.8, reflects the data of the perceptions of the respondents regarding the aspect pertaining to Promotion. This aspect provides more insight, to sub-investigative question 4.

Table 4.8 Promotion

Questionnaire Items <i>ITEMS 16-23</i>	Strongly Agree		Agree		Not Sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>
In SAB the people who are promoted are the people who deserve promotion	4	10.0	31	77.5	5	12.5	0	0.00	0	0.00
SAB is able to retain high quality staff	4	10.0	23	57.5	4	10.0	7	17.5	2	5.0
I am currently searching for other employment	5	12.5	0	0.00	1	2.5	16	40.0	18	45.0
I do not think about leaving SAB	12	30.0	21	52.5	2	5.0	3	7.5	2	5.0
SAB is concerned for its employees' welfare	7	17.5	30	75.0	2	5.0	1	2.5	0	0.00
I have real opportunities for promotion within SAB	9	22.5	25	62.5	5	12.5	1	2.5	0	0.00
Compared with other companies, I know this is a good company to work for	14	35.0	25	62.5	1	2.5	0	0.00	0	0.00

Schultz et al. (2003) found that poor promotional prospects and unfulfilled career expectations can also create stress for employees. According to Table 4.7 77.5% of the respondents believe that SAB promotes people who deserve promotion (a further 10% agree with this statement). The table also shows that about 57.5% of the respondents agree that the SAB is able to retain high quality staff (10% strongly agree, 18% disagree, 10% not sure). The employees of SAB appear to be happy with their jobs as 45% of the employees indicated that they are not currently searching for another job. In addition, 52.5% of respondents stated that they are not thinking of leaving SAB (30% strongly agree). In addition, 75% of employees indicated that SAB cares about its employees' welfare (18% strongly agree). This may be part of the reason why employees appear to want to stay with SAB.

The majority of the respondents agreed that people who are promoted within SAB deserved their promotions. In addition, 63% of respondents indicated that they have real opportunities for promotions within SAB (23% strongly agree). Finally, 63% of the respondents believed that SAB is a good company to work for (35% strongly agree).

Employees are positive, with regards to the manner in which other sales employee's are promoted. Employees are positive about the environment in which they work, and are happy with SAB.

Table 4.9, reflects the data of the perceptions of the respondents regarding the aspect pertaining to work environment. This aspect provides more insight

Table 4.9 Work environment

Questionnaire Items <i>ITEMS 11-15</i>	Strongly Agree		Agree		Not Sure		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Freq</i>	<i>%</i>
I am happy with my work allocation/workload	3	7.5	17	42.5	6	15.0	11	27.5	3	7.5
I feel confident at work and I can pace my work well	4	10.0	24	60.0	4	10.0	8	20.0	0	0.00
It is not fun to work for SAB	1	2.5	3	7.5	5	12.5	15	37.5	16	40.0
I feel that my position is fair and equal to my job description	2	5.0	22	55.0	6	15.0	10	25.0	0	0.00
I experience fun when I do my work	7	17.5	28	70.0	3	7.5	2	5.0	0	0.00

The findings from Table 4.9 show that the majority of the respondents love their job and are happy about their job. In addition, 42.5% of the respondents indicated that they are happy with their work allocation/work load. An additional 7.5% of the respondents strongly agreed with this statement. The results show that 27.5% of the respondents are not happy with their work allocation/ work load, this suggests that there might be a problem with workload at SAB. The majority (60%) of the participants indicated that they have confidence in their 'pace' at work, whilst of the remainder held opposite views and different perceptions. In addition, 40% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that it is not fun to work for SAB, while about 38% disagreed with this statement. It would therefore seem that

the majority of the respondents are determined to work at SAB. If this is the case then excessive pressure could lead to work stress, therefore undermining work performance and possibly causing illness. In relation to the fairness of the job description 55% of the participants indicated that their job position is fair and equal to their job description, whilst the remainder held different opinions.

The high percentage of respondents which are currently unhappy with the workload, necessitate a focus group, facilitated by a senior human resources manager. The sales staff must be given the platform to voice their concern's and also come up with possible solutions to remedy the current issue of employees feeling overwhelmed. A responsibility matrix must be drawn up to ensure that the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clear and personal. A strong succession plan must be in place, so that any and all vacancies are filled, so as not to create any undue pressure in the system.

Section C Correlations, between the variables

Having covered the data analysis for section A and B, the correlations between the key variables will now be presented.

4.3 Inter-correlations between key variables

All the measures used in the study were correlated to determine construct validity. The correlations between job satisfaction, relationship with management/supervisor, work environment, promotion, remuneration, absenteeism, and work control are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 indicates that statistical outcomes

Table 4.10 Correlations

Key variables	Correlation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Job satisfaction	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.331						
Relationship with management/supervisor	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.435	.001					
Work environment	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.521**	1.000	.220				
Promotion	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.412	.172	.084			
Remunerations	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.358*	.220	1.000	-.179*	.180		
Absenteeism and Leave	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.023	.172	.241	.269	.266	1.23	
Stress and work control	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.223	.276	-.179	1.000	.661**	.180	.532

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The table reflects that there is a significant positive correlation between work environment and job satisfaction ($r = 0.521$) at the 99% level. The remuneration aspects correlated with job satisfaction ($r = 0.358$) at the 95% level of significance. It is further found that remuneration is negatively correlated with promotion. Stress and work control were also significantly and positively related to remuneration. This suggests that the significant correlations might be due to the fact that employees have a high workload and high job pressure that requires a lot of attention.

Surprisingly absenteeism and leave emerged as not being statistically significant. This may mean that this aspect is not a significant contributor to stress and burnout. This is contrary to what was found in the literature review.

Table 4.11 contains the summarised comments made by the sample respondents who returned their questionnaires. The response's were based on open ended questions, within main

sections of the data capturing instruments, and this was voluntary. The researcher drew upon this information, in the analysis of the data which was discussed in section B.

Table 4.11 Comments on any issues related to personal Burnout/Stress in SAB

No	Themes	Verbatim examples
1	Stress	• I am little stress • Too much pressure • When its end of the month and I need to hit targets, this becomes very tiring and stressful • Due to competition, there is more pressure on sales staff • Stress is part of my job • My market is very competitive and thus very stressful, because you must always be ahead of the competition • I am from time to time • Work and school are both stressing, I need break, but there is just too much to do • It is a high pressure environment which cases stress, because there are targets to reach and heavy workload to handle
2	No stress	• I am not stressed • I am feeling good about myself and work
3	Stress due to deadlines	• SAB wants everything to be done yesterday and there is not enough time • The movement of established goals and deadlines delivered out of the blue
4	Stress due to various factors	• I still battle to know exactly what my job is all about • More analytic statistics pertaining to key areas need to be done regularly • Taking on many tasks at one time and not being able to accomplish them all

		• I am tired of my boss
--	--	---

Respondents were asked open ended questions to express their views on any issues related to personal burnout/stress at SAB. Some of the responses to these questions are reflected in table 4.12.

Schultz et al. (2003) found that many people experience stress due to personal and work related factors such as lifestyle problems, unexpected feelings, role based strains and lack of emotional support. The content analysis in the table above supports the findings from table 4.12, which showed that 100% of the respondents are experiencing stress at SAB. In order to have a better understanding of this phenomenon an analysis was conducted on the various contributing factors mentioned by the respondents. These factors included target deadlines, competition, work-load, movement of established goals and confusion regarding their discretion within the job.

Table 4.12 How secured do you feel in your job

No	Themes	Verbatim examples
1	Secured	• I feel secured in my job • Okay • Yes most of the time • I am relatively secured • Very • Very secured, I got recognized for my achievements • I would say 80% secured • 75% • Fairly • 50%
		• I am scared I screw up somewhere and loose my job

2	Not secured	• I'm not secured • I'm just scared of losing my job because I didn't manage someone proper and at the same time I don't want to come down or be lenient
3	Various causes of insecurities	• I only get nervous when I am not making volume • I am an asset to the company • Only when we have a big night

- McShane and Travaglione (2003) indicate that people experience stress as a result of being overworked due to job insecurity and unrealistic work responsibilities. The respondents provided various comments regarding their job security. As reflected in table 4.12 the majority of the respondents indicated that they feel relatively secure in their jobs. However, some respondents did indicate that they experience job insecurity. The respondents indicated various reasons for their experience of job insecurity, as listed above.

Table 4.13 To what extent is your work responsible for your absence from work?

No	Themes	Verbatim examples
1	Not absent	• Not ever • Not really • Not at all, I take leave when I need to
2	Absent	• I'm absent when I'm not well or have personal issues • Not too much • I'm sick more often, it might be due to stress • Burnout as a result of over the weekend activities leaving one with less weekend time to rest

According to Gillies (1999, p. 816), unplanned absenteeism occurs when employees are absent for reasons beyond their control. These reasons include factors such as sickness,

death, injury and workplace climate factors. Absenteeism poses challenges to productivity, profitability and competitiveness. Some of the respondents indicated that they are always present at work. This suggests that these respondents are dedicated to their work. However, some respondents report being absent from work due to personal issues, sickness, stress and burnout.

Table 4.14 list the summarised comments which respondents provided, with regard to their well-being.

Table 4.14 Are there any general comments that you would like to make about your well-being

No	Themes	Verbatim examples
1	Confident	• No • I am strong • I'm all good, I wish we had a better social system that include the whole depot instead of individual teams doing whatever they want alone • I'm well • I'm cool • Stress is motivating and it drives, but one needs to gym and exercise
2	Suggestions to SAB management	• More interaction with COF, so that we can advise them on strategic issues and allocate customers based on strategic intent rather than a "one size fits all" approach. • Our brand portfolio is too wide and varied that it makes it difficult to give each brand the amount of effort to grow that brand

		• SAB should focus more on what we do best rather than letting our competitors dictate to us
--	--	--

In general the respondents made positive comments suggesting changes to enhance their functioning at SAB.

4.4 Summary

Vigil (2006) emphasised the importance of taking into consideration that employees from different workplaces experience stress at different levels. The findings show that there is a high incidence of stress among SAB employees. The results suggest that this stress is due to high work-loads, meeting target deadlines and functioning in a highly competitive environment. This finding is supported by a study conducted by Muntaner et al. (2005), who found that employees working under pressure due to high work-loads are at a high risk of poor mental outcomes due to multiple tasks. The correlation analysis also confirmed that there is a positive and significant correlation between various factors of stress in the work place. The next chapter provides the discussion of the main findings, recommendations and conclusion.

This chapter covered the analysis and interpretation of the data captured in the frequency tables, aligned to each sub investigative question, for forty respondents that returned their questionnaires.

Chapter 5 will present an integrated summary of the entire research study, more specifically the conclusions and recommendation's which flowed from the analysis of chapter 4, followed by the limitations of the study and the suggestions for future research and relevant integration between the literature study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to understand the true impact of stress as an organisational disorder. In addition, the study aimed to develop a firm grasp on the causes of stress and the possible programs that a company could implement in order to mitigate the endemic and unrelenting factors that lead to stress. The relationship between stress and burnout was also determined, with the aim of understanding the causes of stress as well as the relationship between stress and burnout.

It is evident that the current trading environment, specifically the competitive trading environment facing FMCG industries, has resulted in employees experiencing high levels of stress. This highly pressurised environment has an adverse effect on employees' emotional, psychological and physiological well-being. This is likely to lead to increased levels of substance abuse, depression and domestic upheaval. It is therefore vital that organisations implement a wide variety of programs/solutions in order to mitigate against the range of stressors that impact employee well-being and ultimately influence organisational performance. In order to successfully achieve this as an on going, successful program, organisations should in parallel conduct continuous research or assessments of their immediate work environments.

5.2 Summary of Chapters

- **Chapter 1**

This chapter discussed the background to the study, the problem statement, the primary and sub-investigative questions as well as the objectives of the study and the delimitation of the research.

- **Chapter 2**

The chapter dealt with stress and its relation to performance. Burnout and depression were also investigated in an attempt to determine their relationship with stress and the impact they could have on the individual and the organisation. The potential costs of stress to an organisation were analysed through defining the commercial and invisible costs of stress, with an emphasis on absenteeism. Coping strategies that could possibly alleviate the early onset of stress were discussed, concluding with a brief discussion of the dichotomy which exists between personality and stress. The Literature reviewed indicates that the medical field and the field of Psychology have ongoing research regarding the aspect called 'stress and burnout'.

- **Chapter 3**

This chapter outlined the research methodology, which was used to conduct this research. The manner in which the research was designed, population and sampling technique's utilized, development and formulation of the questionnaire as the data collection tool, data analysis methods, ethical considerations and concluding with the limitations of the study.

- **Chapter 4**

This chapter covered the analysis and interpretation of the data captured in the frequency tables, aligned to each sub investigative question, for forty respondents that returned their questionnaires.

5.3 Conclusion's drawn from the sub-investigative questions as well as the recommendations by sub investigative question will follow.

The sub-investigative questions which were posed in chapter 1, which were required to be answered by this research study will now be discussed, followed by recommendations, the limitations of the research study and suggestions for future research.

All the sub-investigative questions have been successfully answered.

- Job Satisfaction

On the variable Job Satisfaction it was found that 52% of the respondents were content, on the aspect of time management in their jobs, whilst 30% of the respondents felt that they do not have sufficient time to do their job and about 18% were not sure how to respond to this item. The latter aspect requires independent investigation and it is recommended that someone from senior management in charge of the region conducts an investigation, by having a meeting with the employees that are experiencing a lack of satisfaction, with regard to having insufficient time to complete there daily tasks .

This necessitates capacity building of the entire sales division, by way of a training intervention, monthly meeting forum which will allow for the sales reps to voice out concerns before they become serious issues, and to give the sales staff an opportunity to share on how they cope with the complexity of the situation. Regular reviews of sales resourcing models to ensure that the sales staff compliment is sufficiently resourced to give great customer service. (Conclusions drawn from table 4.3)

- Supervision and management

oFrom the analysis presented in table 4.7 in it can be inferred that the process of selection which SAB follows is fair and transparent. (Conclusions drawn from table 4.7)

- Work Environment

The high percentage of respondents which are currently unhappy with the workload, necessitate a focus group, facilitated by a senior human resources manager. The sales staff must be given the platform to voice their concern's and also come up with possible solutions to remedy the current issue of employees feeling overwhelmed. A responsibility matrix must be drawn up to ensure that the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clear and personal. A strong succession plan must be in place, so that any and all vacancies are filled, so as not to create any undue pressure in the system.

(Conclusions drawn from table 4.9)

- Promotions

Employees are positive, with regards to the manner in which other sales employee's are promoted. Employees are positive about the environment in which they work, and are happy with SAB. (Conclusions drawn from table 4.8)

- Remuneration

The unhappiness of 23% of employees with regard to their salaries should be a warning bell for management and this deems urgent investigation. This barometer could serve as

an indication of employees who might have become retention risks. The company could also implement a program in which it assist's employees with developing their financial intelligence, which various personal financial management issues can covered, namely credit management and savings management. (Conclusions drawn from table 4.4)

- Absenteeism and Leave

There is consensus amongst the respondents that, SAB does encourage staff to take leave. There is also a high percentage of employees that seem to think that their individual leave plans are often cancelled, as a result of business needs which cannot be good for the corporate climate. Manager's need to make sure that sufficient contingency plans are in place so that employees, are not made to cancel their leave as this might result in increased stress. (Conclusions drawn from table 4.5)

- Stress and Work Control

The number of participants who claim to be currently under stress, are at a very high level of 78%. Nevertheless the individuals seem to be coping very well with their stress as evidenced by the high level of tolerance. Showing the high level of tolerance which they seem to have. Over 78% of the respondents say that they are coping well with their stress, with a high number of respondents having expressed their happiness with working for SAB. This finding is supported by the previous research with the previous research by Moch (2010), which highlighted the positive effects that stress, in moderate levels could have on performance. (Conclusions drawn from table 4.6)

The above should not detract from the fact that, unmitigated continuous stressors are harmful, and if unencumbered could result in levels of distress, which has an inverse

relationship with organizational effectiveness. Distress which manifest itself, by way of illness or chronic absenteeism. (Lloyd & Johnson, 2011)

- Correlation Analysis

The correlation study revealed that there is a positive and significant correlation between various factors and stress in the workplace. (Conclusions drawn from table 4.10)

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the literature review there are a number of interventions which can be implemented by management to help mitigate the impact of stress:

- Quarterly session's to be held by the regional manager, with the sales fraternity.
- The introduction of dieticians that conduct bi-annual assessments on the employees and give direction in-terms of the deficiency's and area's that employees should be focusing on.
- The development of a comprehensive succession plan to ensure that, vacancies are not vacant for a period of longer then a month.
- Introduction of a responsibility matrix to ensure that, there is no confusion when it comes to roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.
- Gym attendance should be subsidised by the company, employee attendance should be enforced, minimum twice weekly.
- Weekly scheduled sessions with mediation instructors.
- Development of proactive EAP programs, which hold regular focus groups with the employees, in order to remove preconceived notions or Taboo's with regard to EAP.

- Bi-annual sessions with Financial advisors to assist employees to develop FQ, and manage their overall finance's better.

5.5 Limitations

This has been an explorative and restrictive study, which involves a case study focusing on South African Breweries located in the Tshwane District of Gauteng Province in South Africa. The overall findings should not be generalised across all other sales districts or to the rest of the South African Breweries divisions, as only 60 people were targeted for the research.

The study initially intended to make additional use of the Cronbach alpha coefficient in order to assess the validity and reliability of the assessment instrument. However, this statistical execution could not be undertaken as the electronically tabulated results were lost due to the computer hard disc crashing.

5.6 Suggestions for future research

Organisations should finance or commission a study to be done across all regions. This larger study would allow for a comparative analysis to be done and would also allow for the findings of the study to be generalised. Due to time constraints the researcher was unable to execute more diverse statistical analysis and more quantitative statistical analysis. A larger cross-sectional study will allow for the application of greater quantitative statistical analysis.

Expanded programs of training which could result in greater sustained benefits for SAB within South Africa.

To advance further research in the area of stress in relation to age and personality, alot more can be undertaken.

References

- Aadmodt, M. G. (2010). *Industrial and Organisational psychology: An applied approach*. Belmont: Wadsworth.
- Aswgen, v., S, Botha, S., Kleynhans, R., Lotz, O, . . . Schlechter, A. (2009). *Human resources management: Fresh perspectives*. Cape Town: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., Schaufeli, W. B., & Nachreiner, F. (2001). The Job Demands-Resource Model of Burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 499-512.
- Bergh, Z., & Theron, A. (2006). *Psychology in the work context*. Cape Town: Oxford Universary Press Southern Africa (Pty) Ltd.
- Cherniss, C. (1995). *Beyond burnout: Helping teachers, nurses, therapists and lawyers recover from stress*. Routledge.
- Dollard, M. F., Winefield, A. H., & Winefield, H. L. (2003). *Occupational stress in the service professions*.
- Eckenrode, J., & Gore, S. (1990). *Stress between work and family*. Plenum Press.
- Furnham, A. (2008). *The psychology of behaviour at work: The individual in the organisation*. Psychology Press.
- Jewell, L. (1998). *Contemporary issues in industrial/organisational psychology*. Pacific grove: Brooks/Cole Publishers.Co.

- Judge, T. A., & Church, A. H. (2000). Job satisfaction: Research and practice. In C. L. Cooper, & E. A. Locke, *Industrial and organisational psychology* (pp. 166-198). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Judge, T. A., Thoresen, C. J., Bono, J. E., & Patton, G. K. (2000). The job satisfaction-job performance relationship: A qualitative and quantitative review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 127, 376-407.
- Karasek, R. A. (1989). Control in the workplace and its health related aspects. In S. L. Sauter, J. J. Hurrell, & C. L. Cooper, *Job control and worker health*. New York: Wiley.
- Klarreich, S. H. (1990). *Work without stress: A practical guide to emotional and physical well-being on the job*. Brunner/Mazel.
- Landy, F., & Conte, J. (2008). *Work in the 21st century: An Introduction to industrial and organisational psychology*.
- Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2001). *Practical Research: Planning and design*. New Jersey: Pearson Educational International Prentice Hall.
- Lietter, M. P., & Maslach, C. (2005). *Banishing burnout: Six strategies for improving your relationship with work*. Jossey-bass.
- Lloyd, A., & Johnson, B. (2011). *The healing code*. London: Holder & Stoughton An Hachette UK Company.
- McKenna, E. (2000). *Business psychology and organisational behaviour: A students' handbook*. Psychology Press.
- McClean, A., & Thomas, C. C. (1974). *Occupational stress*.

- McShane, S., & Travaglione, T. (2003). *Organisational behaviour on the pacific rim*. Australia: McGraw-Hill.
- Moch, J. (2010, September 21). *About: Supersmart Teachers*. Retrieved from Stress Web site: <http://www.supersmartteachers.com>
- Mujtaba, B. G., & MacCartney, T. (2010). *Managing workplace stress and conflict amid change*. Florida: ILead Academy, LLC Davie.
- Muntaner, C., Li, Y., Xue, X., Thompson, T., O'Campo, P., Chung, H., & Eaton, W. W. (2005). Country level socioeconomic position, work organisation and depression disorder: A repeated measures cross-classified multilevel analysis of low income nursing home. *Health and Place*, 12, 688-700.
- Nel, P. S. (1999). *South African employment relations: Theory and practice*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Nelson, D. L., & Burke, R. J. (2002). Gender work stress and health. *American Psychology Association*.
- Newton, T., Handy, J., & Fineman, S. (1994). *Managing stress emotion and power at work*. Sage Publications.
- Pearce, J. A., & Robinson, R. B. (2009). *Formulation, implementation & control of competition strategy*. McGraw-Hill.
- Porteous, M. (1997). *Occupational psychology*. Prentice Hall.
- Riggio, R. E. (2000). *Introduction to industrial/organisational psychology*. Prentice Hall Inc.
- Rogelberg, S. G. (2004). *Handbook of research methods in industrial psychology*. Blackwell publishing.



Roger R Pearman: Introduction to Type and Emotional Intelligence. CPP, Inc. Palo Alto, California, 2002

Rothmann, S., & Barkuizen, N. (2008). Burnout of academic staff in South African higher education institutions. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 22(2)439-456.

Schoonmaker, A. N. (1969). Anxiety and the executive. *American Management Association*.

Slocum, J. W., Woodman, R. W., & Hellriegel, D. (1998). *Organisational behaviour*. South Western College Publishing.

Statt, D. A. (1994). *Psychology and the world of work*. MacMillian Press.

Taylor, & Francis. (1988). Occupational stress issues and developments in research. In H. J. J, L. R. Murphy, L. Sauter, & C. L. Copper, *Occupational stress issues and developments in research*.

Wainwright, D., & Calnan, M. (n.d.). *Work stress: The making of a modern epidemic*. Open University Press.

Wheatley, M. J. (2006). *Leadership and the new science: Discovering order in a chaotic world*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Williams, S., & Cooper, L. (2002). *Managing workplace stress: A best practice blueprint*. John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

