



Exploring wellness among sales and marketing staff within a global automotive company

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Thesis submitted for the degree *Master of Commerce* in Industrial Psychology at the North-West University

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Graduation: 12 October 2017

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COMMENTS

The reader is reminded of the following:

- The editorial and reference format used in this mini-dissertation are in accordance with the format prescribed by the Publication Manual (6th edition) of the American Psychological Association (APA). This practice is in line with the policy of the Programme in Industrial Psychology of the North-West University (Vaal Campus) to use APA guidelines as writing style in all scientific documents, as from January 1999.
- The mini-dissertation is submitted in the form of a research article. The editorial style specified by the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology (which agrees largely with the APA style) is used, but the APA guidelines were followed in constructing tables.

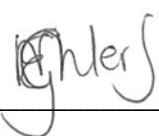
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever (Psalm 136:1).
- Dr. Elrie Botha, it was a great honour for me to have you as my supervisor. Thank you for all your guidance, motivation and support. You never doubted my abilities and always encouraged me to pursue my dreams of becoming an Industrial Psychologist.
- To my Mom, Annetjie Verreyne, I would not be where I am today if it had not been for all your love and support. Thank you for always believing in me, when at times I found it hard to believe in myself. You always brighten up my life in a way that only a mother knows how.
- To my fiancé, Charl van Heerden, thank you for always motivating me to do my best. Your love and support means more than words can express.
- My sister and brothers (Jackie, Coenie and Gustav), thank you for all your support.
- Angelene Hamann, thank you for being passionate about my research with me. Your input and guidance meant a lot to me.
- Kobus Botha, thank you for teaching me that procrastination won't get you anywhere. Your motivational sarcasm always made me laugh when my stress levels were high.

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY OF RESEARCH

I, Gertruida Maria Magdalena Ehlers, hereby declare that *Exploring wellness among sales and marketing staff in a global automotive company* is my own work and that views and opinions expressed in this study are those of the author and relevant literature references as shown in the references. I also declare that the content of this research will not be handed in for any other qualification at any other tertiary institution.

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May 2017

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**Exploring wellness among sales and marketing staff within a global automotive
company**

**Mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
Magister Artium in Industrial Psychology at the Vaal Triangle Campus of the North-
West University**

Supervisor: Dr E Botha

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DEDICATION

To my late uncle, Giel Ehlers, thank you for being a father to me. Your perseverance and will to never give up has always inspired me.

I miss you dearly.

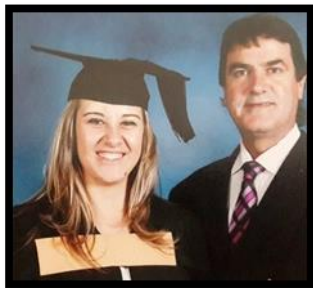


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SUMMARY

Title: Exploring wellness among sales and marketing staff within global automotive company

Keywords: Wellness, well-being, sales, marketing, automotive, stress, work-life balance, qualitative research.

Employees should be regarded as the most important asset in an organisation. Even though machinery and technology has become an important resource in organisational functioning, human capital are vital in determining organisational success. Therefore, the important role of employees should not be overlooked in the organisation. Considering that employees spent most of their time at work, it is imperative for companies to provide them with the necessary support to ensure that they are not only productive, but also 'well'. Often wellness initiatives are implemented in organisations, but show little positive returns. Employee stress is an inevitable factor in the workplace, and has many negative implications on the wellness of employees.

The general objective of this study was to explore wellness among sales and marketing staff within a global automotive company. A qualitative research approach was utilised in the study with hermeneutic phenomenology as philosophical underpinnings. The study made use of semi structured interviews and recruited participants based on a quota sampling technique. The targeted sample consisted of employees who function in the sales and marketing department of a global automotive company (n=12).

The results indicated that the sales and marketing environment can be regarded as highly stressful and fast paced, and as a result their wellness is perceived to be at a low. The participants highlighted that from the seven suggested dimensions, they regarded physical, mental and occupational wellness as most important. The results indicated that employees are prone to unhealthy coping habits in an attempt to manage workplace stress. Furthermore the participants expect the company to do more in terms of promoting their wellness, and that managers play an important role due to their authoritative positions. The participants expressed that managers can either promote or undermine wellness initiatives.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This mini-dissertation explores the experiences and perceptions of wellness among sales and marketing staff in a global automotive company. The study specifically aims at establishing how these employees perceive their employee wellness. This chapter presents the problem statement and a discussion of the research objectives in which the general and specific objectives are stipulated. The research method is also described and an overview of the chapters are provided.

1.1 Problem statement

The automotive industry can be defined as the core of the industry where design, development, manufacturing and sales and marketing of motor vehicles and their parts take place. The automotive industry is one of the world's most important economic sectors in terms of revenue and can further be regarded as one of the most globalised industries in the world (SouthAfrica.com, 2012). The automotive sector accounts for about 12% of South Africa's manufacturing exports, making it a crucial cog in the economy.

In 2013 the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) implemented the Automotive Production Development Programme (APDP) with the aim of increasing the volumes of cars manufactured in South Africa to 1.2 million annually by 2020. According to NAAM (National Association of Automobile Manufacturers) the average automotive industry employment figures rose with 441 employment opportunities within the first quarter of 2013, bringing the total to 30 344 positions within the industry. The automotive industry can overall further be regarded as one of the most globalised industries in the world.

NAAM reported that production, particularly those of light motor vehicles, will increase from 2014 as a result of the implementation of the APDP (BrandSouthAfrica.com, 2013). Automotive companies have thus been spending large amounts of financial resources on market research to enable them to establish the customers' trends and preferences, leading them to incur further costs for printing and broadcast advertising (BrandSouthAfrica, 2013). In this sense, the sales and marketing departments of the automotive companies would play an important role.

The Peppers and Rogers Group (2014) indicated that marketers in the automotive industry should expect some barriers in future. Even though the automotive industry spends huge amounts on advertising and is constantly launching new products (models) yearly, customer loyalties are decreasing and brand differentiation is more difficult to achieve. Sales and marketing should understand the value of building reliable, productive and client-centred relationships with customers.

The sales and marketing departments are responsible for various sub-functions and can be divided into different sections which overlap and link with one another. All of these sections and departments, impact on the production of the automotive company, which in the end is the main purpose of the organisation.

The main sections of the sales and marketing departments of the automotive industry to be explored in the current study are Marketing, Sales and Operations, Dealer Network Development and Customer Quality and Aftersales.

Marketing was defined by Kotler in 1980, as human activities that are directed at satisfying human needs and desires through an exchange process. Kotler (1991) later adapted his definition of marketing and described it as a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need, as well as desire, through a process of creating, offering and exchanging products and services of value with others.

Sales and Operations can be described as a marketing function where the needs and desires of clients are established and then responded to through planned and personalised communication that influences the clients' decisions with regards to the product or service and also enhances future business opportunities for the organisation (MBA Research and Curriculum Center, 2014).

Aftersales can be described as the services that are provided to a client after the products or services have been delivered (Rigopoulou, Chaniotakis, Lympelopoulos, & Siomkos, 2008).

Dealer Network Development (DND) and Customer Quality (CQ) regulates franchise standards and drives the alignment of every point of touch with customers. These standards

and alignments have to be in line with the brand (K. Von Vieregge, personal communication, November 19, 2015).

There are a lot of systems and processes within these different departments and it is further quite multifaceted. Each area plays an important role in the overall functioning of the automotive company and it is also a very competitive environment to function in (K. Von Vieregge, personal communication, November 19, 2015).

It is expected of employees in the overall sales and marketing department to be productive, engaged and at the same time, they also need to consistently meet targets. It should further be noted that the automotive company also competes with a number of other automotive brands in South Africa. Recently this specific automotive company started a process to be able to compete in the top 20 range between all of the other automotive companies by 2020. The manufacturing department relies on sales and marketing to provide them with correct information which will then determine the production targets (vehicle units/components) for manufacturing. This often causes the employees to work longer hours which gives them less time to relax and engage in personal activities. As a result of the environment in which they function, it might lead to them lacking motivation, experiencing stressors and negative behaviours and might also cause them to not be productive in their work. This creates a disruptive workplace, causing work to either get done at a very slow pace or often not to be done at all (Gilbreath & Karimi, 2012).

Various predictors of work stressors have been identified by the Institute of Occupational Health and Safety (NIOSH) which included career concerns, role conflicts, interpersonal relationships and perceived job control etc. (Smith, Makrides, Lebel, Allt, & Montgomerie, 2012). Furthermore the atmosphere and design of workplaces, not only steers employees to behave in certain ways, but it also affects how employees feel at work. The location and physical surroundings, as well as the organisational culture and values, can all support, or undermine wellness at work (Jeffrey, Mahony, Michaelson & Abdallah, 2014).

Myers, and Sweeney, (2005) described wellness as *“a way of life oriented toward optimal health and well-being in which the body, mind and spirit are integrated by the individual to live more fully within the human and natural community”*. Furthermore the concept that wellness is more a psychological than physical state has been a focus of researchers.

Wellness requires that basic needs are met, that individuals have a sense of purpose, and that they feel able to achieve important personal goals and participate in society. Wellness is further enhanced by conditions that include supportive personal relationships, strong and inclusive communities, good health, financial and personal security, rewarding employment, and a healthy and attractive environment (Swarbrick & Yudof, 2009).

The wellness of employees in the workplace are determined by the extent to which they can express values and gain personal satisfaction and enrichment from work; their attitude towards work and the ability to balance several roles; and also the ways in which they can apply their skills and abilities to contribute to the community (Miller & Foster, 2010). Poor wellness in the workplace can lead to various risk factors that can impact on personal as well as work-life as it has been linked to high absenteeism, low productivity, workplace inefficiency, employee turnover, and high healthcare costs (Miller & Foster, 2010).

Persistent reactions to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors at work can result in burnout. Burnout is understood to be a chronic state of job stress, where employer expectations and employee workload exceed the individual's perceived psychological capacity and ability to cope with the work demands expected of them (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001; Mutkins, Brown & Thorsteinsson, 2011). People experiencing burnout are not simply exhausted or overwhelmed by their workload. They have also lost a psychological connection with their work, which has implications for their motivation and their identity (Leiter & Maslach, 2016). Burnout can thus be regarded as the opposite pole of wellness and can be caused by various factors.

Stresses and frustrations are, however, an inevitable part of our working lives. Of course, at times employees are faced with deadlines or are required to do uninteresting tasks, but when negative feelings are more frequent and persistently experienced than positive feelings, they can prevent employees from performing at their best.

It is therefore vital for employees who function in the sales and marketing department to be engaged and productive in their work by having a positive wellness balance. Should employees be able to obtain a balance in terms of their wellness at work, they would be able to make better decisions, remain focussed and would also contribute to the bottom-line of the company, while at the same time enhancing customer satisfaction and relationships with all

stakeholders. The wellness of employees is also in the best interests of employers as they spend substantial resources hiring employees. The company constantly tries to generate products and profits while at the same time remaining able to maintain loyal customers (Harter, Schmidt, & Keyes, 2003). These are typical characteristics of the automotive industry as they continuously work on developing and manufacturing products (car units/components), focus on customer satisfaction (dealerships and clients), making profits (contributing to the bottom-line) etc.

Based on the above, the current study aims to answer the following questions:

1.2 Research Questions

- How are wellness, sales and marketing and the automotive industry conceptualised according to literature?
- How do employees define wellness?
- What are the current experiences of wellness in the workplace?
- Do employees from different tenure, gender and race groups experience wellness differently?
- What are the wellness needs of the employees?
- What future recommendations can be made?

1.3 Expected Contribution of the Study

1.3.1 Contribution for the individual

Each person has their own description of wellness as well as different wellness needs. One should note that the experience of wellness is not necessarily the same for all individuals as every individual has his or her own view and definition of how they describe and experience wellness. The same applies when referring to wellness at work. It will provide clarity for individuals to understand what wellness means to them and will also create awareness about wellness needs which specifically relate to the employee in the workplace. Stress is inevitable in the workplace and for individuals to understand their own wellness needs and finding a balance thereof; will assist them to cope better with the demands of their work.

1.3.2 Contribution for the organisation

Sales and marketing play a very important role in the automotive industry. These departments work under a lot of pressure as most of these employees have targets to meet and to maintain. If sales and marketing are slow and do not meet their targets and goals effectively; it will have a huge impact on the bottom line of the organisation as it slows down the manufacturing and production process. It may then result in evoking negative issues relating to industrial relations, such as strikes as a result of short time etc. This specific manufacturing automotive company has approximately 220 employees who are functioning in the sales and marketing department. A positive employee wellness balance can contribute to the productivity and profit of the organisation while at the same time, allowing them to understand the wellness needs of their employees. The automotive company does an annual survey to determine how satisfied employees are at work. One of the factors being measured by the survey is employee wellness. The results on this factor have been negative for the past three years. Furthermore, the automotive company also spends a lot of money in having employee wellness days and programmes in place. Thus, by being aware of the specific wellness needs of employees, the automotive company will be able to implement tailored employee wellness programmes which will be in line with the specific needs of the employees.

1.3.3 Contribution to Industrial/Organisational literature

Wellness is a phenomenon that does not hold the same meaning and interpretation for all individuals. Every person has different views on what they perceive wellness to be. This research can contribute to future research and assist in understanding how employees perceive wellness and how they link it to the workplace whilst the factors impacting on wellness will also become clearer. It was noted during the literature review that very little research has been done in terms of the wellness of employees that function in the sales and marketing department of the automotive industry.

1.4 Research Objectives

The research objectives are divided into general and specific objectives.

1.4.1 General objectives

The main aim of this research is to explore and describe the wellness experiences of the employees who function in the sales and marketing departments within a global automotive company.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this research are:

- To conceptualise wellness among sales and marketing employees that function in the automotive company, according to literature.
- To explore how the employees define and perceive their own view of wellness.
- To understand their current wellness state.
- To determine the specific wellness needs that the employees have.
- To investigate which workplace factors have an influence (either positive or negative on the wellness of the sales and marketing staff).
- To determine whether employees from different tenure, gender and race groups experience wellness differently.
- To provide future recommendations that can be made for studies regarding the wellness of sales and marketing employees in a global automotive company.

1.5 Research Design

1.5.1 Research Approach

A qualitative research approach will be applied in this study. According to Joubish, Khurram, Achmed, Fatima, and Heider (2011), qualitative research is used to aid one in understanding the feelings people experience in their daily lives. This approach will thus be suitable when investigating the wellness of the sales and marketing staff in the automotive company. The voice, actions and behaviours of the participants will serve as data for the qualitative researcher. The gathering of this data will assist in identifying possible explanations about how the sales and marketing team defines employee wellness and also their experience thereof in the workplace (Flick, 2014). Qualitative research is used to deal with phenomena that are difficult to understand and to quantify in a survey, such as the experiences, beliefs and meanings people have (Willis, 2007). This approach is suitable as rich descriptions will be gained from the participants with regards to employee wellness and also to which extent they experience wellness in the workplace. Another advantage for following a qualitative

approach is because it provides a benefit in the ability to probe into the responses or observations of the participants as needed in order to obtain more detailed descriptions and explanations of experiences, behaviours and beliefs in that specific research environment or setting. Qualitative questioning allows flexibility and an interviewer is typically permitted to ask questions in a different way, to make sure the participant has understood it well (Merriam, 2009).

1.5.2 Research Strategy

For the researcher to gain understanding of the experienced wellness of the sales and marketing employees, the foundation for the design of this current study will be a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. By using this approach the researcher will read the transcribed texts and extract themes. The themes can be regarded as the written interpretations of the lived experiences of the participants. In other words, by applying the hermeneutic phenomenological approach, the researcher has to interpret and reflect on the data collected, unlike pure phenomenology which is solely explorative (Sloan & Bowe, 2014). The onus is not on the researcher to describe and explain wellness as a social phenomenon, but rather to understand this phenomenon as it is experienced and expressed by the participants in the interviews. According to Chapman and Smith (2002), it further engages with the meaning that these experiences of events hold for the participants. In addition, this approach also takes the researcher's own conceptions into account to make sense of the personal world under study.

1.5.3 Research method

1.5.3.1 Literature review

A complete literature review regarding wellness, sales and marketing (both employees and department) and the automotive industry will be conducted. Articles, Journals and textbooks which are relevant to the study and have been published between 2002 and 2017 will be consulted by using searches on the databases and on the internet. Older resources will however also be included where prevalent.

1.5.3.2 Research setting

The research setting will be based at the automotive company. The interviews will be conducted in a sound proof meeting room on the premises to ensure minimum disruption for

the participants and furthermore to create a familiar environment. The interviews will be conducted in a private setting and the room will consist of adequate lighting and air-conditioning and will also have comfortable chairs and a table, as well as a white board and paper for possible drawings. Interviews will be scheduled beforehand.

1.5.3.3 Entrée and establishing researcher roles

The researcher will take on the role of an interviewer. As an interviewer the researcher has to remain objective and fair and consider own biases carefully. The researcher will interact with participants and will thus not remain on the extreme band of participation (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). The role of the researcher will be to obtain access to the thoughts and feelings of study participants with regards to a specific topic. This may not be an easy task as the participants will have to open up to things that may be very personal to them. It is therefore important for the researcher to safeguard participants and their data (Sutton & Austin, 2015). The first step of access to this field will be gained through personal contacts within the particular organisation. The researcher will have to negotiate access and permission to the participants within the automotive company from the director of sales and marketing as well as the gatekeeper, who in this instance will be the Senior Human Resource (HR) Manager. Access will be negotiated in a professional and ethical manner, while treating the director and gatekeeper with respect. The participants would be informed in an open manner about what the project aims to achieve, and also be granted the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any given stage. Once the appointments have been scheduled with each participant, the role of the researcher will be to attend every meeting, while being on time and professional. It is important to note that not all the roles of the researcher will be discussed beforehand, since it may change during the course of the study (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, & Delpont, 2011).

1.5.3.4 Sampling

In qualitative research, the sample size is of utmost importance as the researcher will conduct interviews until data saturation is achieved (De Vos et al., 2011). It is however important that the sample size is sufficient in order to capture the essence of the phenomena and to rule out any limitations (Kuper, Lingard, & Levinson, 2008). When the researcher finds a thorough understanding of the phenomena being researched, then the interviews will be terminated. According to Kuper et al. (2008), data saturation will present itself when new participants no

longer produce new trends and themes are a repeat of the trends and themes which were already raised by other participants. There are approximately 220 employees who function in the sales and marketing department of the automotive company. The researcher will further aim to make use of quota sampling when inviting individuals to participate in the current study. Quota sampling can be described as a way to make convenient sampling more robust. It also involves being able to adequately represent different viewpoints from the participants. For example quotas can be assigned by age, gender, race, occupation etc. Quota sampling will aid to provide rich information from different viewpoints (Duke & Ames, 2008). For the purpose of the current study, the researcher will aim to get an approximate balance between male participants and female participants (gender) as well as participants from different race groups. The researcher will also look at different tenure categories (i.e. less than 3 years, 3 to 6 years and more than 6 years). The reason for this is to determine whether the perception of wellness differs between these groups. Leonard and Levine (2006) studied the effect of gender differences on the turnover rates of employees who function in the sales department of an organisation. It was found that female employees have higher quit rates when compared to the male employees. It was also further indicated that male employees are more inclined to experience job satisfaction when compared to females in the workplace (Leonard & Levine, 2006). The researcher aims to interview a minimum of 15 participants or until data saturation has been achieved.

1.5.3.5 Data collection methods

Primarily the aim of the study is to explore the wellness among sales and marketing staff within a global automotive company. The researcher aims to receive detailed responses and experiences from the participants and not just simply 'yes' or 'no' answers. This creates the need for the implementation of semi-structured interviews. Flick (2014) reported that the use of semi-structured interviewing will enable the researcher to find rich information while at the same time following a natural flow of the interview conversation. The semi-structured interviewing will be guided by open-ended questions, where the researcher will look for a variety of elaborations on experiences the participant has gone through, as well as new issues that might be raised during the interview process. The duration of these interviews is expected to be approximately 45 to 60 minutes. The interviews will be conducted in private meeting rooms on the premises of the automotive company. Some of the known benefits of interviews are that it enables the researcher to obtain quantity data quickly and also provides

the researcher with an opportunity to understand the meanings that the activities hold for the process as it is important to establish rapport and trust with the participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). Some of the questions to be asked during the interview include the following:

- What is your definition or understanding of wellness? (What does it mean to you?)
- How do you relate to your description of wellness in the workplace and to what extent do you experience it?
- Where would you rate your wellness, 1 being poor and 10 being excellent?
- What does a typical day at work look like?
- How do you unwind after a stressful day at the office?

1.5.3.6 Recording of data

Data from the interviews will be collected with the use of an audio recording and field notes. Consent will be obtained from participants before recorded interviews are conducted. The recordings will be stored in a safe location in order to ensure confidentiality. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings. The researcher will aim to transcribe the verbatim information immediately after the interview, while also typing up the field notes and combining these two methods to gain a deeper insight into the participant's story. After the interview and the field notes are transcribed, the researcher will provide the participant with the transcribed copy in order to obtain confirmation after which the researcher will move on to the data analysis process.

1.5.3.7 Data analysis

After data collection is done, the researcher needs to make use of certain methods to analyse the data in order to obtain an accurate description of the participant's experiences.

Data analysis is one of the most important steps in the overall research process. Various tools are available for analysing qualitative research. The seven most commonly used techniques include method of constant comparison, keywords-in-context, word count, classical content analysis, domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, and componential analysis (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). As a phenomenological researcher the aim would also be to make use of bracketing by making use of personal journaling to explore the researchers' own insights,

preconceptions and reflections, which may also contribute to the trustworthiness of the data (Creswell, 2009).

For the purpose of the current study, the researcher chose to make use of methodological triangulation to add to the trustworthiness of the findings. When considering the proposed data analysis tools, (method of constant comparison, keywords-in-context, word count, classical content analysis, domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, and componential analysis), the researcher will make use of the method of constant comparison, together with classical content analysis in order to enhance trustworthiness.

Certain steps need to be followed when performing a constant comparison analysis. First the researcher has to read through the entire set of data; then the researcher has to chunk the data set into smaller groups or parts. After this the researcher labels each chunk or grouping with a descriptive title or 'code'. Then the comparison of data takes place as each new chunk or codes of data are compared to the previous ones. Now the similar chunks will be labelled with the same code. When all of the obtained data have been coded, the codes are grouped according to their characteristics or similarity, after which a theme is identified and documented as per each similar grouping (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007).

Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007) further note that classical content analysis are somewhat similar to constant comparative analysis, however the main difference is that the researcher calculates the number of times each of the above mentioned codes are used. This method can be used when the researcher wishes to establish which of the codes should be considered as the most important ones that should be used in the study.

It is suggested that data analysis should be done alongside of each interview, and not after all the data have been collected. Green et al. (2007) state that the process of analysis should be a constant process that tests the match or link of the new data on a continuous basis. This emphasises the importance for the researcher to be thoroughly knowledgeable about the theory underlying the interviews, in order to capitalise on opportunities in the interview that may broaden the information and build new questions into the interview. Green et al. (2007) as well as Creswell (2009) emphasise that the quality of the recording of information and observations inside the interview, are of utmost importance as this will form a large part of the data itself.

1.5.3.8 Strategies employed to ensure quality data

Due to the personal nature of qualitative research it is more difficult to establish the validity and reliability of the findings than in quantitative research (Creswell, 2009). This calls for a qualitative study to be of unsurpassed quality. Although there are no statistics to assist in the validity of the study, there are some guidelines that the researcher can follow to ensure that the oxymoron that exists between validity and qualitative research are minimised to a zero. Tracy (2010) suggests eight steps to adhere to for quality qualitative research:

- *Worthy topic:* Studies of relative unknown phenomena, like the experiences of wellness among sales and marketing employees in an automotive industry (manufacturing), are intrinsically interesting which may influence the reader's perceptions and assumptions (Tracy, 2010). The current topic will contribute to existing knowledge and possibly also create new knowledge.
- *Accuracy:* The data will be interpreted with the assistance of several researchers (researcher triangulation), this refers to inter-rater reliability. The data will thus be presented to the fullest degree without the possibility of biasness of only a single researcher (Kitto, Chesters, & Grbich, 2008).
- *Sincerity:* This refers to the authenticity of the researcher where the researcher will be honest and true with regards to the collected data. Tracy (2010) suggests that the researcher should be objective and aware about own biases and goals and also be explicit about it.
- *Credibility:* This can be seen as internal validity in the qualitative inquiry. It refers to the extent that the participant can relate to the findings of the research study. The researcher will achieve this through constantly matching her reconstruction of the data, to the participant's views (De Vos et al, 2011).
- *Credibility (in preference to internal validity):* Developing early familiarisation with the organisation and its culture (through phase 1 of this study), encouraging honesty in participants, iterative questioning, and frequent debriefing of the researcher and inspection of the research project by peers will ensure credibility (Shenton, 2004).
- *Resonance:* Tracy (2010) refers to transferability resonance which refers to a researcher being the accurate echo of the participants. The researcher should be able to successfully communicate the findings of the research, to anybody who is not knowledgeable about

the topic. The findings should further also contribute or transfer to new contexts in new studies.

- *Significant contribution:* The study should be able to make a significant contribution to the field of industrial psychology, but also to other contexts, for instance management sciences and leadership development. The study should build on existing knowledge, but also provide fresh new knowledge (Tracy, 2010).
- *Ethics:* Any research done on human behaviour implies that participants will provide personal insights, which should at all times be kept confidential. The researcher will aim to ensure that all data will remain anonymous and safe at all times (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2014).
- *Meaningful coherence:* It is important for the study to answer all research questions, and to remain with the chosen paradigm and interconnect data analysis. For this study to be meaningfully coherent, it would imply that the study will accomplish what the researcher is espoused about (Tracy, 2010).

1.5.3.9 Reporting

According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003), writing the report of a qualitative study is the most challenging part of the whole research process. It is of utmost importance to present the findings carefully, evidently and with conceptual clarity. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) further state that there is no set formula for writing a qualitative report, and De Vos et al. (2011) agree by stating that qualitative reports are not strictly structured and that the elements of the qualitative report will have a certain richness that lacks in quantitative reports. The researcher will follow the guidelines for writing a qualitative manuscript as set out by the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology (SAJIP).

1.5.3.10 Ethical consideration

Research ethics serve to let the researcher rethink the participant's part in the research study. Goodwin and Goodwin (2014) emphasise that research on human behaviour will impose some or other burden on the participant. For instance, the participant could easily be doing something else instead of participating in the research. Ethics is at the heart of studying participant behaviour, especially in a qualitative fashion. This can be due to the open and adaptable nature of qualitative research (Flick, 2014). Ethical consideration in the research

process will start when the researcher enters the field for the first time as well as for the prolonged duration of the study.

The researcher will firstly aim to address the participants in a professional and informed manner. The aim and purpose of the particular research will be communicated to the participants, as well as what the study hopes to achieve. The participants will then be given an informed consent form, which will assist the participants in knowing and understanding their rights, the possible risks as well as the benefits and participation in the research. They should be aware that participation in the study is completely voluntarily and that they are free to withdraw at any given time. Anonymity is the next factor to adhere to at all times. The interviewee should refrain from asking and/or mentioning any concrete information during the interview and should take care to anonymise any personal information in the transcribing phase (Flick, 2014). Goodwin and Goodwin (2014) additionally argue that research in psychology should aim to treat human research participants with respect in a way that signifies their rights and dignity. The researcher will provide a brochure with contact details of the counsellor on the premises of the company, in the case where certain emotions are opened up by the interviewer, or when the participant may realise he/she needs help with their emotions or suspect that they might have signs of burnout. A brochure with the details of clinical psychologists in the area will also be provided should the individual want to attend a session with an off-site counsellor or psychologist. However, it remains in the hands of the participants to decide whether or not they wish to discuss evoked emotions with regards to their wellness.

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The researcher will ensure that this study is done in an ethical manner by adhering to five general principles as set out by the APA code of ethics. Goodwin and Goodwin (2014) describe them as follows:

- The researcher will act with beneficence and non-maleficence, by constantly weighing up the benefits of the research, while seeking to achieve the greatest good in the research;
- The researcher is obligated by fidelity and responsibility to be aware of his /her responsibility to society, as well as his /her role to illustrate the highest standards of professional behaviour;
- The researcher is compelled by integrity to be brutally honest in the entire research endeavour;

- The researcher should act with justice to treat every participant in the research with fairness and aim to maintain the highest level of expertise that will reduce any form of bias, and
- The researcher has a special need to enforce respect for people's rights and dignity by being vigorous in the attempt to ensure the welfare of the participants, and furthermore protecting the rights of the participants

1.6 Overview of Chapters

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

Chapter 1: Introduction.

Chapter 2: Research article.

Chapter 3: Conclusions, limitations and recommendations.

1.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the problem statement, research questions, expected contribution of the study, and research objectives. The research design used in this study was explained, followed by a brief overview of the chapters to follow.

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CHAPTER 2

2.1 Research Article

Orientation: Wellness in the workplace is an important factor to explore for the employee as well as the organisation. It holds benefits for both the employee as well as the employer.

Research purpose: The general aim of this study was to explore wellness amongst sales and marketing staff in a global automotive company.

Motivation for the study: This study was motivated by foregoing research which indicated a lack of research done in terms of employee wellness, especially amongst employees who function in high pace positions such as sales and marketing.

Research design, approach and method: A qualitative research design was utilized with a quota sample that consisted of 12 participants. The sample group consisted of employees that function in the sales and marketing division of a global automotive company. Data was collected by conducting semi-structured interviews.

Main findings: From the results it became evident that employees feel that their wellness in the workplace is being neglected. They reported that employers can do more to assist employees in obtaining a well balanced well-being state. They indicated that their wellness definition consisted of occupational, physical and mental wellness which, in terms of the workplace, determined their well-being state.

Practical implications: Employee wellness should receive more attention in the workplace as it will contribute to the overall wellness strategies that the company implements, and therefor the company can have a more tailored approach in terms of wellness initiatives.

Contribution/value add: This research study provides new knowledge with regards to how employees define wellness and what the possible wellness needs are of employees that function in high pace positions such as sales and marketing. Employee Wellness Programmes (EWP) can also be tailored according to the employee needs. By assisting employees in their overall well-being, organisations can achieve a state where employees function optimally while at the same time remaining 'well' by doing so.

Key words: Wellness, well-being, sales, marketing, automotive industry, stress.

Salespeople play an important role with regards to identifying as well as defining business opportunities for the organisations by whom they are employed (Evans, McFarland, Dietz, & Jaramillo, 2012). Research however indicates that individuals who work in the sales department of an organisation, are at high risk in terms of staff turnover (JDH Group, 2011). The percentage of staff turnover amongst these employee groups are estimated to range

between 30% and 70% per annum (JDH Group, 2011). These findings further imply that organisations are losing knowledgeable and experienced salespeople, which also places a financial burden on organisations as they then incur significant replacement costs as well as other negative implications for the organisation (Noble, 2008). The expectations of salespeople in general consists of initiating new sale cycles and advancing those sale cycles that have already been initiated or implemented (Phelps, 2017). Further investigation into the expectations of the salespeople indicate that their daily tasks can be draining for the employees who function in the sales department. Their job demands may cause them to become demotivated, less effective and this may sometimes even result in employees resigning or being dismissed by their organisations (Phelps, 2017).

Similar draining characteristics due to job demands have been displayed among employees who function in the marketing departments of an organisation. Marketing was found to be one of the worst career fields to function in, as two of the top ten unhappiest jobs in America are marketing positions (Hourigan, 2012). A recent study from Workfront indicated that 25% of marketers reported that they often feel overly stressed or even stressed to the maximum. Another 72% of the respondents further revealed that they do experience tension at work to a certain degree (Gianatasio, 2015). An astonishing 80% of the respondents indicated that they feel overloaded and understaffed and as a result the workflow suffers (Gianatasio, 2015).

Marketing has been characterised as long-term and is considered to be product orientated, whereas sales are described as more short-term in nature and are also more focussed on customer relationships (Cespedes, 1995; Homburg & Jensen, 2007; Rouziès et al., 2005). Previous research indicates that the collaboration between sales and marketing has a direct link to the business performance of an organisation (Le Meunier-FitzHugh & Piercy, 2011). This is especially valid when it comes to market orientated companies who need to understand the market to be able to produce goods or services which are in line with the trends and needs of the consumers (Le Meunier-FitzHugh & Piercy, 2011). It is therefore important for market orientated organisations to ensure that the internal functions work together to make the right marketing decisions and offers to their consumers (Evan et al., 2012).

The automotive industry can be regarded as a market orientated industry as they manufacture vehicles and vehicle components based on intensive market research in order to meet the

needs of the consumers (Capon, 2011). In South Africa only, the automotive industry accounts for 12% of the manufacturing exports, making it an important link in the economy (BrandSouthAfrica.com, 2013). The competition amongst the different automotive brands in the industry causes employees who function in the front row of sales and marketing to function under a lot of stress as they are chasing numbers. The competitive nature of selling within the automotive industry is stressful as salespersons do not only strive to achieve the company's sales quotas, but also their personal earning goals. When occupations in general are compared to the sales jobs in the automotive industry, the transfer of this industry to other occupations are relatively high (Kennedy, 2005).

2.1.1 Employee Stress

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) Employee stress is a response displayed by employees when they are presented with work demands and pressures which exceed their abilities, knowledge or resources to cope (WHO, 2017). Employees frequently report feeling stressed or tensed at work. The statistics indicate that 35% of employees report that their job is harming their physical and emotional well-being, 42% indicate that job demands are interfering with their family and personal lives, 50% indicate that the workload has increased when compared to the previous year and 51% of the respondents indicated productivity that goes to waste as a result of stress in the workplace (American Psychological Association, 2014; Harris Interactive, 2014). Everyday pressure is inevitable in the world of modern work. In some instances pressure in the workplace is needed as it keeps employees alert and motivated whilst enabling them to work and learn. The necessary resources and personal characteristics should however be present in order for employees to cope with these pressures. Should these experiences of pressure however occur too often or become uncontrollable – it will lead to employee stress (WHO, 2017).

Should employees experience excessive, prolonged stress, it may lead to employee burnout.

2.1.2 Employee Burnout

Employee burnout is a state of emotional, psychological and physical exhaustion, caused by extensive stress in the workplace (Smith, Segal, Robinson, & Segal, 2017). Employees who experience burnout normally display overwhelmed feelings, are emotionally drained and as a result, unable to meet constant job demands (Smith et al., 2017). Leiter and Maslach (2016) recently reported that burnout experienced by employees are not only because they are exhausted and overwhelmed by their job demands, but also because they lack a psychological connection between themselves and their work, causing implications for their motivation as well as their personal identity.

Smith et al. (2017) stated that the negative effects of burnout affect each area of one's everyday life which includes work-life, personal life, and social life. On the long-term, burnout also affects one's physical health causing the body to be more susceptible to illnesses such as colds or flu. Burnout holds a lot of negative consequences and therefore it is important to be aware of the risk that employees may have in terms of burnout.

2.1.3 Employee wellness

Various definitions of wellness exist, making it difficult for the researcher to pin down one definition that includes all existing descriptions thereof. Many articles also use the terms wellness and well-being interchangeably (Duff, Rubenstein, & Prilleltensky, 2016). For the current study this will not be the case as wellness and well-being, although linked, will be referred to as different concepts. Colorado Nurse (2015) describes wellness as a state of overall well-being which consists of various wellness dimensions such as occupational, psychological/emotional, environmental, physical, social, spiritual and financial. These dimensions can be described as follows:

- *Occupational wellness*: Feeling satisfied and enriched at work. This includes job satisfaction, enjoyment, looking forward to going to work in the morning, and being able to establish a sense of cohesiveness with co-workers (Swarbrick & Yudof, 2009). Indicators of occupational wellness include access to job resources, clear job descriptions, communication channels, motivation, recognition, instances of conflict and absenteeism (Duff et al., 2016).

- *Mental wellness* is a state of emotional and psychological well-being in which an individual can apply their cognitive and emotional capabilities, being able to function in society and also being able to deal with the demands of everyday life (Duff et al., 2016).
- *Emotional wellness*: Being able to cope with life effectively and also being able to build satisfying relationships (Colorado Nurse, 2015).
- *Physical wellness*: Reflects an individual's satisfaction with his or her overall health and wellness (Duff et al., 2016). It refers to recognising the body's need for physical activity, a healthy diet (eating habits), and sufficient sleep (Swarbrick & Yudof, 2009). Psychological indicators include feelings of vitality, energy, and self-evaluations of health (Duff et al., 2016).
- *Social wellness*: Developing a sense of connection, belonging, and well-developed support systems (Colorado Nurse, 2015). It further reflects satisfaction with the quality of relationships with important people such as family, friends and colleagues (Duff et al., 2015).
- *Environmental wellness*: Occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support overall well-being (Swarbrick & Yudof, 2009). Environmental wellness also strongly correlates with community participation and sense of belonging (Duff et al., 2016).
- *Financial wellness*: Is the level of satisfaction in terms of one's financial position. Material indicators for financial wellness are having money to buy food, to provide housing/shelter, to buy clothing, to be able to obtain medical care, as well as provide savings for retirement, whilst another factor to be included is having a sense of financial security (Dunn & Norton, 2013).
- *Spiritual wellness*: Expanding one's sense of purpose and meaning in life (Colorado Nurse, 2015).

2.1.4 Well-being

Well-being can be described as experiencing positive interpersonal relationships, having a degree of control over one's life and also by accomplishing a sense of purpose in life. Feelings of happiness, contentment, enjoyment, curiosity and engagement are characteristics of someone who has a positive experience of their life (Huppert, 2009).

It can thus be said that the overall state of well-being of a person will depend on the various wellness dimensions as described above, which form part of a person's everyday life.

McCusker (2002) reported that wellness serves as a precursor or pre-condition of the overall well-being state of an individual, which is grounded in mental, physical and emotional health.

By understanding how employees in the sales and marketing department perceive their current wellness, the employer will be able to have an indication about what their current well-being states are. It is the researcher's hope that by relaying the experiences and perceptions of employee wellness within the sales and marketing setting will benefit and provide information to both the employees as well as the employer. Furthermore, the employer would then also be able to implement Employee Wellness Programmes (EWP) that will enhance the wellness and ultimately the well-being of the employees.

2.2 Research Objectives

The research objectives of this study are divided into a general objective, along with specific objectives respectively.

2.2.1 General objective

The general objective of this study was to explore the wellness experiences of the employees who function in the sales and marketing departments within a global automotive company.

2.2.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the study were:

- To conceptualise wellness among sales and marketing employees that function in the automotive company according to literature.
- To explore how the employees define and perceive their own view of wellness;
- To understand their current wellness state.
- To determine the specific wellness needs that the employees have.
- To investigate which workplace factors have an influence (either positive or negative on the wellness of the sales and marketing employees.
- To determine whether employees from different tenure, gender and race groups experience wellness differently.
- To provide future recommendations that can be made for studies regarding the wellness of sales and marketing employees in a global automotive company.

2.3 Research Design

2.3.1 Research approach

Due to the explorative nature of this study, a qualitative approach was utilized. Qualitative research can be described as a process which relates to understanding aspects of social life, it is used as an aid to assist one in understanding the feelings people experience in their daily lives. In qualitative research the voice of the participants serves as data, which is obtained in word format instead of numbers (Joubish et al., 2011; Bricki & Green, 2007). By following a qualitative approach, the researcher was able to probe into the responses or observations of the participants when required to obtain more detailed descriptions and explanations of experiences, behaviour and beliefs in the specific research environment or setting (Merriam, 2009).

2.3.2 Research Strategy

The researcher utilised a hermeneutic phenomenological approach during the study. The researcher read the transcribed texts and then extracted themes. The themes were regarded as the written interpretations of the participants' experiences. In other words the researcher had to interpret and reflect on the data collected unlike pure phenomenology which is solely explorative (Sloan & Bowe, 2014).

2.4 Research Method

2.4.1 Literature Review

A comprehensive literature review was conducted regarding employee wellness and the sales and marketing department within the automotive industry. Relevant articles and books, published between 2007 to date were referenced. Older resources were included where prevalent. Various databases were consulted in order to obtain the aforesaid data. The following keywords were utilized when conducting computer searches, namely 'wellness', 'employee wellness', 'workplace wellness', 'dimensions of wellness', 'automotive industry', 'sales and marketing', 'stress', 'job burnout' and 'qualitative research'. The consulted sources further included Ebscohost, Google, Google Scholar, SAEPublications, Science Direct and the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology.

2.5 Research Setting

The study was conducted on the premises of the automotive company. The interviews were administered in sound proof meeting rooms. These meeting rooms consisted of adequate lighting and air-conditioning and also had comfortable chairs and tables as well as a white board and paper for possible drawings. The interviews were scheduled beforehand at a time that was convenient for the participants.

2.6 Entrée and establishing researcher roles

Access to the participants were gained by meeting with the sales and marketing director and the senior human resources (HR) manager. The senior HR manager also acted as the gatekeeper. Permission was then granted to the researcher to conduct the study at the automotive industry and was then allowed to contact potential participants. The participants were contacted via email, thoroughly informing them of the nature and consent of the study and thereby presenting them with an invitation to partake in the qualitative interviews.

Further information included in the email entailed the contact details of all parties involved in the study, prerequisites for taking part and the approximate timespan of the qualitative interviews. The interested participants were then provided with the informed consent document, thereby notifying them in advance of what they would be agreeing to on the said day, the document also informed the participants about the intended use of a voice recorder during the qualitative interviews.

The researcher had various roles to undertake during the entire course of the study. The roles included being equipped with the required skills and competence in order to execute the research project. The researcher further ensured that all ethical obligations were adhered to and remained objective and refrained from making any value judgement whatsoever (De Vos et al., 2011). De Vos et al. (2011) noted that all actions of the researcher, should display evidence of respect for the participants as individuals as well as towards their profession as a whole in order to ensure utmost cooperation. The researcher should further also note and consider all advantages and possible risks associated with the research project (Yin, 2011).

2.7 Sampling

The sample size was of utmost importance as the interviews had to be conducted until data saturation was achieved (De Vos et al., 2011). It was important to obtain a sufficient sample size to ensure that the essence of the phenomena was captured and to rule out any limitations (Kuper, Lingard, & Levinson, 2008). The interviews were terminated after new participants no longer produced new trends and themes that had already been raised by the other participants. The researcher employed quota sampling for the purpose of this study. Quota sampling is a sampling method where representative data is gathered from a group of participants (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). By applying quota sampling, the researcher ensured that the participants represented certain characteristics (Saunders et al., 2012). Therefore the writer invited participants of both genders, different race groups as well as participants with different tenures. The quotas assigned were therefore gender, race and tenure.

Employees that function in the sales and marketing department of a global automotive company were invited to participate in the research project. The inclusion criteria for the study were individuals from different genders, race and tenure who were employed in the sales and marketing department of the global automotive company. Approximately 10 participants were predicted to be adequate in order to obtain data saturation. The main inclusion criteria was according to the quotas assigned, therefore the researcher aimed to obtain participants who consisted, but where not limited to, the following: criteria:

- Participants should be permanently employed in the sales and marketing department of a global automotive company;
- Participants should include male as well as female participants;
- Participants from different race backgrounds;
- Participants with different tenures which were divided into 1 to 3 years, 4 to 6 years and > 6 years;
- The participants should be willing to engage in a recorded qualitative interview;
- Participants should be willing to participate voluntarily;
- Participants should be proficient in the English language.

Ultimately, the quantity of the sourced sample group consisted of 12 participants ($n=12$). Table 1 provides an overview of the characteristics of the research participants.

Table 1

Characteristics of research participants (n=12)

| Item | Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Gender | Female | 5 | 42% |
| | Male | 7 | 58% |
| Age | 25-30 years | 2 | 17% |
| | 31-40 years | 4 | 33% |
| | 41-49 years | 5 | 42% |
| | 50-55 years | 1 | 8% |
| Race | Black | 2 | 17% |
| | White | 5 | 42% |
| | Indian | 5 | 42% |
| Tenure | 0 – 3 years | 3 | 25% |
| | 4 – 6 years | 3 | 25% |
| | < 7 years | 6 | 50% |

Table 1 indicates that there were 12 participants in this research project. In terms of gender the sample was divided into 42% female and 58% male. The majority of the population group was between ages 41 and 49 years as 42% of the group was represented by this category. The remaining participants were between ages 25 and 30 (17%), 31 and 40 (33%) and 50 and 55 years (8%). The population of the group represented 17% Black participants, 42% White participants as well as 42% Indian participants. Lastly the tenure represented by the participants were 0 to 3 years (25%), 4 to 6 years (25%) and < 7 years (50%).

2.8 Data collection methods

The primary aim of the study was to explore wellness among the sales and marketing staff within a global automotive company. The researcher aimed to obtain detailed responses and experiences from the participants and therefore implemented semi-structured interviews. Flick (2014) reported that by using semi-structured interviewing, the researcher will be able to obtain rich information while at the same time following a natural flow of the interview conversations. The semi-structured interviews normally involve a number of open-ended questions. The open-ended nature of the questions enabled the researcher to define the topic

under discussion and also enabled both the participant as well as the researcher to discuss the topic in detail (Hancock, Windridge, & Ockleford, 2007). When a participant experienced difficulty in answering the questions or only provided short brief answers, the researcher was able to make use of cues or prompts to encourage the participant to consider the question further (Hancock et al., 2007).

The qualitative interviews consisted of the following questions:

- What is your own definition or description of wellness in the workplace?
- How do you relate to your own definition or description of wellness in the workplace?
- To what extent do you experience wellness in the workplace? Rating it on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being poor, 5 being average and 10 being excellent?
- What does a typical day at work look like?
- How do you unwind after a stressful day at the office?
- What are your current wellness needs in the organisation?

2.9 Recording of data

Prior to the actual recording of the data, participants were informed that confidentiality is ensured and that all the gathered data would remain anonymous and would be kept confidential at all times. Thereafter the data were documented by means of a voice recorder. All the interviews were thus audio recorded. The researcher also made use of field notes during the interviews. The recorded data were then verbatim transcribed and all transcripts as well as the field notes were then prepared for analysis which was the next step in the research process. All the data which were obtained during the research study, were password protected in a storage unit of the researcher's laptop. Only the researcher and her supervisor had access to these data sets. Finally, all the gathered data which consisted of the digital recordings, transcriptions as well as the field notes, were destroyed as soon as it had been utilized for its indicated intended purpose.

2.10 Data analysis

Data analysis can be regarded as one of the most important steps in the overall research process (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). The researcher made use of methodological triangulation as it contributes to the trustworthiness of the findings. The proposed data analysis method is characterized by method of constant comparison, keyword-in-context,

word count, classical content analysis, domain analysis, taxonomic analysis and componential analysis (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). For the purpose of the current study, the writer implemented the method of constant comparison, together with the classical content analysis in order to enhance the trustworthiness. Constant comparison is used to develop concepts from the data by coding and analyzing the data at the same time (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007).

By using constant comparison, the researcher had to follow certain steps. The researcher firstly read through the entire set of data after which the researcher divided the data into smaller groups or parts. The researcher labelled each grouping with a descriptive title or code. The comparison of data then took place as each new group or code of data were compared to the previous ones. The similar chunks were labelled with the same code and when all the data were coded, it was grouped according to the characteristics or similarity, after which a theme was identified and documented as per each similar grouping (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). Data analysis was done after each interview and not after all the data had been collected. The quality of the recording of information and observations during the interview were of utmost importance as it formed a large part of the data itself (Green et al., 2007; Cresswell, 2009).

2.11 Strategies used to ensure quality data

The personal nature of qualitative research makes it more difficult to establish the validity and reliability of the findings than that of quantitative research (Cresswell, 2009). Although there are no statistics to assist in the validity of the study, the researcher followed certain guidelines to ensure that the oxymoron that exists between validity and qualitative research were minimized to a zero. The following steps were adhered to in order to ensure quality qualitative research:

- *Credibility*: The research findings were compiled in a way to ensure that the conclusions were logically derived conclusions from the data analysis (Riazi, 2016).
- *Accuracy*: The data was interpreted with the assistance of several researchers (research triangulation); this refers to inter-rater reliability. The data is therefor presented to the fullest degree without the possibility of biasness of only a single researcher (Kitto, Chesters & Grbich, 2008).

- *Sincerity*: The researcher was authentic, honest and true with regards to the collected data. It was important for the researcher to be objective and aware of own biases and goals and therefore had to be explicit in this regard (Tracy, 2010).

2.12 Reporting

A qualitative writing style was utilized when reporting on the findings of this research study. The findings were presented in the form of a descriptive essay. The questions posed to the participants during the semi-structured interviews, served as guidelines for determining the main themes of investigation. The subthemes were linked to the main themes and also explained according to the responses of the participants.

2.13 Ethical considerations

Ethical approval for this research study was obtained from the North-West University's Humanities and Health Research Ethics Committee (HHREC) and the researcher was provided with an ethics number (NWU-HS-2016-0107). Important ethical considerations was the process of obtaining informed consent as well as maintaining participant confidentiality. All participants were provided with a document that contained the aim and the process of the research study. These documents were directly provided to all participants. Prior to conducting the qualitative interviews, the interested participants were given the opportunity to ask questions about the research and were also made aware that they could withdraw from the research process at any stage, without any negative consequences. Written consent was obtained from participants prior to beginning the data collection process. There were no existing power relations between the researcher and the participants that could be perceived as intimidation.

2.14 Findings

The results of the qualitative interviews will be discussed in this section.

| Theme | Subtheme | Response |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Hygiene Factors | Company policy and administration | <p>“Wellness does not stop with HR”. (Participant I: Female, 37 Years)</p> <p>“I find that I just constantly balance my approach, I got to talk in a different way, you got to talk simpler, clearer so they can digest, it’s like talking to other planets you know, I communicate to Japan, so that drains you”. (Participant J, Male, 42 Years)</p> <p>There is a lot of presentations within the company, we do a lot of presentations especially for Japan, it takes up a large part of your day doing these presentations for people, for management, top management in Japan”. (Participant C: Male, 31 Years)</p> <p>Japan is just bombarding us with emails, presentations, things that you need to do. They are working 7 hours already, so when you come into the office, they demand stuff immediately”. (Participant D: Female, 38 Years)</p> |
| | Relationship with management | <p>“How your employer can make your life easier and ensure you can be as efficient as possible in carrying out the duties that you’ve been tasked with.” (Male, 30 Years)</p> <p>“The relationship with your immediate</p> |

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| | | <p>management... When it comes to my wellness with my immediate management it's not great at all." (Male, 31 Years)</p> <p>"Good relationship with your seniors." (Female, 32 Years)</p> <p>"Wellness is influenced mainly by your management... My manager does not do one-on-one conversations easily, unless you approach him when he is in the right mood." (Male, 50 Years)</p> <p>"They don't really care about you as an individual." (Female, 38 Years)</p> |
| | Relationship with peers | <p>"The relationship with your colleagues... Relationships with colleagues are good". (Male, 31 Years)</p> <p>"General good relationship with your colleagues." (Participant G, Female, 32 Years)</p> <p>"How well you continue to engage with your colleagues." (Male, 42 Years)</p> <p>"To be part of a team." (Male, 50 Years)</p> <p>"Wellness in terms of work in terms of colleagues and department is good, we exchange even after work." (Male, 52 Years)</p> |
| | Working conditions | <p>"Good equipment to carry out duties... You need computers that are fast." (Participant A: Male, 30 Years)</p> <p>"Working conditions." (Participant B: Male, 52 Years)</p> <p>"Culture is very important". (Participant C: Male, 31 Years)</p> <p>"How well the person is in the working</p> |

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| | | <p>environment”. (Participant E: Male, 43 Years)</p> <p>“Hygiene factors, which is sort of the physical conditions... An environment that gives you a warm feeling, something you could be comfortable in – the desk you sit at, your chair”. (Participant F: Female, 41 Years)</p> |
| | Remuneration | <p>“Packages of salaries... Benefits they give to the staff”. (Male, 52 Years)</p> <p>“Employees get increases and everybody is not happy”. (Female, 37 Years)</p> <p>“Financial wellness is important... The company must look at their remuneration packages – it will help”. (Participant E: Male, 43 Years)</p> |
| Well-being | Mental wellness | <p>“Healthy wise, mentally, psychologically, socially”. (Participant E: Male, 43 years)</p> <p>“Motivating factors which help you from a mental point of view... Your mindset”... In the old days work was more physical, now a day’s work is more of a mental activity and because it is so much of a mental activity you know your conditions around you need to support that”. (Participant F: Female, 41 years)</p> <p>“Take care of yourself, reflect, and relax”. (Participant I: Female, 37 Years)</p> <p>“Everyone has to work because it generates an income so you got to have a positive mindset”. (Participant K: Male, 50 years)</p> |
| | Physical wellness | <p>“Healthy body”. (Participant D: Female,</p> |

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| | | <p>38 years)</p> <p>“Being healthy, taking care of your body”. (Participant G: Female, 32 years)</p> <p>“Important to have a healthy body”. (Participant F: Female, 41 years)</p> <p>“Physical ability of an employee... Keeping fit”. (Participant I: Female, 37 years)</p> <p>“Sometimes with a hectic day you just don’t want to go to the gym”. (Participant A: Male, 30 Years)</p> |
| Work-life balance | Work | <p>“I need to leave at a specific time, to go home and to be with my kids, but what do I do when they go to bed? I log on, I work further”. (Participant D: Female, 38 Years)</p> <p>“It becomes challenging over time, especially with a family... You have to prioritise, you know your wife, your kid, but you have to kind of force it into your diary... If I am lucky the kid will still be awake you know when I get home”. (Participant J: Male, 42 Years)</p> <p>“Work and life takes a big chunk out of my life... I cannot separate work from home, and that is not the main reason why my wife decided to leave me, but in essence she felt that I gave a lot of attention to my work, I still do”. (Participant K: Male, 50 Years)</p> <p>“So at the moment I am working quite a lot of extra hours at home, I am putting in hours over the weekend, mostly Sunday</p> |

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| | | afternoons". (Participant G: Female, 32 Years) |
| | Family and friends | <p>"I try to at least take one day to not work, usually Saturdays the family are over". (Participant G: Female, 32 Years)</p> <p>"You must understand what is important for you in life and try to have a balance, for example, your family time, so you really have to plan to make it work". (Participant H: Female, 41 Years)</p> <p>"Just lying on the bed in the evening with my daughters and knowing that whatever I went through the day, there is also them, it is just so special for me". (Participant I: Female, 37 Years)</p> |
| Stress | Job Demands | <p>"The company is just demanding, demanding, demanding... It's only work, work, work... There is no relaxation.. So literally when I arrive at the office, it is work all the way". (Participant D: Female, 38 Years)</p> <p>"We are getting too much pressure on us unfortunately". (Participant E: Male, 43 Years)</p> <p>"At the moment I am feeling like I am not swimming, I am thrown into the deep end and I need to find a way to manage everything and at the moment it's just not happening". (Participant G: Female, 32 Years)</p> <p>"At the moment I am very under resourced". (Participant I: Female, 37 Years)</p> |

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| | | <p>“It’s work, work, work”. (Participant J: Male, 42 Years)</p> <p>“At the end of a work day, you do feel tired”. (Participant A: Male, 32 Years)</p> <p>“Days are hectic and challenging”. (Participant B: Male, 52 Years)</p> <p>“You cannot give me this now and say you want it in 2 hours, we are not going to do it, we have this many deadlines and we are working on those”. (Participant L: Male, 29 Years)</p> |
| | <p>Unhealthy coping habits</p> | <p>“Sometimes with a hectic day, you just don’t want to go to the gym, I just want to go home, watch television and eat junk food”. (Participant A: Male, 30 Years)</p> <p>“I’ve drunk more red wine while at this company than anywhere before... I also watch Television”. (Participant C: Male 31 Years)</p> <p>“In this point in time, I don’t think there is any relaxation at all, there is just no time”. (Participant D: Female, 38 Years)</p> <p>“So I watch television and I would most likely fall asleep in front of the television on the couch”. (Participant G: Female, 32 Years)</p> <p>“Kind of stop at the Pub around the corner from me”. (Participant J: Male, 42 Years)</p> <p>“Bad habits, I try to pick up new habits but sjoh, habits are hard to build”. (Participant L: Male, 29 Years)</p> |

2.15 Discussion

The general objective of this study was to explore the wellness of employees who function in the sales and marketing department of a global automotive company. The four main themes identified were hygiene factors, well-being, work-life balance and stress. The findings are discussed and linked to the research objectives below:

The *first objective* of the study was to conceptualize wellness, sales and marketing at a global automotive company according to literature. As mentioned earlier, wellness consists of various wellness dimensions. Wellness as a whole can however be described as an active process where individuals become aware of the different wellness dimensions and then make healthier choices in this regard, in order to promote their overall existence (Mills et al., 2007). Sales is a function within the marketing process, which can be described as determining the needs and desires of potential clients, by planning and implementing personalized communications to persuade individuals to purchase a specific product or services. In other words, sales is the process that takes place after services were provided in terms of the needs and desires of potential clients of an organization. It also enhances future business opportunities (MBA Research and Curriculum Center, 2014). Marketing on the other hand is defined by the American Marketing Association (2008) as an activity where an organization communicates the products or services that they offer by indicating the value that it may have for customers, clients, partners and society at large. The automotive industry is described as the design, development, manufacturing, marketing and selling of motor vehicles (Encyclopedia Britannica, retrieved on 25 March 2014)

The *second objective* of this study was to explore how the employees in the sales and marketing department define and perceive wellness. Most participants indicated that wellness is having positive interpersonal relationships at work with their managers and peers, being able to address workplace stress effectively and also by having a healthy work /life balance. Participants further described wellness as being physically and mentally healthy. They emphasized the importance of having a healthy body, which is achieved by engaging in physical activities and a healthy diet, as well as a healthy mind by displaying effective coping mechanisms, which enable them to be productive and effective under stressful working conditions.

When comparing the responses obtained from the participants to literature, it became evident that employees defined wellness as consisting of occupational, psychological and physical

factors. Occupational factors include the relationship between employees and their managers and peers, coping with stress, and work /life balance which all form part of the overall occupational wellness dimension (Swarbrick & Yudof, 2009; Huber, 2014). Physical factors such as going to the gym and having a healthy diet are linked to the overall physical wellness dimension (Swarbrick & Yudof, 2009; Duff et al., 2016). Psychological factors as described by the participants as being mentally healthy, being able to cope with stressors in every day life and being able to work productively, are linked to the overall mental wellness dimension (Diener et al., 2009; Eid & Larsen, 2008; Keyes, 2007; Lyubomirsky, 2008; Marmot, 2004).

The *third objective* of this study was to determine how the employees relate to their description or definition of wellness. Most of the participants stated that they do not relate to their own opinion of wellness. They reported to be functioning under immense stress due to various factors in the workplace which included poor relationships with their direct management and unrealistic deadlines. In an attempt for participants to cope, they end up working longer hours which cause work /life interference, leading to work-life conflict. It has been reported that experiences of work-life conflict, impacts harder on an employee's role in the workplace, than on their role in their personal lives (Md-Sidin et al., 2010). It was found that work-life conflict is connected to employees' intentions to leave, job dissatisfaction and employee stress (Anderson et al., 2002; Bell, Rajendran & Theiler, 2012). The employees also felt that the company does not have any strategies in place to assist them in coping with the stressors that they are experiencing, and therefore they are more likely to engage in unhealthy coping habits such as consuming alcohol, smoking, and eating unhealthy foods. The American Psychological Association (2008), found that employees often engage in unhealthy coping habits as an attempt to cope with stress in the workplace. Surveys indicated that in the event of employees experiencing high stress levels, 40% of them smoked, 41% of employees gambled, 35% of the employees turned to shopping and 27% consumed alcohol. Nadeem and Abbas (2009) reported that the main causes of job stress are longer working hours, heavy job demands or responsibilities and conflict with management or supervisors. Job stress appears to be the main factor causing work-life conflict and as a result impacts job satisfaction negatively (Nadeem & Abbas, 2009). A Gallup study revealed that managers are the main reason why employees leave their employment (Bono, Hooper & Yoon, 2012). It shows that the relationship between managers and employees play an important part in the organization. It is further noted that the attitudes and skills of managers also influence the forming of employee relationships amongst each other. The extent to which

employees are motivated to cooperate, as well as their commitment and the quality of social interaction at work are further also affected by managers (Ismail, Farihana, Abu, & Shah, 2013).

The *fourth objective* of this study was to determine the wellness needs that employees have. During the qualitative interviews with the participants, they were asked what their definition or description of wellness is. This was explained under the discussion of the second objective of this chapter. Their wellness needs were identified by understanding how they relate to what they regard as wellness. According to literature, wellness consists of various wellness dimensions such as occupational, physical, psychological, spiritual, financial, environmental and social (Colorado Nurse, 2015).

The wellness needs of participants were however linked to occupational wellness, physical wellness and mental wellness. In terms of the occupational wellness needs indicated by the participants they noted that they wished to achieve a better balance between their work and personal life, they felt a need for being assisted with coping strategies in the workplace as they regarded their work as stressful; they also displayed the need to have better relationships with their managers. It was however evident that although the participants had a lot of complaints in terms of their occupational wellness, they still appeared to be motivated to do their work.

Motivation can be described as an individual's willingness to contribute to the goals of the organization by exerting high levels of efforts. These efforts are normally encouraged by the individual wanting to satisfy an internal need (Saraswathi, 2011). Frederick Herzberg designed a two-factor theory in 1959. This theory was based on research that was done on two hundred engineers with regards to their personal feelings toward their working environments. Herzberg identified two sets of factors to determine employees' working attitudes and level of performance, namely motivation and hygiene factors (Robbins, 2009).

When linking the occupational wellness needs that the employees have to Herzberg's two-factor theory, they displayed a need of hygiene factors, which are also the extrinsic factors which either contribute to or affect their job satisfaction, and include, but are not limited to the following:

- Company policy and administration: This includes unclear channels of communication, inadequate authority for satisfactory completion of tasks and inadequate organisation of tasks (Fugar, 2007);
- Management: The skills, or lack thereof and fairness or unfairness of a manager. It also includes the manager's willingness to assist employees and to transfer knowledge to them (Fugar, 2007);
- Interpersonal relationships: This includes the interaction between employees and their peers, management and sub-ordinates. The relations can be either working relationships or social relationships in the workplace (Fugar, 2007).
- Working conditions: This includes the physical working environment, amount of work (job demands) and the availability of resources or facilities to execute one's duties. It also includes the adequacy of ventilation, lighting, tools, space and other environmental features (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1993).

Herzberg noted that the hygiene factors are extrinsic factors which prevent employees from being dissatisfied at work, while the motivating factors are intrinsic factors that will increase job satisfaction (Yusoff, Kian & Idris, 2013). The extrinsic factors are basically a guidance for organisations to assist them in creating a favorable working environment where employees will feel comfortable to work in (Yusoff et al., 2013). On the other hand if employers want to increase the performance and production of their employees, attention needs to be given to the motivational factors which are the intrinsic factors and include achievement, recognition, challenging or interesting work, responsibility, and advancement (Fugar, 2007). According to the two-factor theory, there are four possible combinations:

1. High Hygiene + High Motivation = an ideal situation where employees are highly motivated to work resulting in them having less complaints.
2. High Hygiene + Low Motivation = employees with few complaints but they are still motivated to work as the job is viewed as a paid service (pay cheque).
3. Employees have few complaints but are not highly motivated. The job is viewed as a pay cheque.
4. Low Hygiene + High Motivation = employees are highly motivated to work but have a lot of complaints. This is for example when their job is exciting and challenging but the working conditions are not on par.

5. Low Hygiene + Low Motivation = is the worst position for employees to be in. In this case they will not be motivated and will also have a lot of complaints.

When considering the data obtained from the participants, it appears that their hygiene is at a low but their motivation however, is high. This may indicate that they perceive their work as challenging and exciting, despite the negative working conditions.

Another need for the employees seemed to link with mental wellness which include having the ability to cope with normal stresses in work and life. Participants felt that the organisation does not care about them as individuals and that they are only chasing numbers, whilst the negative consequences that it may have on the employees are being ignored. They reported that they have to apply their minds in executing their duties. In other words, they felt that because their work is a mental activity, it is important for them to have a sense of mental wellness and to have a healthy mind. They noted that all the information with regards to their work, are stored 'within' them and therefore they feel that they should be seen as important assets to the company, rather than a liability.

Employees further indicated that they have a need to be physically healthy, which links to their need for physical wellness. They want to have a healthy body by having time to eat healthy and also to be able to engage in physical exercise. They indicated that meetings are scheduled during lunch time, and as a result they don't always get the chance to sit down and have a proper lunch or are able to just take a break. Johnson (2015) noted the importance of employees taking a lunch break away from their desk and further explained that employees need to have mental breaks as it results in them having renewed vigor and focus that will assist them in continuing the tasks at hand. Participants noted that they end up 'gobbling' down food at their desk before having to attend the next meeting.

Employees also have the need to obtain a better work life balance as they felt that the work-life interference affects their time spent with family, social activities etc. Work-life balance is about creating a balanced workplace which supports and maintains a healthy working environment. When a balance between work and personal responsibilities are obtained, employees will display loyalty and productivity (Johnson, 2015)

The *fifth objective* of this study was to determine whether employees from different tenure, gender and race groups experience wellness differently. From the results it appeared that there were no significant differences in how employees from different tenure, gender and race groups define wellness. It was however interesting to note that working mothers as well as working fathers, noted the importance of work-life balance, especially with regards to spending time with their families. The working mothers especially noted that time spent with family and children, helps them to release some of their work stress.

A study was done by Delina and Raya in 2013 to determine the work-life balance of working mothers. Their study found that working married women experienced difficulty in obtaining a healthy work-life balance, irrespective of their occupation, age, number of children and sector in which they function (Delina & Raya, 2013). Many woman today are wearing a variety of hats in an attempt to obtain a healthy balance between their career responsibilities and their home and family responsibilities, yet it still appears that woman display a stronger family-to-work spill-over than men who display a stronger work-to-family spillover (Delina & Raya, 2013). A recent survey however indicated that work-life conflict experienced by men, are similar to those experienced by women (Rehel & Baxter, 2015). The working father participants noted that they became more family orientated once they became fathers, and that they strive to make work changes to enhance time spent with family, i.e. rather go to work earlier in the morning, than work late in the evenings, as the children will then already be in bed by the time they get home after work. Today, fathers are expected to be more involved in child care and domestic responsibilities, resulting in fathers sharing these responsibilities with their partners, rather than only helping out when needed (Rehel & Baxter, 2015).

The *final objective* of this study was to provide future recommendations for the organisation. The researcher noted that employees wanted a more personalized approach in terms of wellness. They pointed out that there is no 'one size fits all' approach as each employee or department might have their own needs. The participants did not ignore the efforts done by the organisation in terms of wellness days etc., they however noted that the company should first establish the needs of the employees before implementing wellness days and initiatives to ensure that it is in line with what they require. The respondents further noted that some of the initiatives, such as the stop smoking campaigns in the past, have been very successful, where other initiatives were not so effective in enhancing employee wellness.

2.16 Practical implications

This research study aimed to explore wellness amongst sales and marketing employees who function within a global automotive company. The data obtained from the participants can aid the company to develop wellness strategies which are in line with the wellness needs that they have. Consequently the organisation can then provide the employees with tailor-made employee wellness activities which will be more successful. The latter will ensure a well-rounded wellness approach in the workplace and also make employees feel that their wellness needs are being taken care of.

2.17 Conclusion

Literature indicates that wellness consists of various wellness dimensions, which overall determines an individual's wellness state (Colorado Nurse, 2015). The most important factors with regards to wellness for the employees were hygiene factors as set out by Herzberg, work-life balance and stress. These factors were influenced by relationships at work with management and peers, lack of support in the workplace, absence of proper coping mechanisms, work-life interference, culture and working conditions of the employees etc. From the definitions obtained from employees it also became evident that from all the wellness dimensions, they regarded occupational wellness as the foundation which affected their psychological (mental) wellness and physical wellness.

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CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter consists of conclusions pertaining to this study, according to the specific objectives. The limitations of this research are discussed, followed by recommendations for the organization. Furthermore, recommendations and suggestions are made for future research.

3.1 Conclusions

Moccia (2016), noted that the average person lives for 700, 000 hours of which approximately 56, 000 hours (+- 30 years) are spent at work. It is therefore important for employees to function in a working environment which enhances their wellness and overall well-being. When employees experience a decline in their overall well-being various negative factors are present in the organisation. These negative issues include signs of reduced productivity, increased errors, conflict with colleagues or management, low morale and a negative atmosphere and lastly, poor employer reputation among staff (Young, 2010).

The *first objective* of the study was to conceptualise wellness, sales and marketing, in the automotive industry. Wellness is described as the outcome experienced as result of the actions that an individual take toward a healthy lifestyle (Bass & Longman, 2017). In other words, wellness consists of different wellness dimensions (physical, mental, occupational, social, financial, spiritual, and environmental) which each plays a role in one's overall well-being. Well-being on the other hand is determined by the balance of the different wellness dimensions. Well-being is who you are as an individual and also the perception of how an individual sees his own life (Bass & Longman, 2017).

Employees who function in the sales department of an organisation are responsible for determining the needs and desires of potential customers (Fogel, Hoffmeister, Rocco, & Strunk, 2012). Sales have to communicate the different aspects of the products or services being offered by the company. Salespersons facilitate the overall process until the product or service has been provided to the customers (Fogel et al., 2012). In other words, sales is the function where products or services are sold to customers according to their needs and desires, therefore it can be said that salespersons need to develop good customer relationships

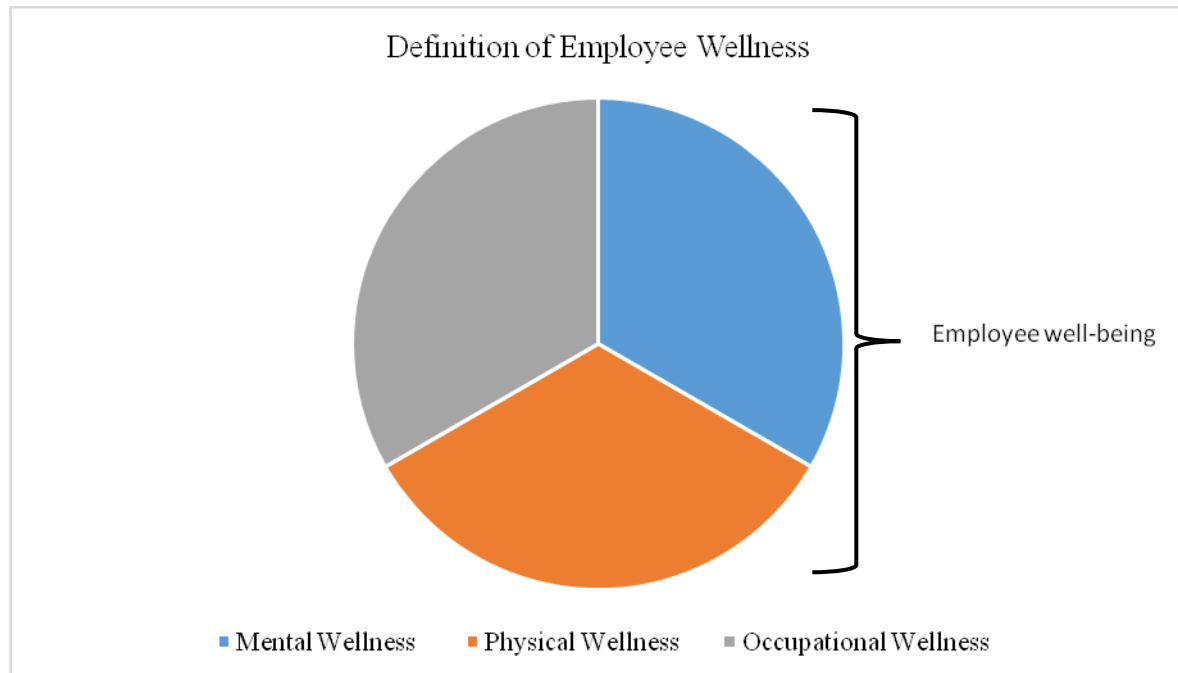
and need to ensure that orders from customers are fulfilled (Saxby, 2013). Marketing can be described as doing the necessary research to understand the market-place from a customer's as well as company perspective. Marketing assists the organisation with product development, pricing as well as communication in order to place the company in a position where they are able to compete profitably (Saxby, 2013).

The automotive industry can be described as the design, development and manufacturing of motor vehicles and their parts (SouthAfrica.com, 2012). The automotive industry is also responsible for the sales and marketing of these motor vehicles and their parts (SouthAfrica.com, 2012).

The *second objective* of the study was to determine how the employees in the sales and marketing department define or view wellness. Participants stated that they view wellness in the workplace as having positive relationships with their peers and managers, coping effectively with workplace stress and having a healthy work-life balance. These aforementioned elements form part of occupational wellness. Occupational wellness is described as the potential of an employee to obtain a balance between work and personal life, being able to effectively cope with workplace stress and to have general good relationships with management and peers (Swarbrick & Yudof, 2009). Participants also pointed out that wellness is being physically and mentally healthy. They stated that it is important to follow a healthy lifestyle and to include exercise in one's everyday life. It was also important for them to have a healthy mind by coping effectively with stress and to take part in relaxation activities. These aspects are linked to physical wellness and mental wellness. Physical wellness is described as engaging in physical activities, having healthy eating habits and getting enough sleep (Swarbrick & Yudof, 2009). Mental wellness can be described as the ability of an individual to be able to apply their cognitive and emotional abilities, being able to function optimally in society and further also being able to cope with the demands of everyday life (Duff, Rubenstein, & Prilleltensky, 2016). It is increasingly being recognized that the mental health of an employee is a crucial determinant in their overall health and that poor mental health and stressors in the workplace can be a contributory factor to a range of physical illnesses like hypertension, diabetes and cardio-vascular conditions amongst others. In addition, poor mental health can also lead to burnout amongst employees, seriously affecting their ability to contribute meaningfully in both their personal and professional lives. In essence, out of the seven wellness dimensions, the participants mainly explained that their

overall well-being in the workplace is determined by physical, mental and occupational wellness. The image below illustrates which wellness dimensions according to the participants, contribute to their overall well-being in the workplace:

Figure 3.1. Definition of Employee Wellness



The *third objective* was to determine how the employees in the sales and marketing department of the automotive company, relate to their own definition of wellness. Most of the participants stated that they did not relate to their definition of wellness. They noted that they are functioning under a lot of stress at work, due to various factors such as their extensive working hours, unrealistic job demands, and negative relationships with management. They noted that the company does not care about them as individuals. When stress in the workplace is not managed effectively, it can affect the physical and mental wellness of employees (American Psychological Association, 2017). Sustained job related stress can affect the physical health of employees as it often leads to irregular or unhealthy eating habits and a lack of exercise, which can result in weight problems, high blood pressure and even high cholesterol (American Psychological Association, 2017). Common job stressors such as a lack in support, long working hours and a negative working environment can also accelerate the onset of heart disease, which includes the likelihood of heart attacks (American Psychological Association, 2017). The mental wellness of employees can also be affected by

prolonged work related stress as it can lead to burnout, which is a condition marked by emotional exhaustion and negative or cynical attitudes toward others and self (American Psychological Association, 2017). Longer working hours and highly stressful jobs such as in sales and marketing, not only hamper the ability of the employee to have a balanced work and family life, but is also associated with health risks such as increased smoking and alcohol consumption, weight gain and depression. Work-life conflict has been associated with numerous physical and mental health implications (Johnson, 2015).

Participants noted unhealthy working relationships between themselves and their managers. They reported that this negatively affects their wellness. Blackburn (2017) noted that many employees dread going to work because of poor working relationships with their managers. A recent study which was conducted by TINYpulse with regards to employee engagement and organisational culture, indicated that close to 50% of the surveyed employees, were unsatisfied with their direct management (Blackburn, 2017).

Despite the participants noting that they do not have good management relationships, they noted that they get along well with their peers. Most of the participants noted that they also exchange opinions after work and would often blow off some steam together. Dickson (2015) noted that 69% of employees with good peer relationships at work, display high levels of work engagement. Employee engagement affects almost every facet of an employee's work and therefore it is important for the organisation to create an environment where positive peer relationships are encouraged (Dickson, 2015). The performance of employees in the workplace depends largely on the quality of inter personal relationships at work, this includes with management, subordinates and peers. Inter personal relationships at work can thus be regarded as an important factor in any organisation (Obakpolo, 2015).

The *fourth objective* of the study was to determine the wellness needs that employees in the sales and marketing department have. As per their definition of wellness which included occupational, physical and mental wellness, their needs were also linked to these three dimensions. The participants indicated that their wellness needs included having better relationships with their management, having a better work-life balance, being assisted with coping strategies in the workplace, and working conditions which also form part of the organisational culture. The aforementioned forms part of the aspects describing occupational wellness. The facets of occupational wellness also links to the hygiene factors of Herzberg's

two factor theory of motivation (Robbins, 2009). Some of the Hygiene factors which were explained by Herzberg were company policy together with administration, management, inter personal relationships and working conditions (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1993). As mentioned earlier, the participants noted to have general good relationships with their peers.

Another wellness need displayed by the participants was mental wellness. They noted that they are not assisted in effective coping mechanisms to deal with workplace stress and that the company is not concerned about their stress levels and are only chasing numbers. The respondents acknowledge that they are in high pace positions where stress is a given. They however felt that their stress levels are out of control, causing them to be exhausted and not as productive as they wish to be. Participants were of the opinion that their duties can be mainly regarded as a mental activity and therefore they need to be mentally healthy. Poor mental health has been acknowledged as a factor that leads to burnout amongst employees, which as a result seriously affects their ability to contribute meaningfully to both their personal as well as professional work lives (Rajgopal, 2010). It is further also recognized that poor mental health plays an important role in determining the overall health of an employee. As mentioned earlier, poor mental health and persistent job stressors in the workplace, can lead to various physical illnesses such as hypertension, diabetes and heart conditions amongst others (Rajgopal, 2010).

The physical factors link to the physical wellness dimension. The need of participants in this regard is to have a healthy body and adopting an overall healthy lifestyle. This also included following a healthy diet, and eliminating unhealthy eating habits. They also expressed their need to engage in more physical activities, such as going to the gym, to assist them in dealing with everyday stressors; they however lacked the time to do so due to excessive working hours and family responsibilities. The participants felt that the company should lay the foundation in promoting wellness by giving attention to the occupational wellness facets, which will encourage and assist them in further obtaining a balance between their physical and mental wellness. The image below is an illustration of what the participants described:

Figure 3.2: An illustration of the factors assisting employees to balance their wellness needs.

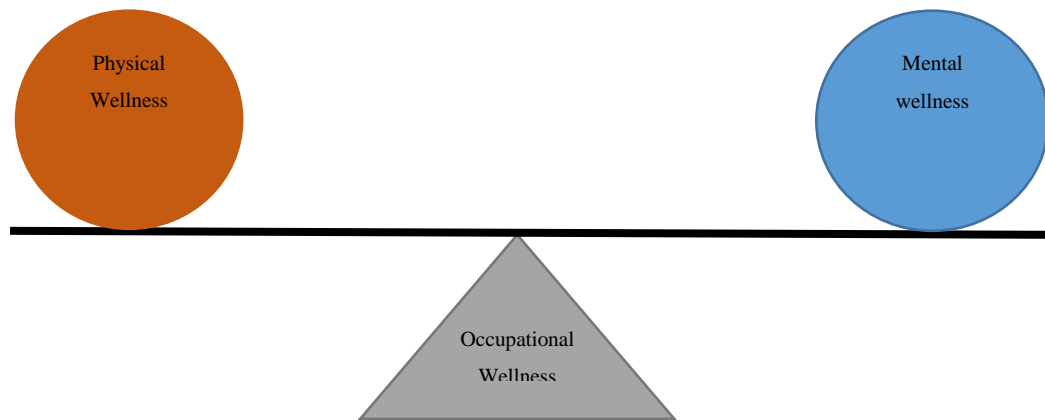


Figure 3.2 illustrates that employees expect the company to assist in their wellness needs by laying a foundation on which they can build their wellness. Occupational wellness will have the biggest influence on the motivation of employees being mentally and physically well. They currently feel that the company should support them by encouraging a better work-life balance, assisting them with better coping strategies and having positive relationships with their management. This will assist them in enhancing their physical wellness, by having more time to engage in physical exercise and having healthy lunch breaks. Employees will also then be more encouraged to have a healthier lifestyle. By being healthier the employees will subsequently cope more effectively with stress which will prevent them from being mentally exhausted and having a risk of burnout. Without the support from the company (Occupational Wellness), the efforts of employees to be physically and psychologically healthy will cause them extra strain as they currently feel that they are giving the company all their time and energy, but are not getting any support or assistance in return. It can be compared as a type of see-saw effect, where occupational wellness forms the support on which the physical and mental wellness of the employee needs to balance. Without the support from the company, the balance of the employee's physical and mental wellness will remain at the current level. Therefore the efforts that they attempt in having a better physical and mental wellness will not necessarily improve the overall well-being of the employees when the foundation and support from the company is absent. This is illustrated below:

Figure 3.3: The lack of occupational wellness as foundation



Figure 3.3 illustrates that without the support from the company (Occupational Wellness), employees' attempts won't take them anywhere. Their efforts will remain 'heavy', pulling them down to the ground. Only when the support from the company are placed underneath the see-saw plank as foundation, will the efforts of employees start to be visible as the weight would then direct their direction of overall well-being in the workplace.

The *fifth objective* of this study was to determine whether employees from different tenure, gender and race groups experience wellness differently. There were no significant differences indicated amongst the participants with regards to their definition of wellness. All participants had a very similar approach to how they view wellness. It was however interesting to note that the male employees indicated almost equal work-life interference as the female employees. The male employees noted that their priorities changed after they were married and started a family. They reported that they want to be just as involved in their responsibilities towards their children as the level of involvement displayed by their wives. It was therefore found that work-life balance is equally important to both male and female employees. The single (unmarried) participants who have not yet started a family, displayed concerns about how their work would influence their time spent with family in future. It is clear that employees in the current world of work, have many challenging responsibilities such as work, family, household chores, volunteering, and elderly parent care, which all contribute to the stress levels of individuals, their families and working environment (Johnson, 2015). In terms of coping mechanisms, there were a few differences between the male and female employees. The data obtained during the qualitative interviews, indicated that male employees are more prone to engage in unhealthy coping habits when compared to the coping habits of the female employees. The male respondents noted that their consumption of alcohol increases when they experience high levels of stress, some of them also then smoke more cigarettes and consume more unhealthy foods. The female employees

however noted that their families, especially their children and spouses, play an important role for them when it comes to stress management. They noted that spending time with their families, makes them feel more relaxed and calm.

3.2 Limitations of This Research

A few points of limitation were identified during the course of the research project. Most of the participants were in junior or middle management positions. Therefore very few participants were in lower management levels. Another limitation was the lack of qualitative interviews with African females. It was very difficult for the researcher to recruit black female participants as they reported to be very busy and did not have time to meet with the researcher. The researcher was informed that they would not be able to attend the qualitative interviews. Therefore there were no African females included in the study.

3.3 Recommendations

Suggested recommendations can be of value for automotive companies in terms of improving the wellness of their employees, which in turn may encourage employees to function to their full potential. Based on the findings of this research, several recommendations can also be made for future research regarding the wellness of employees.

3.3.1 Recommendations for the organisation

Based on the findings of this research study, certain recommendations could be posed to the organisation. The study provided unique and interesting insights into the overall wellness experienced by employees in the sales and marketing department.

It can be suggested to the organisation to align their wellness approaches with the wellness needs of the employees. Research should be done among employees to determine the exact needs that the employees have. Every year the company spends a lot of financial resources in implementing wellness interventions, which are not necessarily in line with the needs of employees, causing the interventions to have very little positive returns. All wellness initiatives should be aligned with the company's mission and vision.

Another suggestion would be for management to support the wellness of their team. The support of management plays an important role in determining the success of any wellness initiative in the workplace (Linnan, Weiner, Graham & Emmons, 2007). The position of a manager will have an influential effect on the morale of the employees, their workloads, the communication among the team and job satisfaction. Managers can either motivate employees to improve their wellness, or they can cause employees to be demotivated in terms of improving their wellness. It is suggested that managers should act as role models in promoting healthy behaviors amongst employees which will decrease turnover costs and increase productivity (Health Enhancement Systems, 2011).

Organisations need to understand that wellness is an ongoing process and that there is no quick fix when attempting to improve employee wellness. It is a long-term commitment, but when implemented effectively, the organization will not regard wellness as an unpleasant factor. A recent comprehensive study indicated that improvement in the overall well-being of employees lead to improved workplace performance, profitability, productivity, and improved quality of products or services (Bryson, Forth & Stokes, 2014).

3.3.2 Recommendations for future research

The researcher proposes a few recommendations for future wellness research. As mentioned earlier most of the participants who formed part of the study consisted of employees in a junior and middle management level. In this regard a recommendation would be to explore wellness among different levels of employment by recruiting employees in management levels as well as non-management levels.

Another recommendation would be to do a comparative study where wellness is explored at two or more automotive companies to determine whether the wellness levels amongst the automotive companies are similar or different. It would be interesting to establish whether the sales and marketing employees from different automotive companies have similar or different wellness definitions, wellness needs and wellness stated.

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