



EMPLOYEE BURNOUT AT LESOTHO HIGHLANDS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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DECLARATION

"I declare that the Field Study hereby submitted for the Masters in Business Administration at the UFS Business School, University of the Free State, is my own independent work and that I have not previously submitted this work, either as a whole or in part, for a qualification at another university or at another faculty at this university.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABQ	-	Athlete Burnout Questionnaire
ANOVA	-	Analysis of Variance
CBQ	-	Coach Burnout Questionnaire
COR	-	Conservation of Resources
HSD	-	Honest Significant Difference
JD-R	-	Job Demands and Resources
JPTC	-	Joint Permanent Technical Commission
LHDA	-	Lesotho Highlands Development Authority
LHWC	-	Lesotho Highlands Water Commission
LHWP	-	Lesotho Highlands Water Project
MBI	-	Maslach Burnout Inventory
MBI-ES	-	Maslach Burnout Inventory – Educators’ Survey
MBI-GS	-	Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey
MBI-HSS	-	Maslach Burnout Inventory – Human Services Survey
OLBI	-	Oldenburg Burnout Inventory
SDT	-	Self-determination Theory
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for the Social Science
TCTA	-	Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority
UFS	-	University of the Free State

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The primary objective of the study was to determine the level of employee burnout at Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA).

Methodology: The research approach was positivist and the research design was quantitative. The Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey (MBI-GS) was used to measure burnout dimensions – exhaustion (5 items), cynicism (5 items) and professional efficacy (6 items). A comprehensive sampling strategy was used and the study subjects were all 276 LHDA employees. The questionnaire was manually distributed and the company's internal mail service was also used for questionnaire delivery to some operational sites.

Findings: Cronbach's α was 0.77 for exhaustion, 0.724 for cynicism and 0.713 for professional efficacy, indicating a satisfactory reliability of the instrument. Overall the level of exhaustion was found to be low, that of cynicism moderate; while the level of professional efficacy was found to be high. The level of cynicism differed between men and women, with men having a higher level of cynicism. The level of cynicism also significantly differed between employees who never completed high school and those with at least a bachelor's degree qualification; the former having higher levels of cynicism than the latter. The exhaustion levels differed significantly between employees with tenure of less than five years and those with tenure of 5 – 10 years as well as those with tenure of more than 15 years, with a lower level for those employed for less than five years. There were no significant differences regarding the levels of exhaustion, cynicism and professional efficacy across all ages, occupations, sites and marital status groups.

Conclusion: The employee burnout level is low at LHDA, with individuals who never completed high school education having the highest level of cynicism.

Keywords: Burnout, exhaustion, cynicism, professional inefficacy, MBI-GS, power generation, water utility, Lesotho Highlands Development Authority

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This research study evaluated the level of employee burnout at the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA). This chapter covers the background of LHDA which includes a brief history of the company and a discussion of its operations. It continues by stating the research problem and questions that prompted this study. The primary and secondary objectives of the research are also tabled. The brief description of the research design and methodology is presented; included in the description are the sampling strategy, data collection and ethical considerations, among others. The demarcation of the study is briefly stated followed by the study chapter layout.

1.2 BACKGROUND

LHDA was established by the government of Lesotho as per the treaty between Lesotho and South Africa in 1986 (Governments of Lesotho & South Africa, 1986). The organisation is mandated to implement and manage the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) in Lesotho. This project is a bi-national undertaking between Lesotho and South Africa for transferring water from the highlands of Lesotho to the industrialised Gauteng province of South Africa. The project also includes the hydropower station on the Lesotho side, for generation of electricity for the Mountain Kingdom. On the South African side the Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority (TCTA) is the company responsible for the implementation and management of the project (Governments of Lesotho & South Africa, 1986).

Lesotho Highlands Water Commission (LHWC), formerly the Joint Permanent Technical Commission (JPTC), is the governing body responsible and accountable for the project. This governing body is made up of three delegates from each country. It has monitoring and advisory powers regarding activities by the two authorities, which affect delivery of water to South Africa (Governments of Lesotho & South Africa, 1986). It acts on behalf

of the two governments and also as a link for the two governments' inputs to the project. The LHWC appoints the LHDA Board of Directors, which then appoints the Chief Executive. The LHDA management also comprises the executive members and branch managers.

The project is being implemented in phases. Phases 1A and 1B are fully operational. Phase 1A involved construction of the Katse Dam, which is the main reservoir, Matsoku Weir, tunnels, and the hydropower infrastructure. The Katse reservoir has a capacity of 1,950,000,000m³. The tunnel to Muela is 45km long and from Muela Hydropower Station to the Ash river outfall in South Africa, the tunnel length is 37km. Phase 1B involved the construction of the Mohale reservoir, which has a capacity of 947,000,000m³, and the 32km tunnel to the main reservoir. The water from the Katse Dam flows by gravity through the tunnels to South Africa. The hydropower at Muela uses the highlands water for electricity generation before it crosses the South African border. The implementation of Phase 2 is in the pipeline; it will include the construction of the 1,259,000,000m³ capacity Polihali reservoir and its 38.2km tunnel to the Katse Dam (LHDA, 2013a).

The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority mainly focuses on operations and maintenance of the project infrastructure to ensure efficient and effective water transfer and electricity generation. The other major responsibility is the environmental conservation and compensation of the communities affected by the project (LHDA, 2004). The company has 276 employees, who are based at five different sites. This personnel complement comprises professionals from different fields, e.g. engineering, environmental sciences, finance, human resources management, economics etc. The company headquarters are in the capital city, Maseru, where the senior management, finance, human resources, social and environmental personnel, amongst others, are based. The Field Operations branches are the Katse, Mohale, Muela and Polihali branches. These Field Operation branches are responsible for the operation and maintenance of the project's infrastructure at their respective sites, with the exception of the Polihali Branch (LHDA, 2004). The Polihali Branch is, however, currently doing

environmental baseline studies in preparation for the construction of the new dam. These branches are far apart and based in different districts of Lesotho.

The organisation's vision is: "to become a world-class water resources development and management organisation" (LHDA, 2014). However, it was established that the company still has a long way to go in becoming a world-class organisation and therefore management implemented a three year strategic vision. The strategic vision is: "to become a high performance organisation" (LHDA, 2014). This strategic initiative is geared at ensuring high performance throughout the organisation in the execution of duties. This is most relevant considering the construction of the third big reservoir in the country is the next big hurdle for the company to overcome.

The company has had to go through several restructuring processes depending on the project stages and their respective exigencies. In 1998, LHDA had to restructure as the construction of Phase 1A infrastructure was complete. The company had to restructure again in 2005 following commissioning of the Phase 1B infrastructure. In 2013, the company structure changed in preparation for the implementation of Phase 2. These restructuring processes changed roles for some personnel members and affected job demands for others; however, some have been in the same positions to date. The study on organisational restructuring and its impact at the LHDA found that the impact of stress from restructuring was much more severe to employees at lower levels than it was at management level (Mahloane, 2009). Senel and Senel (2012) suggest that as the length of service increases, employees suffer higher levels of burnout.

The LHDA's Human Resources Management branch was requested to provide statistics on employee wellness issues. Apparently, no burnout surveys or studies have been undertaken within the LHDA in the past. However, wellness information for the past two financial years reflects that a number of employees have attended the company's Employee Assistance Programme for confidential wellness issues. In the financial year 2012/2013, 47 employees were reported to have attended a total of 98 wellness sessions. These sessions included counselling and massage sessions, amongst others. The LHDA's financial year starts in April and ends in March of the following year. In the following financial year, 72 employees were reported to have attended a total of 85

counselling sessions. During the two months before this information was provided to the researcher, a total of 16 employees had attended 16 sessions amongst themselves. This information was telephonically provided by the Human Resources Officer responsible.

Many studies have associated burnout with different forms of negative responses to the job, namely job dissatisfaction, low organisational commitment, absenteeism, intention to leave the job, and turnover (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Burnout is a serious concern in organisations due to costs involved in terms of low job performance, high turnover, and low organisational commitment (Jawahar, 2012). Leiter (2012) suggests that burnout is more a question of degree than a definitive diagnosis. Therefore, people in large organisations may experience exhaustion every workday, but never feel exhausted at all. It is ideal to avoid burnout before it happens, but identifying the signs and ways to address the problem once it is recognised, is important (Pontius, 2011). Addressing burnout and mitigating its effects increase employee morale; enhance positive attitudes at work, and as a result, performance is improved. Leiter (2012) indicates that managers' challenge is a more modest one of promoting a bit more energy, involvement, and confidence among employees rather than an intimidating aim of preventing burnout per se. Wittmer and Martin (2010) suggest that the burnout studies remain an important area of study in both psychological and managerial disciplines.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem that was researched is that employees experience an increase in stress that could lead to burnout due to various restructuring and increased job demands. Studies show that if burnout is not addressed and its effects not mitigated, employee morale, quality of work, and consequently the company's overall performance will be negatively affected (Tabarsa, Bairamzadeh, Ghojavand, & Tabarsa, 2013). The overall research question is then: 'to what extent are the LHDA employees experiencing occupational burnout?'

In order to address the overarching research question the following research questions were formulated:

- How far does the existing literature go in dealing with the concept of employee burnout?
- What is the level of burnout on various dimensions of burnout at the LHDA?
- Which category of employees experiences the highest level of burnout at the LHDA?

1.4 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives for the research study are defined as follows.

Primary research objective:

- To evaluate employee burnout at Lesotho Highlands Development Authority.

Secondary research objectives:

The secondary objectives for this field study are:

- To review the literature on employee burnout.
- To determine the level of burnout on the various dimensions of burnout at LHDA.
- To determine the category of employees with the highest level of burnout at the LHDA.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 Research design

The positivistic view was employed in this study to ensure that the study was conducted in an objective manner. The positivist approach is normally related with natural sciences research and includes empirical testing (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). The research design for the study was quantitative. A quantitative research study is associated with a deductive approach to the testing of theory, normally using numbers or facts.

1.5.2 Sampling strategy

The probability sampling design, in which elements of the population had a known and nonzero probability of being chosen as subjects, was used in the research (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). Since the entire population was used for data collection a comprehensive sampling strategy was adopted for this study. This sampling strategy is applicable where everyone is involved and was relevant in this study because questionnaires were sent to all personnel members. The basis for employing the strategy was to ensure that the sample was large enough to achieve generalisable results in this quantitative study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). A large sample increases the chances that many people will respond to the questionnaire. Thus the 276 employees of the LHDA, in all the categories that the LHDA employees are divided into, was the population and the sample of the research study. Data analysis was done in consideration of the technical and professional categories, but a questionnaire was given to everyone. The population was pulled from the personnel members working in both rural and urban operational sites, doing either field work or working indoors.

1.5.3 Data collection method

The Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey (MBI-GS) questionnaire was used to measure the three dimensions of burnout in various employee occupations in all LHDA departments. In addition to the MBI-GS, a biographical questionnaire was used to obtain data about the following demographic variables: age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, and years in service. The reason for choosing the MBI-GS questionnaire was because the validity and reliability of the questionnaire has been tested and proven satisfactory (Marais, Mostert & Rothmann, 2009). MBI-GS is a modified and a more generic version of the MBI that caters for all occupations, and due to this wide applicability it is becoming the most popular form of scale (Mäkikangas, Häätinen, Kinnunen, & Pekkonen, 2011). A Likert-type scale was used for scoring each item on the MBI-GS questionnaire.

Questionnaires were manually distributed to the LHDA employees for data collection. The researcher self-administered questionnaires at the closest sites and asked colleagues to administer questionnaires at other sites. The reason was because the LHDA employees are geographically dispersed in terms of operational sites. It would not only have been expensive to personally administer the questionnaires in these different sites, but it would also have been time consuming. The employees were allowed enough time to complete the questionnaire in their own time and therefore interference with normal operations was probably minimal.

1.5.4 Data analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used for managing and analysing the data collected from the field. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used during data analysis.

1.5.5 Ethical considerations

The following ethical considerations were observed in the research in order to ensure validity of the results and the protection of the participants.

1.5.5.1 Authorisation to conduct the study

Permission to conduct the study was formally sought from the company management hierarchy. The letter requesting permission was written to the Human Resources Manager, who consulted the Chief Executive before authorising that the study may be conducted. The Human Resources Department was then expected to officially respond with a letter authorising that the research could be undertaken. Sekaran and Bougie (2014) suggest that before any research study is undertaken it should be authorised by the relevant authorities.

1.5.5.2 Objectivity

The conclusions resulting from the data analysis and interpretation have to be objective; thus they should be drawn from actual data and not from the researcher's own

subjectivity or emotional values (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). Biases of all forms were avoided in the research design and the SPSS was employed for data analysis to ensure objectivity of the findings. The researcher made sure that there was no interference of any form with the information given on respondents' questionnaires. The importance of responding to all the questions on the questionnaire was emphasised to the respondents because that would improve the credibility of the results.

1.5.5.3 Informed consent

Respondents were given information on the study in advance so that they could make informed decisions with regard to their involvement. An email was sent to prospective respondents to inform them about the study and its purpose, prior to distributing the questionnaires. Thus, respondents were made aware of what to expect and accordingly were prepared before receiving the questionnaires. According to Greener (2008), informed consent requires that respondents have some documentation showing what the researcher wants to do and why, what their role in the research is, and what will happen with the data collected from them.

1.5.5.4 Participation

Respondents were not forced to participate in the research; rather, they were asked to volunteer. It was made clear to the respondents that they were not being coerced into participating, even though responding to the questionnaire was important for the success of the study. Employees willing to respond have the right to be protected from harm, either psychological or physical (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). The researcher therefore did not promise respondents anything that he would not have been able to fulfil, thereby unnecessarily raising their hopes.

1.5.5.5 Confidentiality

It is critical that the responses of the respondents are kept confidential; the researcher ensured privacy and confidentiality of such. Greener (2008) suggests that participants' anonymity is a basic requirement for business research. Anonymity was observed; when completing the questionnaire the respondents were not requested to write their

names on the questionnaire and the questionnaires were instead uniquely numbered. Respondents were assured that their responses would not be divulged to anybody within the LHDA.

1.5.5.6 Plagiarism

Plagiarism was avoided in compiling the study documentation by observing the rules for referencing sources used and using the Turnitin software. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2014) plagiarism is fraudulent and therefore illegal.

1.6 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY

The study falls in the fields of human resources management and organisational behaviour. These fields are very critical for the success of organisations, as the employees perform very important roles of implementing company processes in order to achieve desired goals. The psychological health of the employees impacts on their level of performance and productivity. It is therefore imperative that employees are not only physically healthy, but psychologically healthy as well. The research was aimed at all LHDA employees in their various disciplines and branches. Data were gathered from all the geographical sites for analysis.

1.7 CHAPTER LAYOUT

Chapter 2: Burnout

Chapter 3: Research methodology

Chapter 4: Data analysis and interpretation

Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations

1.8 CONCLUSION

This research focused on evaluating burnout and identifying factors influencing burnout at the LHDA. Findings were expected to enable the researcher to formulate and present recommendations to management. Consequently, if the study revealed that employees experience burnout, management might take measures to curb the levels of employee burnout and its effects. The literature review on employee burnout is discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2: BURNOUT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the study reviews the current and most recent literature on employee burnout. The literature review is intended for informing the study on the extent that the existing literature deals with the construct of burnout. The definitions of burnout and its dimensions are discussed in this chapter. The definitions of burnout are based on Maslach's dimensional burnout theory, which has been adopted for this study. The different burnout theories and models are tabled and explained. The chapter also covers the factors contributing to employee burnout and the consequences of burnout in the workplace. Finally, different burnout measurement instruments are discussed, including the MBI-GS which was used to measure burnout in this study.

2.2 DEFINITIONS

Maslach and Leiter (2008) define employee burnout as a psychological syndrome that is a consequence of job related stressors. They describe burnout as a dysfunctional and an unpleasant condition that people and organisations would like to change. According to them, exhaustion, cynicism and professional inefficacy are the main components of burnout. Furthermore, they consider burnout as the opposite of job engagement; the former being a negative experience and the latter a positive experience. They claim that people's psychological relationships with work have been conceptualised as a continuum between burnout and engagement. The premise is that if a worker is experiencing early signs of burnout, building engagement would help prevent burnout. Researchers argue that, in contrast to depression, which manifests across all spheres of personal life, burnout happens to be basically a work-related problem (Bamber, 2011).

On the one hand, Werner, Bagraim, Cunningham, Potgieter and Viedge (2007) define burnout as a condition where an individual's coping resources have been depleted by

work and life demands to the extent of poor performance and exhaustion. They argue that it affects perfectionists more, who try to do perfect jobs and maintain perfect social life styles. Pontius (2011), on the other hand, define burnout as a psychological term for long-term exhaustion and diminished interest, but it could simply be defined as being worn out. According to her, burnout happens when an individual is exposed to frustrating, stressful or demanding situations for extended periods of time. It is often the result of job related stress as a result of, amongst others, the following: increased responsibilities, tight schedules, overwhelming job pressure, stressful work environment, poor leadership, etc. She mentions the following as common signs of burnout: decreased productivity, being irritable, poor attitude, absenteeism, etc.

However, according to Leiter (2012), few people experience full-fledged burnout; many experience resource reduction in forms that edge off their vigour, dedication, and confidence. Consequently, they become less engaged, withdrawing their potential from the work at hand. He therefore claims that in large organisations, surveys will establish that people operate along the continuum of feeling exhaustion every workday to never feeling exhausted at all. He reckons that the defining burnout qualities – exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy – have a linear relationship with indicators of wellbeing and productivity. Senel and Senel (2012), in agreement to the above, suggest that it is more appropriate to categorise employees as those with low, intermediate, and high burnout levels, instead of describing them as either “burned out” or “not burned out”.

Bamber (2011) suggests that burnout is found in people-oriented occupations where employees have direct contact with clients, especially when there are inadequate resources. Aguayo, Vargas, De la Fuente and Lozano (2011) suggest that burnout manifests itself in people who are in the human services professions. They further argue that its development leads to deterioration in physical and mental health, coupled with negative results in the personal and work spheres. Earlier studies in this regard actually focused on human services occupations; however, research has lately established that other occupations experience burnout to some extent as well (Wittmer & Martin, 2010).

In summary, burnout is a multidimensional construct characterised by exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy. Exhaustion and cynicism tend to be the core components; the former reflecting the strain dimension of burnout and the latter the relationship dimension between a worker and the job aspects (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Exhaustion prompts reactions to distance one-self cognitively and emotionally from one's work; thus a relationship exists between exhaustion and cynicism. Reduced professional efficacy is sometimes directly related to the other two and sometimes independent. It refers to a loss of confidence and the tendency to appraise one's accomplishments at work negatively. This study adopts the Maslach multidimensional burnout definition as summarised here. The definition is the most suitable and aligns well with the purpose and the objectives of the research. The Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey, designed to assess all burnout variables, was employed to evaluate the extent of burnout at the LHDA in accordance with this definition. Different burnout theories are discussed in the following section.

2.3 THEORIES ON BURNOUT

The Maslach dimensional framework of burnout described in the previous section continues to dominate in the studies on burnout (Jawahar, 2012; Montero-Marin et al., 2011; Ogunbamila, 2013). Contrary to the three-dimensional theory, Jorgensen, Nel and Roux (2013) describe only emotional exhaustion and cynicism in their study on burnout. In this section the dimensional burnout theory, burnout-engagement continuum theory, the JD-R model, conservation of resources theory, and the self-determination theory are discussed.

2.3.1 Dimensional burnout theory

As shown earlier, Maslach and Leiter (2008) describe burnout as a three dimensional concept, with exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy as the main components. These three core dimensions of burnout are discussed in detail in the following sub-sections.

2.3.1.1 Exhaustion

Exhaustion refers to extended feelings of physical and emotional depletion. Lopez, Green, Carmody-Bubb and Kodatt (2011) define emotional exhaustion as the extent to which an individual feels emotionally drained and worn out from work. According to Basińska and Wilczek-Rużyczka (2013), emotional exhaustion is related more with job demands than is the case with insufficient organisational esteem. Taddei and Contena (2010), in agreement to previous studies, established that job demands and work overload significantly affect exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion is the base dimension of burnout and also the most obvious symptom of burnout (Senel & Senel, 2012; Wittmer & Martin, 2010). Jorgensen et al. (2013) suggest that chronic exhaustion sometimes results in employees refraining cognitively and emotionally from their work. Consequently, they become less concerned about work demands and colleagues or clients' needs in the workplace. Ultimately chronic exhaustion results in a depleted sense of efficacy. Jorgensen et al. (2013) also found that a lack of organisational growth and support opportunities may be associated with extensive occupational exhaustion. They further found that exhaustion impacts on both physical and psychological health challenges experienced by workers. Exhaustion can lead to cynicism, which is the second dimension of burnout.

2.3.1.2 Cynicism

Bamber (2011) suggests that a sequential link exists from exhaustion to cynicism; thus as exhaustion sets in, employees gradually withdraw emotionally from their work. Cynicism represents interpersonal aspects of burnout and refers to feelings of indifference, and a negative or distant attitude in the workplace. Lopez et al. (2011) define cynicism as the degree to which the individual feels less interested and less enthusiastic about work. Basińska and Wilczek-Rużyczka (2013) established that cynicism was more associated with inadequate organisational esteem and excessive demands. Taddei and Contena (2010) found that cynicism is also associated with customer-related social stressors and not only to work overload. The third dimension of burnout is professional inefficacy.

2.3.1.3 Professional inefficacy

Professional inefficacy refers to feelings of incompetence, lack of achievement and productivity at work. Lopez et al. (2011) explain professional efficacy as the extent to which someone feels he has achieved important things at work and can effectively figure out solutions to problems in the workplace. Basińska and Wilczek-Rużyczka (2013) concluded that excessive demands are not only related to cynicism but also negatively affect the feeling of personal accomplishment, possibly because excessive demands lead to the tendency to abandon tasks and make matters difficult for maintaining the required quality of work. Taddei and Contena (2010) found that the level of autonomy an individual has over his/her work is positively related to the feeling of personal accomplishment and also that recognition is important for workers' well-being. Perceived autonomy and self-efficacy are positively associated with job satisfaction and engagement, but negatively related to emotional exhaustion (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014).

Emotional exhaustion and cynicism may cause an individual to become unsuccessful at work and feeling incompetent (Senel & Senel, 2012). Consequently, the individual feels guilty, believes people hate him/her and regards himself/herself as unsuccessful, hence low self-efficacy. Maslach and Leiter (2008) claim that professional inefficacy has a complex relationship with the other dimensions of burnout, directly relating to them at times and sometimes being independent. Professional inefficacy is sometimes excluded as a dimension of burnout, since it does not always manifests like the other two dimensions (Jorgensen et al., 2013). Preceding definitions of exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy respectively refer to individual stress, interpersonal context, and self-evaluation dimensions of burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Following the discussion on the Maslach Dimensional Burnout Theory, the burnout-engagement continuum theory is discussed below.

2.3.2 Burnout-engagement continuum theory

Work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, affective-motivational status of job related wellbeing that is the antipode of burnout (Bakker & Leiter, 2010). It is characterised by high levels of vigour and a strong identification with one's job. The basic mediation model for burnout and engagement proposes that an employee's internal experience of burnout mediates the impact of external job stressors and work-related outcomes (Maslach, 2011). The key factors that predict both burnout and engagement are workload, control, rewards, community, fairness, and value. According to the theory these are critical points of strain in organisations. Alarcon and Edwards (2010) suggest that burnout is strongly related to work demands, whereas engagement is strongly associated with resources. Moreover, burnout is a strain process while engagement, on the other hand, is a motivational process. These two different processes tend to have opposite effects on workplace outcomes, such as job satisfaction and turnover.

Maslach (2011) suggests that the practical significance of the burnout-engagement continuum seems to be the fact that engagement represents a desired goal for any form of burnout intervention. She continues to propose three principles that should guide burnout interventions. Firstly, preventing burnout is the best strategy over treatment after experiences of burnout. The latter is more costly in terms of physical health, psychological health, and work performance. Secondly, enhancing engagement is the best prevention measure against burnout; individuals who are engaged in their jobs are better at coping with challenging encounters. Thirdly, organisational intervention can be more effective than individual intervention. People work within a social network and the on-going interaction could contribute to a supportive and engaging environment, thus discouraging burnout. The job demands and resources (JD-R) model is to some extent related to the burnout-engagement continuum theory.

2.3.3 JD-R model of burnout

The JD-R model accounts for two psychological processes explaining work strain (burnout) and motivational outcomes (engagement) (Fernet, Austin & Vallerand, 2012). The premise is that job demands drain an employee's energy, contributing to burnout, while job resources, on the other hand, promote work engagement. Ojedokun and Idemudia (2014) suggest that the JD-R model predicts that physical, psychological, social or organisational resources may reduce job demands and related physiological and psychological costs such as burnout. Consiglio, Borgogni, Alessandri and Schaufeli (2013) suggest that the JD-R model deals with perceived demands and resources. The model reflects that high job demands and lack of resources are related to burnout; however, the correlation with resources is weaker than with the demands.

In contrast to Maslach's Burnout Framework Theory, Consiglio et al. (2013) did not consider professional inefficacy in their study, citing its weak relationship with the other dimensions. They included the new burnout dimension, called interpersonal strain, instead. According to them, this new dimension refers to all interpersonal relationships at work and has recently been introduced to recapture the original burnout meaning, which was lost when depersonalisation was replaced by cynicism. Gandi, Wai, Karick and Dagona (2011), in line with the JD-R model, established that job demands are related to emotional exhaustion for both genders. In contrast to the theory they found that the association between job resources and emotional exhaustion among males was as strong as that between job demands and emotional exhaustion. Job resources also strongly determined more depersonalisation for men than for women, because women tend to have more elaborated support systems than men. Job resources predicted personal accomplishment, thus supporting the JD-R model. The conservation of resources theory is discussed in the following section.

2.3.4 Conservation of resources theory

The conservation of resources (COR) theory suggests that the perceptions one has about job demands mediate the correlation between resources and coping strategies

(Alarcon, Edwards & Menke, 2011). Coping, in turn, mediates the association between demands and burnout, and engagement outcomes. However, in their findings, demands partially mediated the relationship of conscientiousness, a resource, with coping. Coping likewise only partially mediated the relationship between demands and burnout, and engagement. Thus those results only partially supported the COR theory. Furthermore, the findings, interestingly, did not reveal any direct effect of resources on either burnout or engagement. The COR theory considers resources as the key components in determining people's appraisals of events as stressful and resources also define how individuals will cope with stress (Buchwald, 2010). Moreover, the theory suggests that individuals lacking resources are prone to experience spirals of loss while those with adequate resources will have a better chance for resource gain.

Consistent with the COR theory, interpersonal influence was found to negatively correlate with all burnout facets (Park, O'Rourke & O'Brien, 2014). Interpersonal influence acted as a buffer from the detrimental effect of emotional labour on burnout. However, since interpersonal influence only showed a protective effect against reduced personal accomplishment and not against the other two burnout dimensions, reduced personal achievement could potentially be a separate construct from burnout (Park et al., 2014). Ojedokun and Idemudia (2014) also established that psychological resources significantly predicted burnout. They argue that employees having high levels of psychological resources were less prone to burnout and its dimensions. The last theory to be discussed is the self-determination theory.

2.3.5 Self-determination theory

The self-determination theory (SDT) concerns two forms of motivation and their impact on employee behaviour (Fernet et al., 2012). Intrinsic motivation refers to acting in volition where the employees engage in their work because they personally value the importance thereof. Controlled motivation, on the other hand, refers to performing due to pressures of demands, feelings of anxiety/guilt, threats or rewards. In their study, Fernet et al. (2012) established that autonomous (intrinsic) motivation strongly influenced commitment and exhaustion rather than controlled motivation. The SDT

approach is mainly adopted in research focusing on burnout of athletes (Balaguer et al., 2012; Isoard-Gautheur, Guillet-Descas, & Lemyre, 2012; Lonsdale, Hodge, & Rose, 2009). Lonsdale et al. (2009) found that controlled motivation positively correlates with burnout, whereas autonomous motivation is negatively associated with burnout. Furthermore, motivation also mediates the relationships of both competence and autonomy in athlete exhaustion.

In line with the theory, Balaguer et al. (2012) found that a controlling coaching style was positively correlated with player burnout, while the interpersonal coaching (autonomy support) style was negatively associated with player burnout. Isoard-Gautheur et al. (2012) also demonstrated that a controlling coaching style is indeed negatively related to autonomy while a supportive coaching style is positively associated with autonomy and confidence. Thus the study results proved that burnout is negatively related to self-determined motivation and positively linked to lower self-determined forms of motivation.

In addition to the theories explained in the previous sections, burnout can also be described as three different types (Montero-Marin et al., 2011). The first type of burnout is “frenetic” which is experienced by ambitious employees who give up all else to meet their job demands. The second type is the “under-challenged” burnout which involves subjects who are indifferent and bored at work. Lastly, the “worn-out” type refers to neglectful individuals who experience lack of job control and receive no appreciation for their efforts. Montero-Marin et al. (2011) also suggest that hours worked per week contribute significantly to the “frenetic” type, while the occupation type predicts the “under-challenged” type and finally, that the “worn-out” type is associated with the length of service in the organisation.

In assessing the theories discussed, the burnout-engagement continuum theory is based to some extent on the JD-R model and involves measuring engagement as well (Alarcon & Edwards, 2010; Fernet et al., 2012). However, the purpose of this study is to evaluate burnout and not engagement at the LHDA. The self-determination theory is most appropriate for studies related to burnout of athletes and therefore not relevant in the context of this study. The COR theory considers resources as the key component in

determining whether people perceive events as stressful or not (Buchwald, 2010). Thus, other factors that also contribute to burnout may not receive due consideration from the COR theory perspective. Therefore, the most appropriate theory for this study is the Maslach Dimensional Burnout Theory, as all three dimensions have to be evaluated. The context of the study involves employees from various occupations; consequently these individuals are exposed to various factors that may contribute to burnout. Moreover, these three burnout components are differently predicted by a variety of factors and as discussed in the previous sections, they may be sequentially related, one leading to the other (Bamber, 2011; Senel & Senel, 2012). Thus, it is necessary to assess all the dimensions in this research study to fairly determine the level of employee burnout at the LHDA. Burnout theories were explained in this section; in the following section, factors associated with burnout are discussed.

2.4 FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO BURNOUT

According to the existing literature several factors contribute to the burnout syndrome in varying degrees. Targeting these factors may perhaps be an effective strategy in addressing burnout (Pontius, 2011). In the following sub-sections, several factors, which are either positively or negatively associated with burnout, are discussed.

2.4.1 Work demands and inadequate resources

High job demands and lack of resources are positively related to burnout. Basińska and Wilczek-Rużyczka (2013), concurring with previous studies, established that excessive job demands are associated with burnout. They argue that excessive demands predict all dimensions of burnout; that they increase both exhaustion and cynicism and conversely reduce a personal sense of accomplishment. Taddei and Contena (2010) found that job demands in the form of work overload influence exhaustion and depersonalisation, but had no influence on personal accomplishment. Moreover, Wittmer and Martin (2010) found that high job demands and inadequate resources are

related to emotional exhaustion in occupations with no customer contact and little interpersonal contact.

In addition, Jorgensen et al. (2013) also established that high job demands and inadequate resources to a large extent contribute to burnout in various South African occupations. They suggest that all sectors, by guarding against high job demands and providing enough resources, will ensure that their employees are well motivated. That would result in the employees being able to establish and maintain a balance between their social and work life. Fernet, Austin, Trépanier and Dussault (2013) suggest that role overload is positively and directly associated to emotional exhaustion, but also found that the presence of psychological resources reduce the impact of emotional exhaustion. They further found that job resources, in the form of job control and social support, indirectly exert some effect on the central component of burnout, which is exhaustion. These job resources, according to them, tend to foster employees' feelings of personal accomplishment while minimising depersonalisation.

Furthermore, Consiglio et al. (2013) established that a weak relationship exists at the individual level between the lack of resources and burnout, whereas a stronger association was observed at team level between job demands with resources, and burnout. On the other hand, Kilic, Pelit and Selvi (2011) established that employees who earn higher wages experience lower burnout levels compared to those earning less. They argue that a fair wage system (economic resources) and recognition (social resources) are some of the instruments that can be used to curb burnout levels and raise job satisfaction. Lack of growth opportunities in the workplace can be stressful, leading to burnout.

2.4.2 Lack of growth opportunities

Jorgensen et al. (2013) also found that lack of organisational support and growth opportunities contribute as much to extensive exhaustion as high job demands. Furthermore, they indicate that personnel members in all sectors are more dedicated to their work if their employers provide support and growth opportunities. According to them, employees attach meaning and direction to their jobs if the company is committed

to them, thereby guarding employees against the negative effects of work stress. They argue that organisational commitment provides employees with a feeling of belonging and stability.

On the other hand, Jawahar (2012) found that challenging job opportunities are directly associated with personal efficacy, but that opportunities in the way of traditional training and development are negatively related to personal efficacy. This implies that personal development through training by the company reduces the feeling of personal accomplishment; conversely, personal development through challenging duties enhances a sense of personal accomplishment. He also argues that increasing levels of job challenge cause emotional exhaustion. Furthermore, challenging responsibilities contribute in lowering levels of cynicism; thus job development opportunities are negatively associated with depersonalisation.

In addition, Scanlan and Still (2013) found that supervisor support, feedback, participative decision-making and being interested in opportunities for research or quality improvement are related to lower levels of burnout. Job insecurity is another factor that can be associated with job burnout.

2.4.3 Job insecurity

Cheng, Huang, Li and Hsu (2011) found that high employment insecurity and low levels of justice in the workplace were related to high levels of burnout. In contrast, Basińska and Wilczek-Rużyczka (2013), in their study in Poland, established that greater job security reduced nurses' sense of personal accomplishment. They attributed these opposite results to the notion that lack of respect and organisational esteem, coupled with promotion and salary, were significantly more valuable to the nurses than job insecurity. Attachment insecurities, like job insecurity, also contribute to employee burnout.

2.4.4 Attachment insecurities

Insecurely attached individuals are more prone to burnout than secure individuals. Ronen and Mikulincer (2009) suggest that attachment orientation can be measured in two dimensions, namely attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance. Attachment anxiety refers to the degree to which a person worries whether a partner will be available for them in times of need, while attachment avoidance refers to the extent to which the individual distrusts their partners' goodwill and therefore maintains autonomy and emotional distance from them. Ronen and Mikulincer (2009) demonstrated that higher levels of attachment anxiety and avoidance are related to high burnout levels. They also found that attachment anxiety was related to lower perceptions of teamwork cohesion and that avoidance was associated with lower perceptions of organisational fairness. Their findings revealed that lower levels of perceived organisational fairness mediated the relationship between avoidance and burnout, whereas the lower perceived team cohesion mediated association between attachment anxiety and burnout.

On the other hand, Ronen and Baldwin (2010) revealed that hypersensitivity to social rejection predicted future stress and burnout in the workplace. They also confirmed that attachment anxiety was associated with elevated levels of stress and burnout. They further established that hypersensitivity mediated relationships between attachment anxiety and perceived stress and burnout. Perfectionist behaviour at work can also contribute to employee burnout.

2.4.5 Perfectionism

Philp, Egan and Kane (2012) found that perfectionism is related to symptoms of burnout and difficulty in separating one from work. They argue that pursuing high work standards leads to over commitment to work, which in turn results in burnout. They further suggest that perfectionists tend to appraise standards once achieved and even set higher standards to achieve; as a result they do not easily separate with the work trying to attain these standards. Childs and Stoeber (2012) established that socially prescribed perfectionism contributes to the development of role stress and all three

burnout dimensions over time. On the other hand, self-oriented perfectionism correlated positively with socially prescribed perfectionism and with role stress and exhaustion. However, self-oriented perfectionism did not have any impact over and beyond socially prescribed perfectionism. Leadership at work has a role to play in influencing levels of burnout.

2.4.6 Leadership

Another factor that can be associated with burnout is leadership type and behaviour in the workplace. Leary et al. (2013) suggest that dysfunctional leadership dispositions relate negatively with work engagement and job satisfaction, but positively with burnout. On the one hand, Lopez et al. (2011) demonstrated that followers of considerate leaders felt less exhaustion and cynicism than was the case with followers of a production-oriented leader. Conversely, followers of the production-oriented leader reported a greater sense of personal accomplishment. Various demographic factors can be related to burnout at work.

2.4.7 Demographic factors

Age is one of the demographic factors that to some extent influence burnout at work. Haley, Mostert and Els (2013) found that young and middle-aged workers in comparison to the older employees experienced higher levels of exhaustion. The study also revealed that older workers were more dedicated to their jobs than younger colleagues. However, no substantial differences were established between the age groups concerning cynicism and vigour. Furthermore, emotional load was significantly associated with exhaustion across all age groups.

In line with the above findings, Senel and Senel (2012) also discovered that middle-aged employees experienced higher levels of burnout than older employees. They argue that the findings are attributable to older workers being able to successfully handle and resist burnout. The study also established that single and middle-aged employees experienced higher burnout levels than others; in the like manner employees with 15 or more years of service and married had higher levels of burnout than others.

Özkan, Celik and Yonis (2012) revealed that increasing age and working experience and reduced number of superiors decreased the level of depersonalisation and increased the level of personal achievement. Hamama (2012) also found that older and more experienced social workers revealed less burnout levels. In contrast, Ojedokun and Idemudia (2014) found that the demographic characteristics had no effect on burnout with the exception of employee tenure. Role stress also leads to burnout and is discussed next.

2.4.8 Role stress

Role stress is a result of role conflict and role ambiguity; the former happens when the individual believes that the job needs incompatible demands and expectations and the latter occurs when he is uncertain about job functions and responsibilities (Jaramillo, Mulki, & Boles, 2011). Özkan et al. (2012) established that increasing levels of role conflict and role ambiguity increase levels of burnout. Jaramillo et al. (2011) found that role stress directly affects emotional exhaustion and also creates job overload perceptions and interpersonal conflict at work. Interpersonal conflict in turn, affects job attitudes through emotional exhaustion. Fernet et al. (2013) suggest that role ambiguity is exclusively negatively and directly linked to personal accomplishment. They state that psychological resources, such as perceived competence, can also mediate the impact of role ambiguity on personal accomplishment.

Furthermore, Özkan et al. (2012) verified that personal accomplishment is higher among people who willingly chose their professions. Their findings showed that increasing age, work experience, and income reduce the level of role conflict and ambiguity and hence the burnout level. Conversely, they revealed that inadequate training and increasing number of superiors increase role conflict and ambiguity, and emotional burnout. Aggression and bullying at workplace also affect employee burnout.

2.4.9 Workplace aggression and bullying

Merecz, Drabek, and Mościcka (2009) found that experiencing aggression from whatever source in the workplace adversely influences employees' mental health status

and work satisfaction, and contributes to the level of burnout. They also established that a strong emotional exhaustion-aggression relationship exists more in the service sector than in health care. Furthermore, that aggression from co-workers has no substantial impact on personal accomplishment, but high aggression levels from clients are characterised by low personal accomplishment.

Trépanier, Fernet and Austin (2013) suggest that experiencing bullying behaviour at work positively predicts burnout, as it thwarts workers' sense of being effective at work. They suggest that constant negative and tormenting behaviour over which one has no control depletes one's emotional energy and sense of identity at work. Consequently, poor psychological health prevails at work. Their findings also revealed that acting according to one's interests and values at work are significantly important in preventing burnout and enhancing work engagement, even in situations of bullying. Spence-Laschinger, Leiter, Day and Gilin (2009) revealed that workplace incivility was associated with health professionals' experiences of burnout and important retention factors. Work-family conflict is another factor that is related to high levels of burnout.

2.4.10 Work- family conflict

Braunstein-Bercovitz (2013) established that work-family conflict predicts burnout. The results of that study revealed a negative correlation between resources such as personal empowerment, supportive work-family culture and reduced workload, and work-family conflict. These findings supported the notion that work-family conflict mediates the relationship between resource gain and burnout. Thus there is a probability for burnout to occur should strain spill over from the family domain to the work domain or vice versa. Francis (2004) found that engineers who experienced organisational values which were supportive of the employees' non-work life had significantly lower work-family conflict levels. Thus, in more supportive work environments, transfer of conflict to the family domain due to work demands is less. In the following section the relationship between personality traits and burnout is discussed.

2.4.11 The five personality traits

The personality traits of an individual can also be associated with burnout. Morgan and De Bruin (2010) found that neuroticism is significantly positively correlated with emotional exhaustion and cynicism and negatively associated with professional efficacy. Extroversion, on the other hand, was negatively associated with exhaustion and cynicism, while positively correlated to professional efficacy. The third trait, openness to experience, which involves creative thinking and willingness to experience new things, positively correlated with professional efficacy. The fourth personality trait, agreeableness, indicated a negative relationship with cynicism and a positive relationship with professional efficacy. Lastly, conscientiousness negatively correlated with exhaustion and cynicism and related positively with professional efficacy. These results supported previous researches, showing that individuals who are emotionally stable, outgoing, hard-working and who maintain good interpersonal relations experience low burnout levels. Alarcon et al. (2011) suggest that conscientiousness is a valuable resource against burnout and promotes engagement.

Mesmer-Magnus, Glew and Viswesvaran (2012) suggest that a sense of humour mitigates a relationship between stress and burnout in the workplace. Their findings revealed that employee humour correlated negatively with burnout and stress, and positively to health, job performance and satisfaction. Supervisors' humour related positively to subordinate job satisfaction and group cohesion, but negatively with subordinate work withdrawal. The relationship between work schedules and burnout is dealt with next.

2.4.12 Work schedules

Nonstandard work schedules can also contribute to employee burnout. Wittmer and Martin (2010), in confirmation with previous studies, revealed that shift workers experience more burnout than employees working normal schedules. Findings in their study suggested that night shift workers experienced even more exhaustion than other shifts or day workers. Moreover, that job demands, lack of resources and work-family

conflict significantly accounted for variance in emotional exhaustion for all shift workers, supporting the Job Demand-Resources model of burnout. The results suggested that when resources are limited and work-conflict high, exhaustion increases. Furthermore, they revealed that exhaustion increased more for night shift workers than for other workers when job demands, role stress, and work-family conflict were higher, thus confirming the conservation of resources theory, as working on a nonstandard work schedule exacerbates exhaustion. Wittmer and Martin (2010) suggest that it is important for management to recognise that night shift has negative consequences and other factors like high job demands can worsen the situation. Özkan et al. (2012) suggest that long working hours also contribute significantly to burnout levels. Work environment is another factor that can influence burnout in the workplace.

2.4.13 Work environment

Organisational culture and climate also contribute to burnout to some extent. Watts, Robertson, Winter and Leeson (2013) found that an innovative organisational culture positively relates to personal accomplishment, indicating that employees who perceive the workplace to be dynamic and entrepreneurial have a greater sense of job satisfaction. They suggest that perceptions of the company are important for employee wellbeing, with innovative cultures linked to reduced burnout. Conversely, this positive relationship suggests that employees experiencing greater reward and satisfaction also perceive their company as more challenging, entrepreneurial and dynamic. Watts et al. (2013) concluded that facets of the organisation's traits significantly predicted burnout than did the customer contact.

In addition, Francis (2004) established that a supportive organisational culture correlated strongly with burnout outcomes such as intentions to leave, organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and mental health issues. Thus, the supportive work culture showed counter effects to burnout enhancing occupational health and organisational performance. On the other hand, Hamama (2012) found that better physical (extrinsic) work conditions were associated with significantly low burnout levels. This relationship was found to be even stronger among social workers than that

between psychological (intrinsic) work conditions and burnout. Moreover, better support from colleagues negatively correlated with burnout and the negative relationship was stronger between burnout and management support. Policy-makers desiring to reduce burnout in their companies should work at establishing a positive, accepting and supportive work environment that may curb levels of worker's social evaluative threat (Ronen & Baldwin, 2010). More autonomy and self-efficacy on the job are factors that also tend to reduce levels of burnout.

2.4.14 Self-efficacy and autonomy

Self-efficacy and perceived autonomy are inversely related to burnout. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2014) showed that perceived autonomy and self-efficacy were directly associated with job engagement and satisfaction, but negatively influenced emotional exhaustion. They argue that self-efficacy has proved to increase motivation and decrease stress and burnout in a number of settings. Contrary to their expectations, however, the relationship between autonomy and engagement was even stronger for teachers with low self-efficacy than those with high efficacy. This finding could be attributable to individuals with low efficacy increasing engagement as a self-protective strategy from challenging responsibilities. Nevertheless, they showed that autonomy is positively related to engagement and job satisfaction irrespective of self-efficacy. Ojedokun and Idemudia (2014) also revealed that individuals with significant psychological strengths were less affected by burnout components. Their analysis established that emotional intelligence and self-efficacy had a substantial negative effect on burnout. Moreover, that optimism and organisation-based self-esteem also have a significant negative influence on burnout. Consistent with the above discussions on self-efficacy, Consiglio et al. (2013) found that work self-efficacy was strongly associated with a more positive perception of job characteristics which was significantly linked with burnout. Weng et al. (2011) also confirmed that emotional intelligence is positively correlated to low burnout and high levels of job satisfaction. Thus, emotional intelligence may act as a protecting factor against burnout. In addition, the three factors of emotional intelligence – appraisal of emotions, optimism, and social skills – are negatively correlated with emotional exhaustion (Moon & Hur, 2011).

Furthermore, Fernet et al. (2013) established that deprivation of psychological resources, such as perceived autonomy, competence and relatedness, could lead to burnout. They found that perceived autonomy predicted emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation, whereas perceived relatedness (social aspect at work) predicted cynicism and personal accomplishment, and perceived competence explained personal accomplishment. The results of their study suggest that the perceptions of workers' relation to autonomy, competence, and relatedness can prevent burnout in the workplace. On the other hand, Day, Sibley, Scott, Tallon and Ackroyd-Stolarz (2009) revealed that increased job control and increased team efficacy somewhat alleviate burnout. The impact of spiritual intelligence on the levels of burnout is dealt with in the following section.

2.4.15 Spiritual intelligence

One other factor that negatively impacts burnout is spiritual intelligence. Tabarsa et al. (2013) demonstrated that spiritual intelligence has a significant negative impact on burnout. They found that individuals with high levels of spirituality tend to think beyond trivial issues in the workplace. This ability empowers them to cope with tough situations and continue working irrespective of challenges. Kutcher, Bragger, Rodriguez-Srednicki and Masco (2010) also revealed a significant negative association between religious beliefs and practices with job stress and with employee burnout. They further established that individuals who reported that they practice their religion were significantly satisfied with work and experienced more organisational commitment than those who did not. Thus, those who practice religion experienced less burnout than those who did not, perhaps partly because they are committed to the organisation. They suggest that surrendering to a higher power relieves the individual from the burden of worrying over issues that are beyond their control. Kutcher et al. (2010) suggest that perceived freedom to express one's religiosity at work can be seen as the company's acceptance and appreciation of their employees and may enable employees to effectively deal with stressors and maintain life and job satisfaction. This section dealt with factors that contribute to burnout. The following section discusses the effects of burnout in the workplace.

2.5 EFFECTS OF BURNOUT

The effects of burnout in the workplace are unfavourable and it should be in the interest of management to minimise them. The discussions on these burnout outcomes are presented below.

2.5.1 Low organisational commitment

Low organisational commitment is an outcome of occupational burnout. Spence-Laschinger et al. (2009) found that burnout is a significant predictor of employees' experiences of organisational commitment. Moreover, they established that cynicism was strongly associated with low commitment, dissatisfaction and turnover intentions. Cynicism also mediated the relationship of exhaustion with these three outcomes. Ha, King and Naeger (2011) also revealed that emotional exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment were significantly and negatively related to organisational commitment. Conversely, depersonalisation was not a significant determinant of organisational commitment. Low productivity and poor performance at work can result from burnout.

2.5.2 Low productivity/performance

Dewa, Loong, Bonato, Thanh and Jacobs (2014) suggest that countries globally are starting to realise the potential impact of physician burnout on productivity. They continue to argue that studies revealed a negative relationship between burnout and productivity. However, they also suggest that research relating to the relationship between burnout and low productivity is still at an infancy stage. In line with the above view, Nayeri, Negarandeh, Vaismoradi, Ahmandi and Faghihzadeh (2009) revealed a significant negative correlation between emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation with productivity. However, interestingly 21.66% of participants experiencing high burnout levels presented a high productivity level in their findings. They suggested that this interesting result requires further study. In their study, personal achievement revealed a significant positive correlation with productivity. Moon and Hur (2011) also established that emotional exhaustion was negatively associated to job performance.

Their findings also confirmed that exhaustion has mediating effects between emotional intelligence and two components of job performance, namely organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Turnover intentions as a burnout outcome are discussed below.

2.5.3 Turnover intentions

Turnover intentions among the employees can be explained by burnout levels. Du Plooy and Roodt (2010) found that employees showing work engagement and organisational citizenship qualities are unlikely to experience turnover intentions, whilst those reflecting burnout and work alienation are likely to experience turnover intentions. Their results also established burnout as a mediator in the work engagement and turnover intentions relationship. Alarcon and Edwards (2010) also revealed that burnout predicted turnover intentions. In support of the above view, Scanlan and Still (2013) established that disengagement and exhaustion were associated with high turnover intentions, highlighting that burnout significantly influences workforce outcomes.

In addition, Spence-Laschinger et al. (2009) revealed that supervisor incivility and burnout were particularly strong predictors of turnover intentions. Emotional exhaustion is positively associated with turnover intention (Ha et al., 2011). On the other hand, Bartman, Casimir, Djurkovic, Leggat and Stanton (2012) found that burnout also mediates the relationship of emotional labour and intention to leave. They also illustrate the importance of high-performance work systems that positive perceptions of high-performance work systems may dampen the effects of emotional labour on burnout and therefore counteract burnout effects on intention to leave. Staff turnover is costly to organisations in terms of re-training costs, recruitment costs, lost productivity and lost competencies (Francis, 2004). Absenteeism from work is another product of burnout.

2.5.4 Absenteeism

Consiglio et al. (2013) suggest that team-level burnout strongly predicted team absenteeism. Hence teams experiencing high levels of burnout have a tendency to also experience high sickness absenteeism levels. On the other hand, Mather, Bergström,

Blom and Svedberg (2014) found that genetic factors have a significant influence in the transition from burnout to sick leave. Their study established that burnout was a risk factor for sick leave as a result of both stress-related and other mental disorders. Addictive genetic factors predicted variations in burnout and sick leave due to stress-related and other mental disorders. Since a certain environment impacted substantially on both burnout and sick leave due to mental disorders, they concluded that environmental measures may effectively reduce sick leave spells and burnout levels in the population. However, they argued that reducing burnout will not necessarily reduce levels of sick leave. Low job satisfaction is next in the discussions.

2.5.5 Low job satisfaction

Alarcon and Edwards (2010) found that burnout is negatively correlated with job satisfaction. Kilic et al. (2011) revealed that personal accomplishment had the highest effect on job satisfaction than the other burnout dimensions. Thus, increased employee's personal achievement was positively related to their job satisfaction. Accordingly, Scanlan and Still (2013) found that disengagement and exhaustion relate to lower job satisfaction, revealing the importance of occupational burnout in relation to workforce outcomes. In this study, findings also proved that job satisfaction was associated with rewards and cognitive demands. Weng et al. (2011) found less burnout to be significantly associated with higher customer satisfaction and high job satisfaction. Ha et al. (2011) demonstrated a negative and significant correlation shown by emotional exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment with job satisfaction. Conversely, depersonalisation was not a strong determinant of job satisfaction. Burnout can also lead to various physical and psychological health problems.

2.5.6 Health problems

Pranjić, Nuhbegović, Brekalo-Lazarević and Kurtić (2012) suggest that burnout and exhaustion processes are characterised in phases as follows: emotional fatigue, cognitive reactions and fatigue, physical and ill-health, social reactions and existential fatigue. Emotional fatigue may be expressed with dejection, anxiousness and irritability,

reduced empathy and dissatisfaction with work among others. Reduced self-esteem, poor perception, mistakes, tunnel vision, lack of energy and suspicion of other people are some of the signs of cognitive reactions and fatigue. Physical fatigue and ill-health can be expressed by sleep problems, headaches, dizziness and muscular complaints. Social reactions are often reflected by restlessness, isolation from people, increased consumption of nicotine or alcohol, poorer performance, reduced efficiencies, and greater absenteeism. Finally, existential fatigue can be expressed by disappointment, resignation, lack of interest in relationships, disinclination to go to work and reduced loyalty. Pranjic et al. (2012) suggest that adrenal exhaustion is a synonym for burnout and is an underlying factor in all illnesses. In addition, Trépanier et al. (2013) also demonstrated that the relationship between bullying and burnout in the workplace results in poor health for employees. The last section to be discussed in this chapter is measuring burnout.

2.6 MEASURING BURNOUT

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) is the most popularly used instrument for measuring job burnout (Aguayo et al., 2011). The wide usage of the MBI questionnaire proves that its validity and reliability are sufficient. The questionnaire was originally designed to measure burnout in the human services occupations such as teaching, nursing, and social work (Marais et al., 2009). Aguayo et al. (2011) suggest that this original version of the MBI had 22 items for evaluating the three burnout dimensions. MBI-Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS) and MBI-Educators' Survey (MBI-ES) are other versions of the questionnaire which were designed specifically for health professionals and education professionals respectively (Aguayo et al. 2011). The MBI-General Survey (MBI-GS) is a version designed for measuring burnout across occupational groups which sufficiently meets the reliability and validity requirements (Childs & Stoeber, 2012). The MBI is still the mostly used instrument to assess burnout (Qiao & Schaufeli 2011).

Literature on burnout suggests that there are other instruments that can also be used for measuring burnout, such as the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI), Coach Burnout Questionnaire (CBQ) and Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (ABQ) (Lundkvist, Stenling, Gustafsson & Hassmén, 2014). The OLBI is explained as a context-free measure with two subscales, namely disengagement and exhaustion, which build on MBI-GS's cynicism and emotional exhaustion respectively. Lundkvist et al. (2014) argue that the OLBI was developed to overcome some of the problems of the MBI. Qiao and Schaufeli (2011) cite some of the criticisms of the MBI scale as follows: burnout has two not three dimensions, as reduced professional efficacy does not always manifest; and MBI subscales have only negatively worded items. The OLBI covers emotional and physical aspects of exhaustion and is therefore perfect for use in both physically and cognitively challenging works (Lundkvist et al., 2014). On the other hand, the Coach Burnout Questionnaire (CBQ) is actually the traditional Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (ABQ) rephrased to fit a coaching context (Lundkvist et al., 2014). This sport-specific questionnaire has three dimensions: broader exhaustion, devaluation, and reduced sense of accomplishment – where the last two dimensions focus on the job instead of interpersonal aspects of the job. In their study, Lundkvist et al. (2014) established that the MBI and the OLBI cover similar definitions of exhaustion and cynicism/disengagement whereas the CBQ covers different dimensions. Furthermore, the OLBI lacked discriminant validity as a result of high correlations between exhaustion and disengagement and the CBQ's reduced sense of achievement measures a different construct to the MBI's lack of personal accomplishment.

The MBI-GS is the most appropriate measure of burnout in this research as it measures all three components of burnout. It is discussed in more detail in the following chapter. Moreover, it measures the construct of burnout in all occupational groups and is the mostly used burnout measurement tool (Childs & Stoeber, 2012; Qiao & Schaufeli 2011). Conversely, both the OLBI and the ABQ are not suitable for the following reasons. The OLBI measures only exhaustion and cynicism (disengagement) excluding the third dimension, which is reduced personal accomplishment. The ABQ is the most appropriate for measuring burnout related to athletes, thus it is perfectly relevant in a sporting context.

2.7 CONCLUSION

The existing literature has to a large extent dealt with burnout, highlighting the importance of the syndrome in the corporate world. The literature confirms that burnout is a serious concern that needs to be addressed to ensure high levels of productivity, job satisfaction, and employee retention, thus curbing costs related to burnout. A substantial number of factors predicts employee burnout and various work outcomes are influenced by burnout. However, due to many factors that predict burnout and its various negative outcomes, further studies on burnout still need to be undertaken in different contexts. The evolving corporate environment and new technologies are bound to introduce new factors contributing to burnout that will still necessitate more research on the concept. In the following chapter, the research methodology that was adopted in this research study is discussed in detail.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research methodology employed in this research project. The research design is presented first, followed by the sampling strategy. Thereafter, the data collection method used in the project is followed by the data analysis. The final section of the chapter deals with the ethical issues, which is another important aspect in business research.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research approach was positivistic and as such rigor and replicability of this research and generalisability of the findings were of great concern (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). The positivist view is also concerned with objectivity in the scientific research. Glenn (2010) argues that the paradigm of positivism tends to dominate social and behavioural sciences. Positivism regards only phenomena that can be known through senses as knowledge (Greener, 2008). It supports the idea of experimentation and testing of hypotheses and then generates new theory by putting facts together. Positivists suggest that the positivist approach can be value free. Positivist research involves objective rather than subjective statements, which aligns with the proper domain of scientists (Greener, 2008).

Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad (2010) describe research design as a logical and systematic plan arranged for directing a research study. It tables the objectives of the research, methodology, and techniques to be employed in achieving those objectives. Cooper and Schindler (2014) describe research design as the blueprint for fulfilling objectives and answering questions. They argue that selecting a design may be a complicated challenge due to the availability of a large variety of methods, techniques, procedures, protocols, and sampling plans. Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad (2010) suggest that the research design prevents blind search and indiscriminate data

gathering, thus ensuring that the researcher proceeds in the right direction. The research design also makes it possible for the researcher to anticipate challenges of data collection, operationalisation of concepts, measurements, and so on. The research design can either be qualitative or quantitative in nature.

Although both designs can adopt both the inductive and deductive research processes, qualitative design tends to use inductive processes often, whereas the quantitative design uses the deductive processes most of the time (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). The quantitative research design emphasises objective measurements and analysis of numerical data using computational techniques. This design focuses on gathering numerical data; and also on generalising that data across groups of people or explains a certain phenomenon. Cooper and Schindler (2014) suggest that usually in business research, quantitative methodologies measure consumer behaviour, knowledge, opinions, or attitudes. Furthermore, that quantitative methodologies tend to answer questions related to how much, how often, how many, when, and who. According to them, the survey is considered a dominant methodology of the quantitative researcher. In addition, Glenn (2010) suggests that quantitative research is less associated with social sciences, that it is focused, and aims to test hypotheses.

The research design for this cross-sectional study was descriptive and quantitative in nature. Sekaran and Bougie (2014) suggest that a descriptive study is designed to collect data that explain the characteristics of persons, events or situations. Quantitative data is more objective and scientific than qualitative data; therefore, it is often associated with more traditional scientific approaches (Crowther & Lancaster, 2009). Glenn (2010) argues that quantitative data may lead to measurement or kinds of analyses involving applied mathematics; in contrast qualitative data cannot always be graphed or represented as a mathematical term. Glenn (2010) furthermore suggests that the research methodologists' training in social sciences and education weighted heavily on the quantitative research designs and statistics. In addition, Cooper and Schindler (2014) indicate that quantitative data often consist of respondents' responses that are coded, categorised, and reduced to numbers that can be manipulated for statistical analysis. They also suggest that the objective is the quantitative sum of

events or opinions, which is called frequency of response. A survey was employed to collect the quantitative data that respondents completed on their own. The sampling strategy that was used in this research is now discussed.

3.3 SAMPLING STRATEGY

The probability sampling design was employed in the research. Sekaran and Bougie (2014) suggest that when the elements in the population have a nonzero and a known probability of being subjects, the probability sampling design should be used. Probability sampling design can be divided into restricted and unrestricted sampling types. According to Greener (2008) probability samples are less prone to sampling errors and are usually seen to be representative. In probability sampling, the variation in the population parameters under study and the estimating precision requirements determine the size of the sample (Cooper & Schindler, 2014).

The comprehensive sampling strategy was used for collecting data from all the LHDA employees in different operational sites, namely Maseru, Katse, Mohale, Muela and Polihali (LHDA, 2013b). With the comprehensive sampling strategy every member of the population is the subject in the study, thus the sample size equals the population. Cooper and Schindler (2014) suggest that the advantages of sampling over census studies are less compelling when the population is small and the variability within the population is high. Therefore, when the population is small or highly variable, any sample drawn may not be representative of the population. The comprehensive strategy was employed to maximise generalisability of the findings and the response rate. The data were analysed using the technical and professional category in consideration but the questionnaires were distributed to everyone.

The sample size was therefore 276 employees involved in the research. Questionnaires were distributed to all 276 employees in the four categories dispersed across geographical sites. The structure of the biographical and MBI-GS questionnaires used for data collection is presented in the next section.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

The questionnaire is the instrument that was used for data collection in this quantitative research. The questionnaire was divided into two sections; the first section was made up of a biographical questionnaire and the second section was the Maslach Burnout Inventor-General Survey (MBI-GS). This two-part questionnaire was distributed to all employees of the LHDA at different operational sites. Manual distribution of questionnaires was used to maximise the response rate as opposed to the formerly considered email questionnaires. Email questionnaires were declined on the basis that some employees are still not comfortable using computers. The researcher self-administered questionnaires in the closest operational sites, and then asked willing colleagues in other areas to administer questionnaires in their respective workplaces. The questionnaires were to be collected at respective sites and then sent to the researcher through the internal LHDA mail. These questionnaires are discussed in detail in the following sections.

3.4.1 Biographical questionnaire

The biographical questionnaire's purpose was to collect the biographical and demographic data from the research sample. The biographical variables included in the questionnaire were gender, age, and marital status. Respondents had to indicate their gender as either male or female. The following ordinal scale was used for age groups: less than 25 years of age, 25–35 years of age, 36–45 years of age and older than 45 years of age. The marital status was classified into married, single, widowed/divorced and other. Other was a provision for individuals who did not fall into any of the other three identified categories.

On the other hand the demographical variables were highest level of education achieved, place of work, occupation, and years of service. The ordinal scale for level of education included: below Form E, Form E, Certificate/Diploma and Bachelor's degree and above. Form E is the equivalent of a South African Matric in Lesotho. The LHDA employees are dispersed geographically by project sites. Therefore operational sites

were identified as Maseru, Mohale, Katse, Muela and Polihali (LHDA, 2013b). Occupational categories appearing on the questionnaire are category 1: technical/professional, category 2: operative/clerical, category 3: management and category 4: primary skills, representing the technical staff and other professionals; secretarial and clerical; management and labourers/office assistants respectively. Finally, the years of service were ordinally scaled in the following manner: less than 5 years, 5–10 years, 11–15 years and over 15 years. These demographic and biographical variables were used as independent variables and the three burnout dimensions tested against each of them to determine the levels of burnout throughout the organisation. The researcher developed the biographical questionnaire (Appendix 2) and estimated that it would take less than five minutes to complete the questionnaire. The next section discusses the MBI-GS as the instrument that was adopted for measuring burnout.

3.4.2 Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey

The MBI-General Survey (MBI-GS), which was designed for use with workers in any professional field, is a reduced version of the original MBI (Marais et al., 2009). The goal was to align the MBI to occupations without direct contact with customers or with only casual contact with other people. As a result the MBI-GS describes burnout as a problem in one's relationship with work and not necessarily with people at work. According to Maslach, Leiter and Schaufeli (2008), the MBI-GS measures respondents' relationship with their jobs on a continuum from engagement to burnout. However, even though the MBI-GS shares features with those measured by the original MBI, it focuses more on performance at work in general instead of service relationship.

The MBI-GS (Appendix 3) has three generic subscales in line with those of the original MBI, namely exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced professional efficacy (Qiao & Schaufeli, 2011). However, it has only 16 items instead of the 22 items of the original MBI; five items on exhaustion, five items on cynicism and six items on professional efficacy. These items are rated on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (every day) (Mäkikangas et al., 2011). Exhaustion items are generic and do not emphasise

emotions and direct reference to contact with customers. Examples of modifications from the MBI are: “working with people all day is really a strain for me” is changed to “working all day is really a strain for me” (Maslach et al., 2008). Greater differences are from depersonalisation to cynicism; where new cynicism refers to indifference or a distant attitude towards work. Depersonalisation on the MBI, on the other hand, was exclusively human service related. Thus the cynicism items refer to work itself, not to interpersonal aspects at work. The professional efficacy subscale remains similar to the personal accomplishment measured by the MBI, but with a broader focus to incorporate both social and non-social occupational aspects. Maslach et al. (2008) suggest that the MBI-GS subscales jointly provide a three-dimensional perspective on burnout. Just like with the MBI, the high burnout level is indicated by high scores on exhaustion and cynicism and low scores on professional efficacy. They also suggest that it takes about 5 to 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Thus, to complete both the biographical and MBI-GS questionnaires in one sitting was estimated take approximately 15 minutes.

Marais et al. (2009) found the internal consistency of the questionnaire ranging from 0.73 (cynicism) to 0.91 (exhaustion) which is satisfactory. Moreover, they also demonstrated that the construct validity of the MBI-GS was also satisfactory. Mäkikangas et al. (2011) also confirmed that the questionnaire has a good construct validity which further proved that it is a valid scale to measure job burnout. Furthermore, due to its generic nature of applicability, the MBI-GS happens to be the most popular form of the burnout scale. In addition, Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Kantas and Demerouti (2012) proved that the MBI-GS is a valid instrument that can provide robust estimations on employee burnout levels.

The MBI-GS is a standard questionnaire and is therefore copyrighted. The researcher sent emails to developers requesting permission to use the instrument. The response received suggested that the researcher should contact the publisher of the questionnaire and eventually the license to use the instrument was purchased from Mind Garden’s website. Data analysis and interpretation are discussed next.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The statistical analyst used the University of the Free State's (UFS) Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 22. Data collected from the field study using the biographical and the MBI-GS questionnaires were analysed using the SPSS with the help of the UFS statistician. Crowther and Lancaster (2009) state that quantitative data is in the form of numbers therefore it can often be analysed by standard statistical techniques. The internal reliability of the questionnaire was determined by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Thereafter the descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis and interpretation. The descriptive statistics describe characteristics of a variable's distribution. Frequency tables and charts (bar chart and pie chart) were used for the statistical analysis in this regard. The inferential statistics, on the other hand, test whether a significant relationship exists between a dependent variable and an independent variable. Therefore, the t-test and Analysis of Variance techniques were adopted in the data analysis as well. The demographic variables were the independent variables against which emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy were measured. Ethical issues are another important factor in ensuring the objectivity of this quantitative study and are dealt with in detail in the following section.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Crowther and Lancaster (2009), ethical issues in research comprise values for conducting research and the researcher must not violate these values. Thus, conducting research must conform to a set of ethical codes. They further suggest that ethical issues should be included in the research plan as they tend to affect key aspects such as data collection methods, data recording, analysis techniques, and research findings. In research, the goal of ethics is to make sure that nobody is harmed or suffers adverse consequences due to research activities (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Examples of ethical issues include authorisation to conduct the research, informed consent, voluntary participation, objectivity, confidentiality, and anonymity.

3.6.1 Authorisation to conduct the study

The researcher had to write a letter to the Human Resources Manager of the LHDA formally requesting permission to conduct the research. The letter briefly presented both the purpose of the research and the research title. After about two weeks the researcher received a verbal response from the Human Resources Manager that the Chief Executive of the company has granted the researcher permission to conduct the study on condition that a copy of the final report be submitted to the LHDA management after successful completion of the study. However, no official response was forthcoming for a period about eight months and the researcher had to keep reminding the Human Resources Manager that it was important to officially obtain permission. It would be unethical to distribute questionnaires without such. Eventually, the official letter (Appendix 1) granting permission was received and the researcher was able to distribute the questionnaires. Crowther and Lancaster (2009) argue that issues of access to people and information have to be clarified in advance between the researcher and the involved organisation. Informed consent is another important ethical issue.

3.6.2 Informed consent

An invitation was sent by email to employees to invite them to participate in this research project prior to distributing the questionnaires. The invitation briefly presented the purpose of the study and encouraged the LHDA employees to participate in the research. The questionnaire also included a cover letter explaining the purpose and significance of the study. The cover letter also highlighted the ethical considerations that were relevant to this study. If the respondents decided to complete the questionnaire, they were expected to indicate that they have read the cover letter and agreed to voluntarily complete the questionnaire. This to some extent addressed the requirements of informed consent. Greener (2008) indicates that respondents should at least sign a brief statement referring to a document providing relevant research details if they cannot sign the document itself. On the other hand, Cooper and Schindler (2014) suggest that even oral consent is sufficient in most businesses.

3.6.3 Participation

In the previous section informed consent was discussed, and stated that respondents were supposed to indicate that they volunteered to participate prior to completing the questionnaire. Participation in the research was on a voluntary basis and nobody was pressurised to complete the questionnaire; this was clearly spelled out in the cover letter as well. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2014), respondents deserve protection from all sorts of harm and the researcher complied by ensuring that respondents were comfortable with their participation. Cooper and Schindler (2014) also suggest that research must be designed in a manner that no participant suffers physical harm, discomfort, pain, embarrassment, or loss of privacy. The researcher also did not attempt to employ any deceptive means in obtaining information or access to information. Respondents were also afforded enough time and space to answer questionnaires. Objectivity also had to be ensured throughout the research process.

3.6.4 Objectivity

To ensure objectivity the conclusions resulting from data analysis and interpretation have to be objective; thus they should be drawn from actual data and not from own subjectivity or emotional values (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). The quantitative research design that this study has adopted to some degree guarantees the objectivity in the results and consequently, the conclusions drawn. However, the researcher still had to ascertain that there was no interference of any form with the information given on respondents' questionnaires. The importance of responding to all the questions on the questionnaire was emphasised to the respondents, thus ensuring reliable feedback. Sekaran and Bougie (2014) argue that self-administered questionnaires tend to introduce a bias where explanations to questions may be different from person to person. Biases of all forms were avoided at all cost and people who helped distribute questionnaires were asked to refer any question regarding the questionnaire to the researcher. Confidentiality and anonymity are other ethical aspects to be dealt with.

3.6.5 Confidentiality

The privacy guarantee is important for retaining validity of the research and also for protecting participants (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Greener (2008) suggests that participant anonymity is a fundamental requirement in business research, unless the research method used requires that some identity should be relevant to the results, in which case respondents will have to agree to be associated with the research. Furthermore, that anonymity could be ensured by neither putting the names of respondents on the questionnaire, nor in the final report. The confidentiality and anonymity of respondents were protected by using unique numbers on the questionnaire and not employee names or numbers. The unique number was to be used as the identity of the respective questionnaire during data analysis.

3.6.6 Plagiarism

Special attention has to be paid as far as academic referencing and avoidance of plagiarism is concerned (Greener, 2008). Greener (2008) also suggests that peer-reviewed academic journal articles should be read and used for enhancing academic writing. Sekaran and Bougie (2014) describe plagiarism as using other people's original work as one's own, which is fraudulent and is taken seriously in the academic world. The researcher used sources recommended by the University of Free State, including the university's library personnel. Thus, the researcher ensured that credible sources were used and well referenced in the research. The Turnitin software was used to prove that plagiarism was avoided in writing the report.

3.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the research methodology was discussed in detail. The research design, sampling strategy, data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations were discussed. The research design was quantitative and the sampling strategy used was comprehensive. Questionnaires were manually administered to the research subjects and the SPSS program was used for data analysis. The relevant ethical values of

research were observed. In the following chapter the findings and interpretations are presented and elaborated on.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the methodology employed in the study and Chapter 4 continues by presenting the empirical results of this research project. The response rate, biographical data and descriptive statistics are discussed in detail. Thereafter, the analysis on the inferential statistics is presented. The statistics were examined by the UFS statistician using the university's Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 22 program.

4.2 RESPONSE RATE

A total of 276 questionnaires were manually distributed to LHDA employees at various sites. The company's internal mail service was used to deliver the questionnaires to individual personnel members who helped in distributing the questionnaires at their respective sites. The completed questionnaires were either collectively or individually sent to the researcher using the company's internal mail service. A few completed questionnaires were returned by email. Thus both manual distribution and the company's internal mail service were employed. The researcher distributed questionnaires at the Muela Branch where he is based.

In total 149 questionnaires were completed and returned, representing a response rate of 54%. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2014), a response rate above 30% is an acceptable response rate for mail distributed questionnaires. Mcneill and Chapman (2005) suggest that manually distributed questionnaires can achieve 70% to 80% response rate. However, Nulty (2008) states that face-to-face administration of questionnaires achieves on average 56% response rate, whereas online surveys achieves 33.3% response rate. Therefore the 54% response rate reflects a combination of the two distribution methods. Table 4.1 below shows an analysis of the response rate according to the operational sites.

Table 4.1: Response rate per site

Operational Sites	Respondents	Response rate
Katse	24	47%
Maseru	71	56%
Mohale	13	32%
Muela and Polihali	43	69%

The Maseru site, which is the company's headquarters and hosting a larger contingent of personnel, produced the largest number of the respondents, followed by Muela. Only three completed questionnaires were received from the Polihali site and these were therefore not comparable with the other sites. Consequently, these questionnaires were included in the Muela site's responses for analysis. Muela produced the highest response rate at 69% and Mohale produced the lowest response rate at 32%. The response rate pattern in Table 4.1 could be attributed to the fact that the researcher personally delivered questionnaires at the Muela site, whereas colleagues manually distributed questionnaires at the other sites and used the LHDA internal mail service to return the questionnaires. The biographical data of the respondents is analysed in the following section.

4.3 BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

The biographical data related to gender, age, marital status, educational level, operational site, occupation, and tenure is discussed in this section. These biographical variables may impact on the burnout dimensions in varying degrees.

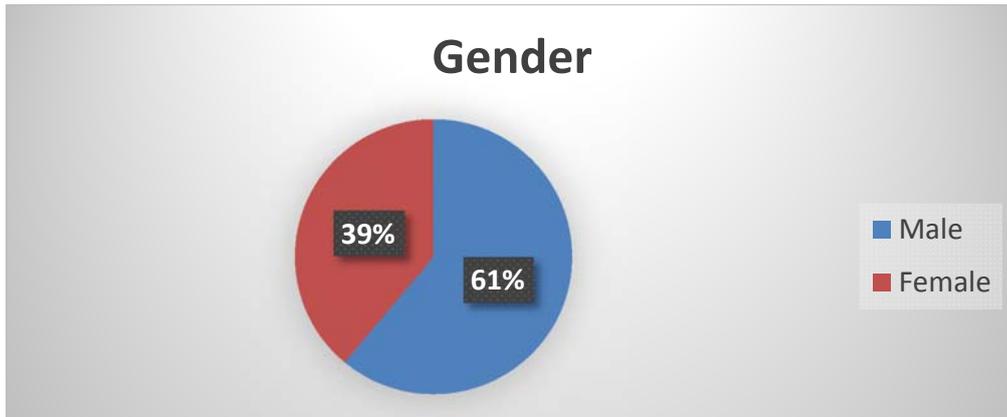


Figure 4.1 Analysis by gender

According to Figure 4.1 it can be concluded that 61% of the respondents are male and 39% female. Therefore, the population is dominated by males and that is correctly representative of the population in the organisation.

Figure 4.2 below indicates that the majority of the respondents (68%), are 36 years of age and older, while 26.5% of the respondents are aged between 25 and 35 years of age. Those younger than 25 years of age made up only 5% of the respondents. Therefore most of the population is made up of the employees who are probably men and women with families and that have substantial work experience.

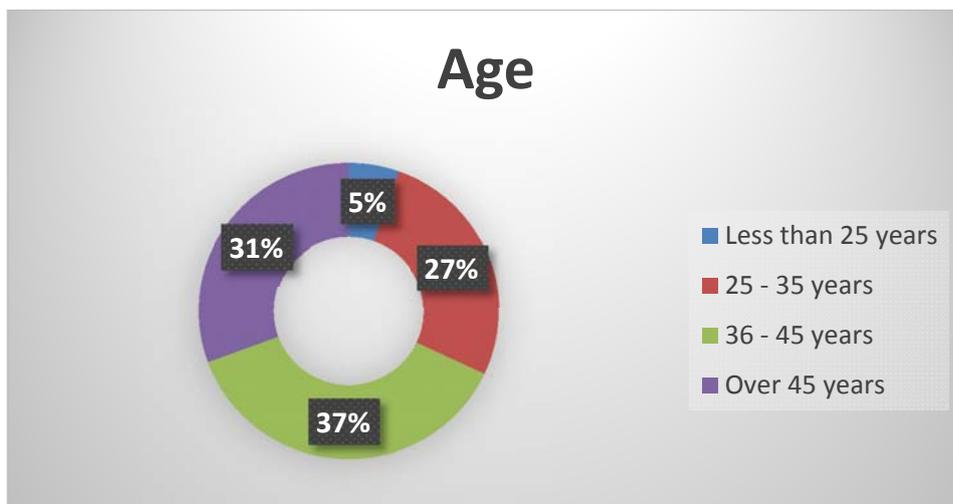


Figure 4.2 Analysis by age

In terms of marital status, married respondents constituted 69%, those who are single 24% and those who are either widowed or divorced 7%, as shown by Figure 4.3 below. Consistent with the conclusions on age analysis, it can be further concluded that most of the employees at the LHDA who responded to the questionnaire are older than 35 years of age and are married.

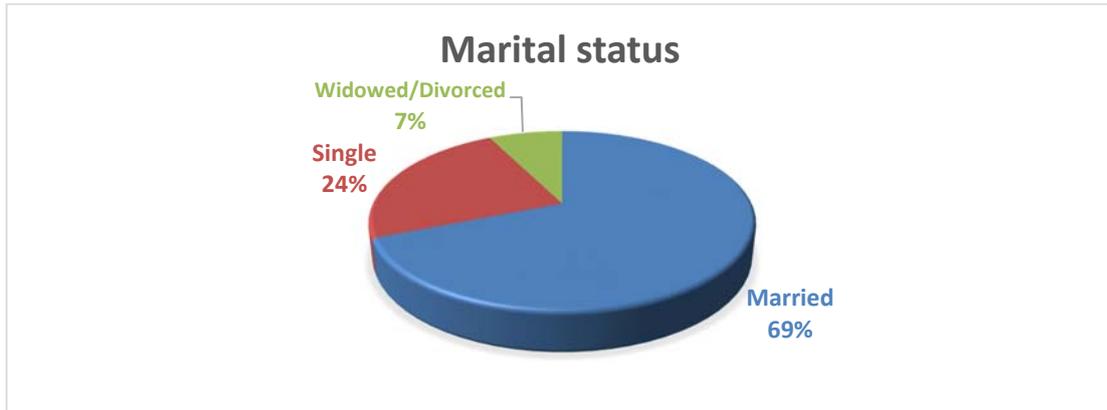


Figure 4.3 Analysis by marital status

Therefore the research population consisted mostly of married employees, followed by those who are single with the widowed or divorced group forming the smallest group. The responses also revealed that nobody belongs to the “other” group of the marital status. The “other” group on the questionnaire represents people who are either separated or are in a stay-together relationship and do not fall in any of the three marital status groups.

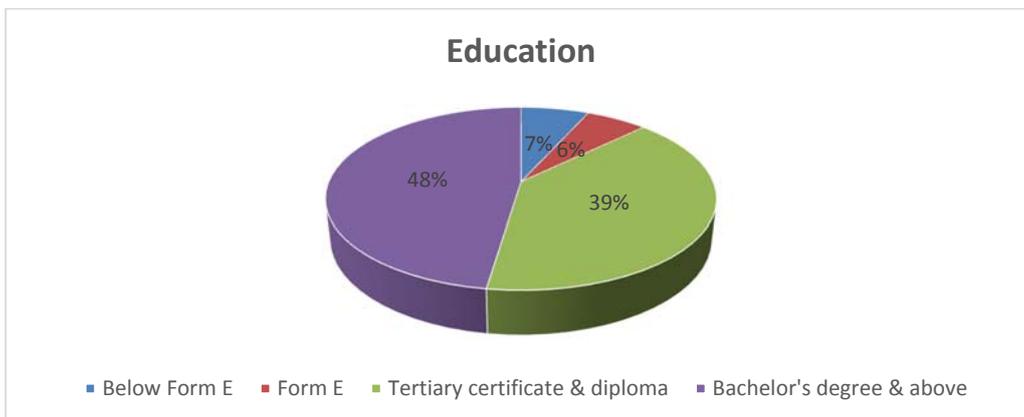


Figure 4.4 Educational levels analysis

Figure 4.4 shows that the respondents who hold at least a bachelor's degree made up 48% and those who hold a certificate or a diploma qualification 39% of the respondents. On the other hand, the respondents who have completed high school (Form E) and those who have never completed high school had almost equal frequencies, at 6.0% and 7% respectively. Thus, most of the people working at the LHDA who responded to the questionnaire hold at least a bachelor's degree, followed by those with either a tertiary certificate or a diploma qualification.

Figure 4.5 below indicates that 48% of the respondents work in Maseru, 27% works in Muela and Polihali, 16% works at Katse and 9% at Mohale. Therefore the Maseru employees dominate the response population followed by Muela and Polihali, then Katse and Mohale respectively. This is representative of the employee distribution per operational site.

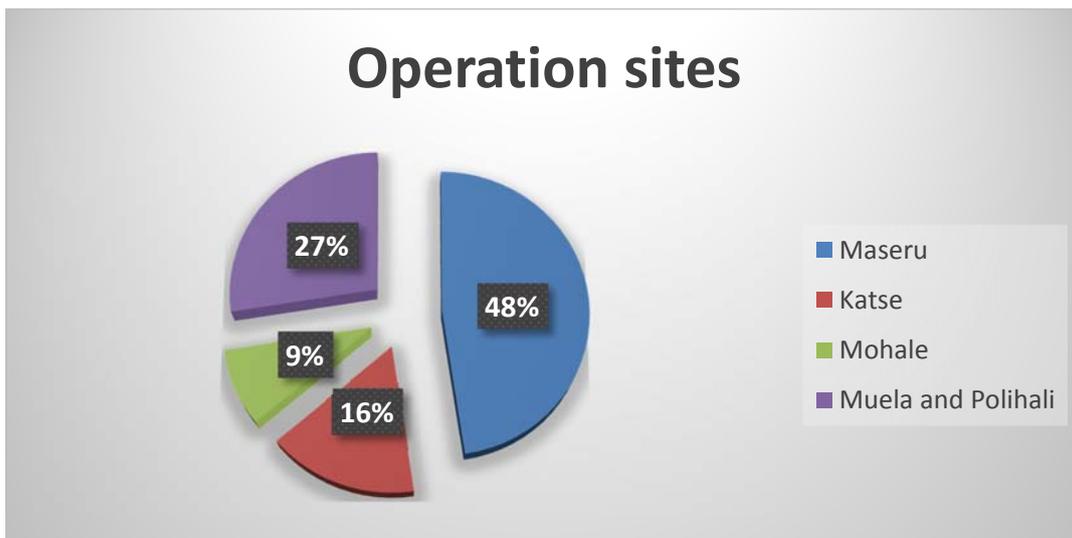


Figure 4.5 Analysis by operational site

In terms of occupation, as shown in Figure 4.6 below, the technical and professional category made up 62% of the respondents. The operative and clerical category follows second at 22%. The management and primary skills category represents the smallest groups at 9% and 7% respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that employees working in the technical and professional categories significantly dominate the research population, followed distantly by the operative and clerical employees. In line with the

conclusion regarding the highest level of education reached, most of the employees in this majority hold at least a diploma qualification. This is understandable in view of the fact that most of the technical works in the organisation require a bachelor's degree as the minimum qualification. However, in some engineering sections technicians with diploma qualifications carry out core activities.

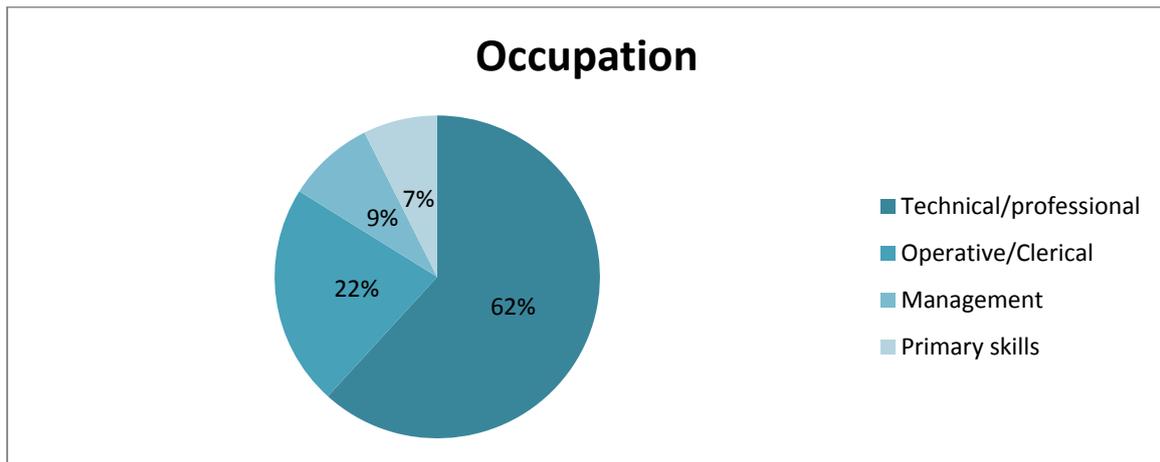


Figure 4.6 Analysis by occupation

Finally, as Figure 4.7 indicates, the majority of the respondents (43%) have only worked at the LHDA for less than five years, while 38% of the respondents have been working for the company for at least 10 years. Thus, it can be concluded that 62% of the population has worked at the organisation for less than 10 years. This conclusion is interesting when the age analysis is considered in conjunction with the above. It appears that the company has a tendency of recruiting mainly older people with substantial work experience; the expectation would be that most of the new employees are young people.

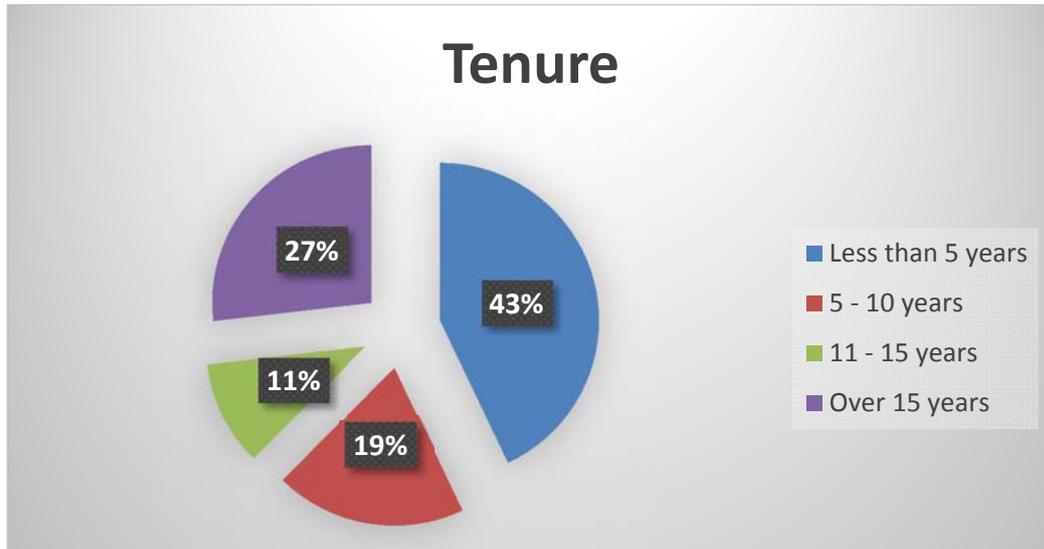


Figure 4.7 Analysis by tenure

4.4 ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

This section discusses the reliability test undertaken on the MBI-GS and the analysis of the responses on the 16 MBI-GS statements.

4.4.1 Reliability test

The reliability test had to be carried out prior to other tests to ascertain that the questionnaire measures the three burnout variables. This test determines whether all the items for exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy actually measured the intended variable. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the items in the questionnaire. The standard is that if the calculated coefficient for a variable is greater than 0.5, it can be concluded that the scale used is reliable. According to Table 4.2, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were 0.770, 0.724 and 0.713 for exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy respectively; thus, the scale used for the three variables was reliable.

Table 4.2: Reliability results

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Exhaustion	0.770	5
Cynicism	0.724	5
Professional efficacy	0.713	6

4.4.2 Analysis of the responses on the questions

Figure 4.8 indicates the responses to the first three questions in the MBI-GS survey; these were the items measuring exhaustion.

Question 1: I feel emotionally drained from my work

According to Figure 4.8 below, 23.6% of the respondents never feel emotionally drained from their work. However, 27.7% feel emotionally drained a few times per year or less, 16.2% once a month or less, 18.9% a few times per month, 2.7% once a week, 9.5% a few times per week and 1.4% feel emotionally drained every day. It can be concluded that 43.9% of the research population rarely feel emotionally drained from their work and 21.6% feel moderately drained, whereas 10.9% feel drained too frequently, either a few times per week or daily. Therefore, the majority of the respondents (67.5%) rarely or never feel emotionally drained.

Exhaustion - Part 1

- Everyday
- A few times a week
- Once a week
- A few times a month
- Once a month or less
- A few times a year or less
- Never



Figure 4.8 Analysis of responses to questions 1 to 3

Question 2: I feel used up at the end of the workday

Figure 4.8 above shows that 22.8% never feel used up at the end of the work day, while 13.4% feel used up a few times a year or less, 14.1% once a month or less, 15.4% a few times a month, 11.4% once a week, 14.1% a few times a week and 8.7% feel used up every day. It can therefore be deduced that 27.5% of the respondents rarely feel used up at the end of a workday and 26.8% feel moderately used up. A few times a year combined with once a month represent a low frequency, whereas a few times a month and once a week combined represent a moderate frequency. On the other hand, 22.8% frequently feel used up at the end of a work day either a few times a week or every day and a similar percentage never feel used up at all. Thus, the majority of the respondents (49.6%) feel either moderately or highly used up at the end of the day. This could be indicative of high job demands for these employees.

Question 3: I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job

According to Figure 4.8, 22.1% of the respondents never feel tired when getting up to face another day on the job. However, 23.5% feel tired a few times a year or less, 16.1% once a month or less, 15.4% a few times a month, 10.1% once a week, 7.4% a few times a week and 5.4% feel tired every day. The conclusion is that 39.6% of the respondents rarely feel tired when they get up to face a day at work, 31.5% feel tired at a moderate frequency, whereas 12.8% too frequently feel tired when getting up for work. The majority of respondents (61.7%) either rarely or never feel tired when they have to get up and face another day at work. Thus, they are eager to get engaged at work.

The results of questions 4 and 6 are included in Figure 4.9.

Question 4: Working all day is really a strain for me

Figure 4.9 below indicates that 29.5% of the respondents are never strained from working the whole day. However, 28.9% feel strained from working all day a few times a year or less, 14.8% once a month or less, 17.5% a few times a month, 3.4% once a

week, 4.0% a few times a week and 2.0% every day. It can be deduced that 43.7% rarely feel strained from working all day and 20.9% feel moderately strained from working all day, whereas 6.0% feel strained too frequently. Thus, the majority of the respondents, namely 73.2%, either rarely or never feels strained, indicating high levels of engagement.

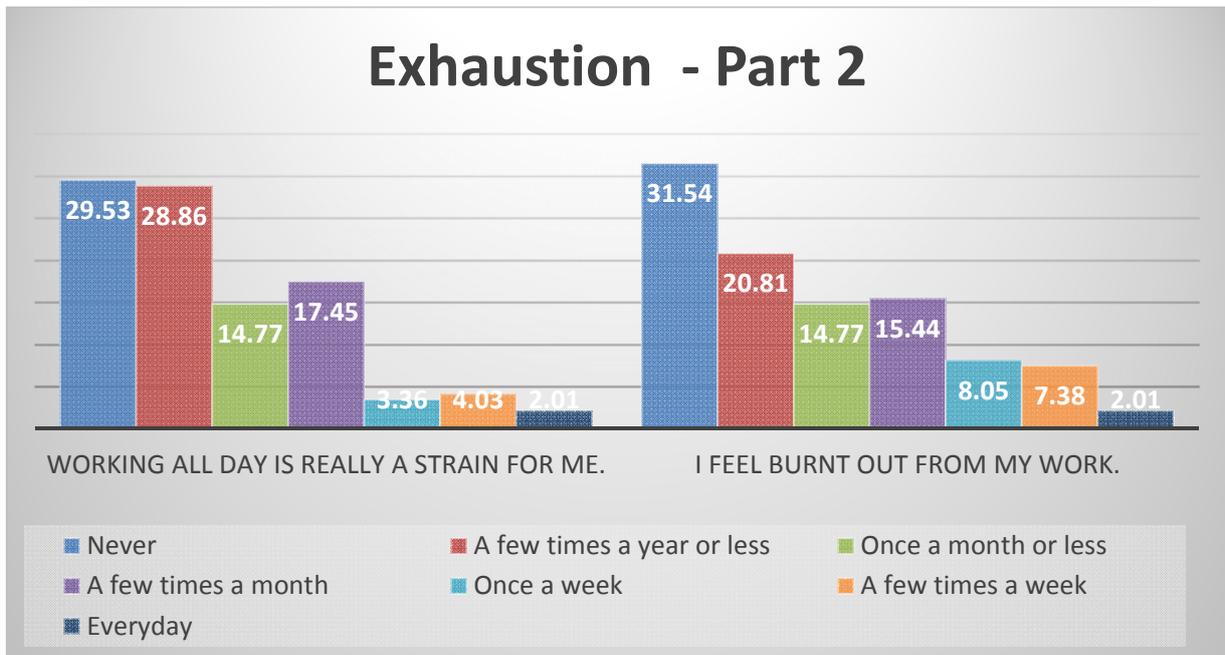


Figure 4.9 Analysis of the responses to questions 4 and 6

Question 6: I feel burnt out from my job

According to Figure 4.9 above, 31.5% never feel burnt out from their jobs. However, 20.8% feel burnt out a few times a year or less, 14.8% feel burnt out once a month or less, 15.4% a few times a month, 8.1% once a week, 7.4% a few times a week and 2.0% every day. Thus, 36% rarely feel burnt out from their jobs, 23.5% feel burnt out at a moderate rate and 9.4% feel burnt out almost daily. Therefore, 67.5% of the LHDA employees who completed the questionnaire rarely or never feel burnt out. Considering the six questions combined it is evident that exhaustion levels are low at the organisation. However, there is a small group of employees revealing high or moderate levels of exhaustion which cannot be ignored.

Figure 4.10 below indicates the responses to questions 8, 9 and 13 on the MBI-GS survey; these are the items measuring cynicism.

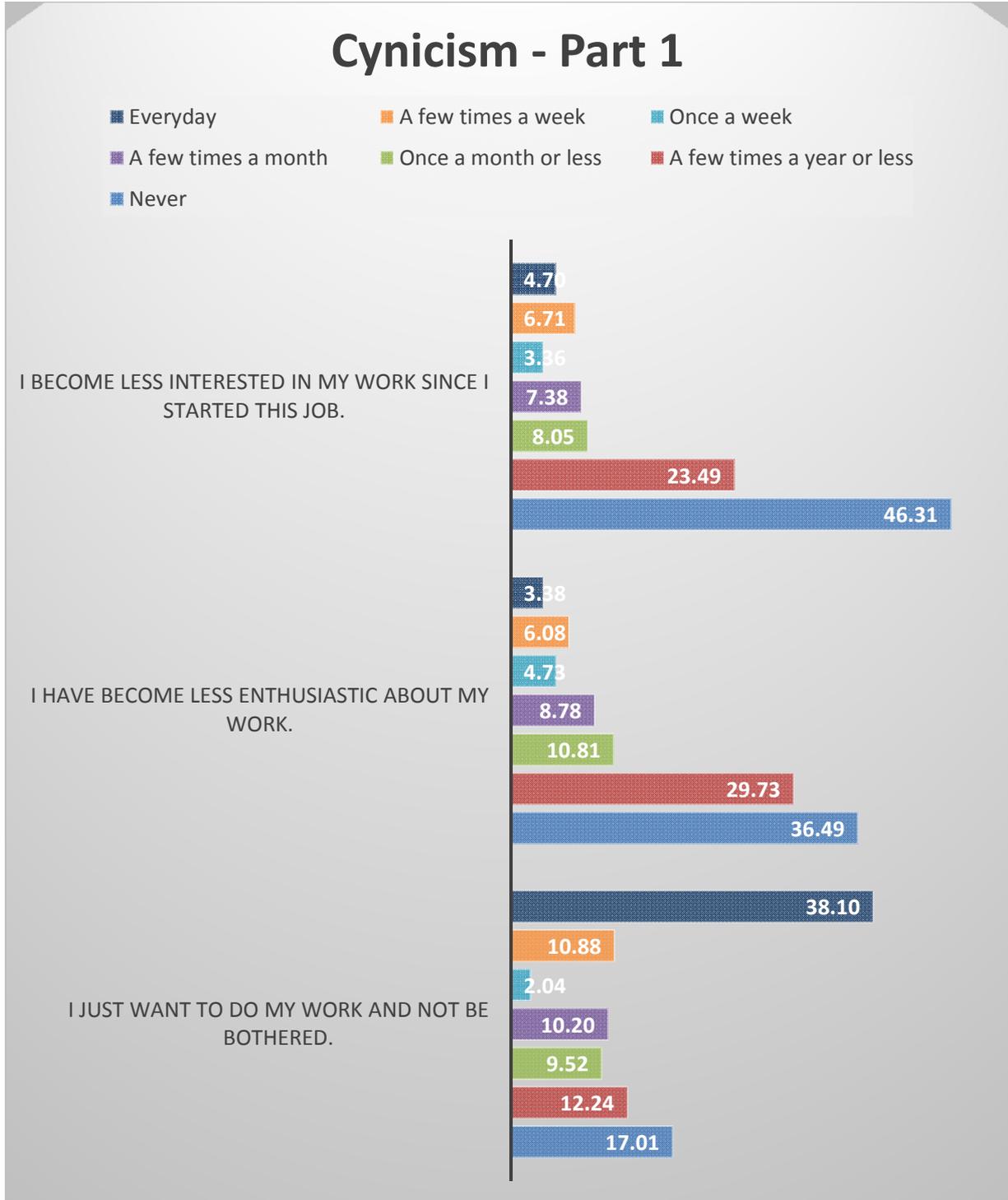


Figure 4.10 Analysis of the responses to questions 8, 9 and 13

Question 8: I have become less interested in my work since I started this job

Figure 4.10 shows that 46.3% of the respondents never became less interested in their jobs. However, 23.5% feel less interested in their jobs a few times a year or less, 8.1% feel less interested in their current jobs once a month or less, 7.4% a few times a month, 3.4% once a week, 6.7% a few times a week and 4.7% every day. It can be concluded that 46.3% never feel less interested in their current jobs, 31.6% rarely feel less interested in their jobs and 10.8% feel less interested at a moderate rate. On the other hand 11.4% feel less interested in their jobs day by day. Therefore most of the employees (77.9%) who completed the questionnaire are still interested in their current jobs and rarely or never became less interested since starting the job.

Question 9: I have become less enthusiastic about my work

According to Figure 4.10, 36.5% of the respondents have not become less enthusiastic about their work. However, 29.7% have become less enthusiastic at a frequency of a few times a year or less, 10.8% once a month or less, 8.8% a few times a month, 4.7% once a week, 6.1% a few times a week and 3.4% every day. The conclusion is that 40.5% have seldom become less interested in their work, 13.5% have become less interested at a moderate rate; whereas 9.5% have become less interested in their work almost every day. So most of the employees (70.2%) who completed the questionnaire have seldom become less enthusiastic about their work or never became less enthusiastic about their work.

Question 13: I just want to do my job and not be bothered

Figure 4.10 depicts that 38.1% of the respondents want to do their jobs and not be bothered on a daily basis. However, 17% never mind being bothered while working, 12.2% would not want to be bothered a few times a year or less, 9.5% once a month or less, 10.2% a few times a month, 2.0% once a week and 10.9% a few times a week. It can be deduced that 49.0% just want to work and not be bothered, 12.2% only tolerate being bothered to some extent while working, 21.7% barely mind being bothered and 17% do not mind being distracted while working. Therefore the marginal majority of the population (51%) prefers to do their work and not be bothered.



Figure 4.11 Analysis of the responses to questions 14 and 15

Question 14: I have become more cynical about whether my work contributes anything

According to Figure 4.11, 41.8% of the respondents have never become more cynical about whether their work contributes anything. However, 20.6% have become more cynical about the contribution of their work at a frequency of a few times per year or less, 9.6% once a month, 11.6% at few times a month, 2.7% once a week, 4.1% at few times a week and 9.6% every day. It can be comfortably concluded that 41.8% never became more cynical about their contribution in the company, 30.2% have seldom become more cynical, 14.3% have moderately become cynical and 13.7% have become more cynical about the contribution of their work almost every day. So most of the employees (72%) who completed the questionnaire have never or rarely become more cynical about whether their work contributes anything.

Question 15: I doubt the significance of my work

Figure 4.11 indicates that 63.5% never doubted the significance of their work. However, 14.9% have doubted the significance of their work few times a year or less, 6.1% once a month, 5.4% few times a month, 2.0% once a week, 4.7% few times a week and 3.4% every day. It can be deduced that 63.5% do not doubt the significance of their work, but 21% rarely doubt the significance of their work, 7.4% moderately doubt the significance and 8.1% doubt the significance of their work daily. The majority of the population does not doubt the significance of their work and this majority (63.5%) is bigger than the combination of those who seldom, moderately or frequently doubt the significance of their work.

Figure 4.12 depicts the responses to questions 5, 7 and 10 on the MBI-GS survey; these are the items measuring professional efficacy.

Question 5: I can effectively solve the problems that arise in my work

According to Figure 4.12, 54.4% of the respondents can effectively solve problems arising from their work every day. However, 28.9% can effectively solve problems at work few times a week, 4.0% once a week, 3.4% few times a month, 1.3% once a month or less, 5.4% few times a year or less; whereas 2.7% cannot effectively solve problems arising from their work. It can be comfortably concluded that 73.3% of the respondents can effectively solve problems at work. Thus, the population is dominated by the significant majority of employees (73.3%) who can effectively solve problems arising from their work.

Question 7: I feel I am making an effective contribution to what this organisation does

Figure 4.12 shows that 67.8% of the respondents feel that they are making an effective contribution in the organisation every day. However, 18.1% feel they are making an effective contribution in what the organisation does a few times a week, 1.3% once a week, 6.0% few times a month, 0.7% once a month or less, 5.4% few times a year or less and 0.7% feel they are not effectively contributing anything at all. The conclusion is

that 85.9% contribute effectively to the company goals, which reflects a substantial dominance over those who feel their effective contribution is modest.

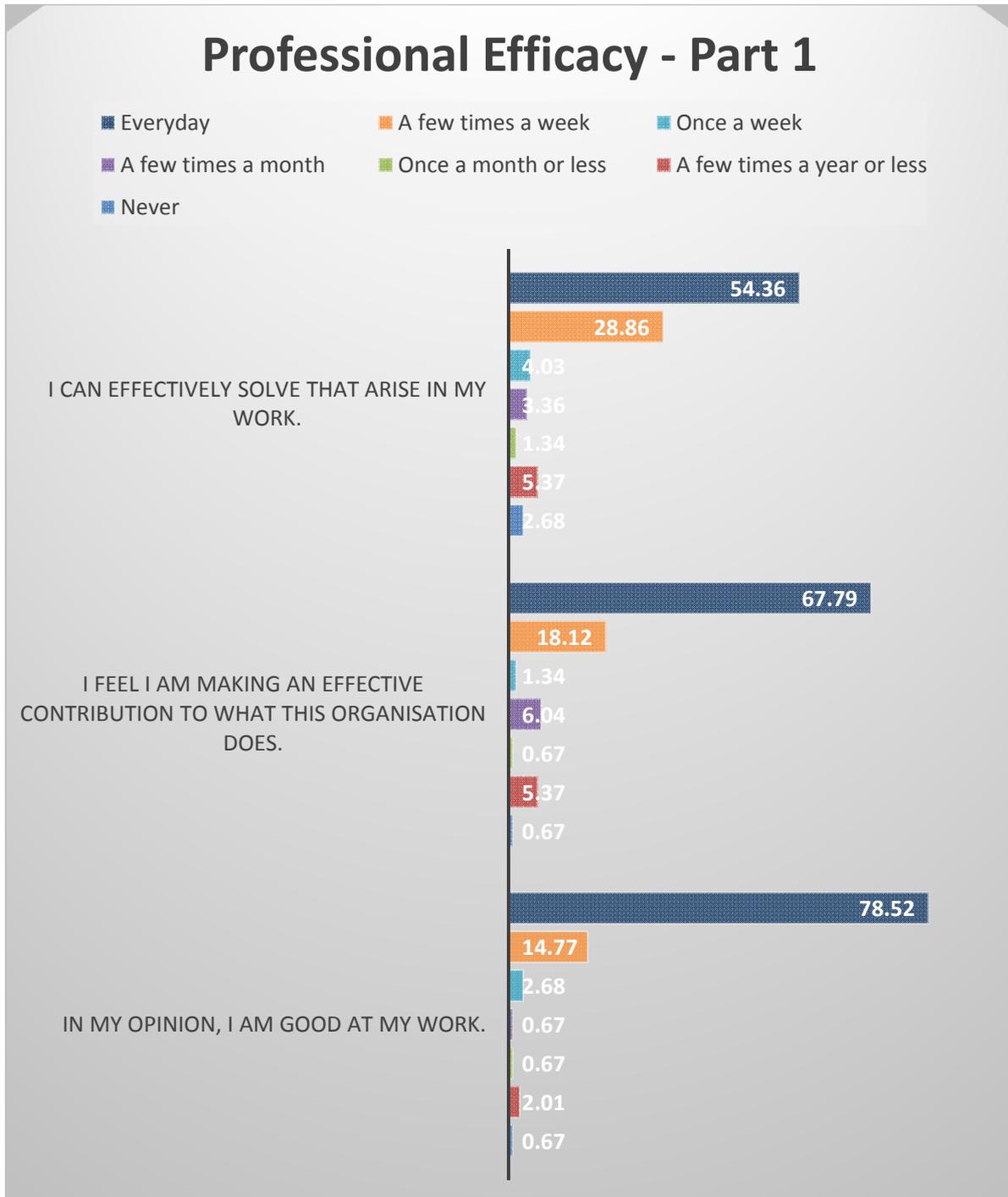


Figure 4.12 Analysis of the responses to questions 5, 7 and 10

Question 10: In my opinion, I am good at my work

In Figure 4.12, 78.5% of the respondents believe they are good at their work every day. However, 14.8% believe they are good at their work a few times a week, 2.7% once a week, 0.7% a few times a month, 0.7% once a month or less, 2.0% a few times a year or less and 0.7 do not believe that they are good at all. It can be deduced that the overwhelming majority (93.3%) of the population feel that they are good at their work.

Question 11: I feel exhilarated when I accomplish something at work

Figure 4.13 depicts that 58.1% of the respondents feel exhilarated every day when they achieve something at work. While 16.9% feel exhilarated when they accomplish something at work a few times a week, 3.4% once a week, 6.8% a few times a month, 6.1% once a month or less, 4.7% a few times a year or less and 4.1% never feel exhilarated at all when they achieve something at work. The conclusion is that 75.0% of the population feels exhilarated when they achieve something at work compared to 10.2% who moderately feel exhilarated, 10.8% who rarely feel exhilarated and 4.1% who never feel exhilarated at all. Thus, the majority of the employees (75%) feel exhilarated when they accomplish something at work.

Question 12: I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job

According to Figure 4.13, 41.5% of the respondents accomplish many worthwhile things in their current jobs on a daily basis, while 27.9% of the respondents have accomplished many worthwhile things a few times a week, 5.4% once a week, 11.6% a few times a month, 8.2% once a month or less, 4.1% a few times a year or less and 1.4% believe they have not achieved anything worthwhile. This gives the conclusion that 69.4% believe they have accomplished many important things in their jobs almost every day, 17.0% have achieved worthwhile things at a moderate rate, 12.3% have rarely achieved and 1.4% never achieved anything worthwhile. Therefore the population is dominated (69.4%) by employees who have accomplished many worthwhile things in their jobs.

Professional Efficacy - Part 2

■ Everyday
 ■ A few times a week
 ■ Once a week
 ■ A few times a month
■ Once a month or less
 ■ A few times a year or less
 ■ Never

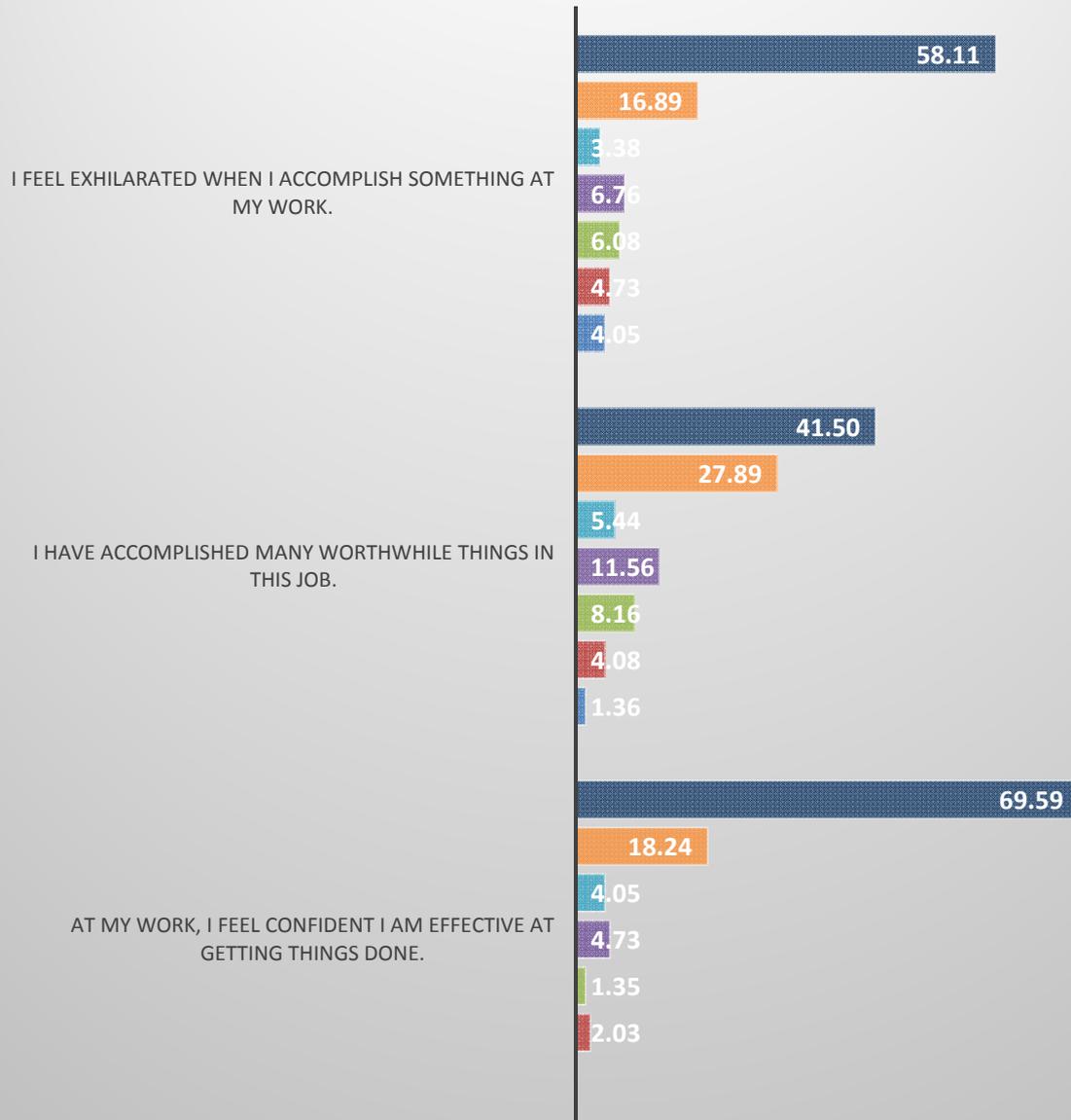


Figure 4.13 Analysis of the responses to questions 11, 12 and 16

Question 16: At my work, I feel confident that I am effective at getting things done.

Figure 4.13 depicts that 69.6% of the respondents feel confident that they are effective at getting things done at work every day, while 18.2% feel confident that they are effective at getting things done a few times a week, 4.1% once a week, 4.7% a few times a month, 1.4% once a month or less, and 2.0% a few times a year. Notably everybody feels that they are confident to some extent to get things done at work. It can be deduced that 87.8% feel confident that they are effectively getting things done almost every day, 8.8% get things done at a moderate rate and only 3.4% rarely feel confident.

4.4.3 Interpretation of the responses to the questions

The analysis of the responses in the previous sections can be interpreted to reflect the following. The LHDA employees who completed the questionnaire experience exhaustion at varying degrees with the majority indicating that they do not feel exhausted at all, and only a small group indicating that they experience exhaustion daily. Thus, the majority may not be exposed to factors that contribute to exhaustion or they have some resistive mechanism against such factors. In terms of cynicism, the majority are not cynical about their work, with only a small percentage indicating cynicism. Further tests and analysis should be used to identify the sections of the employees that are either exhausted or cynical about their work. However small, it could be that the affected minority includes people that are performing critical activities. Lastly, in terms of professional efficacy, the employees reflect high levels of professional efficacy. Thus, they generally have the confidence that their achievements are worthwhile, in line with the company goals or that they at least have the capabilities and abilities to achieve in their jobs.

4.4.4 Analysing the results of the questionnaire according to biographical data

The responses to the relevant questions on exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy were summed. Responses to questions 1–4 and 6 in the MBI-GS were

summed for exhaustion; responses to questions 8, 9 and 13–15 summed for cynicism and lastly those to questions 5, 7, 10–12 and 16 summed up for professional efficacy. The averages were calculated for each of the variables. The scoring key for the MBI-GS is applied as shown in Table 4.3, according to the MBI-GS key on the questionnaire provided by the developers.

Table 4.3 MBI-GS scoring key

Level	Exhaustion	Cynicism	Professional Efficacy
Mean			
High	16 or over	11 or over	30 or over
Moderate	11 – 15	6 – 10	24 – 29
Low	0 – 10	0 – 5	0 – 23

The high level of mean ranges for exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy are 16 or over, 11 or over and 30 or over respectively. The moderate level mean range is 11–15, 6–10 and 24–29 for exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy respectively. On the other hand, the low level range is 0–10, 0–5 and 0–23 for exhaustion, cynicism and professional efficacy. Therefore, as depicted in Table 4.4, the aggregate exhaustion level is low with a mean of 9.84; cynicism on the other hand moderate at 8.87 whereas professional efficacy is high at 30.73.

Table 4.4 Aggregates

Variables	Mean
Total	
Exhaustion	9.84
Cynicism	8.87
Professional efficacy	30.73

Gender

Table 4.5 below shows that both males and females are experiencing low levels of exhaustion at mean values of 10.43 and 8.91 respectively. Both genders reflect moderate levels of cynicism at 10.14 and 6.86 for males and females respectively even though males reflect a higher level of cynicism. Both also reveal high professional efficacy levels at 30.79 and 30.64 respectively.

Table 4.5 Gender

Variables	Male	Female
Total		
Exhaustion	10.43	8.91
Cynicism	10.14	6.86
Professional efficacy	30.79	30.64

Age

All age groups indicate low levels of exhaustion; however the age groups of 36–45 years of age and over 45 years of age showed higher levels of exhaustion than the other two groups at 10.29 and 10.38 respectively, as shown in Table 4.6. On average all the age groups experience a moderate level of cynicism and high professional efficacy. However, those younger than 25 years of age scored highest on both with means of 9.88 and 32.00 respectively. This could be attributable to anxiety in the new job as the new employees try to settle; however, at the same time they indicate enthusiasm and a belief that they have what it takes to excel.

Table 4.6 Age groups

Variables	Less than 25 years	25 - 35 years	36 - 45 years	Over 45 years
Total				
Exhaustion	6.75	9.08	10.29	10.38
Cynicism	9.88	7.79	9.07	9.20
Professional efficacy	32.00	31.54	29.71	31.09

Marital status

Table 4.7 shows that both married and single employees experience low levels of exhaustion; however, married individuals indicate a higher level of exhaustion than singles. The group representing those who are either widowed or divorced indicates moderate levels of exhaustion with a mean of 10.80. All the groups reflect moderate levels of cynicism with the married group scoring highest at 9.31. Both married and single employees indicate high professional efficacy, whereas the widowed or divorced individuals reflect moderate professional efficacy at a mean of 28.9. These results reflect that the widowed or divorced employees who completed the questionnaire are experiencing moderate levels of burnout. This could be attributable to the increased responsibilities for this category of employees, who no longer share family responsibilities with spouses. The literature discussed in Chapter 2 revealed that the strain in the family domain can possibly spill into the work domain and contribute to burnout.

Table 4.7 Marital status

Variables	Married	Single	Widowed/Divorced
Total			
Exhaustion	10.42	8.09	10.80
Cynicism	9.31	8.17	7.10
Professional efficacy	30.70	31.09	28.90

Education

In terms of the highest educational levels reached, all categories reflect low exhaustion levels with averages ranging from 8.30 to 10.00. However, they also show moderate levels of cynicism with the exception being the group who never completed high school, which reflects a high level of cynicism with a mean of 14.20. These people normally belong to the primary skills category and probably perceive that their work is being looked down upon by their colleagues who work in other categories. Routine cleaning and housekeeping forms the bulk of the work in this category. They could also be frustrated by the reality that growth opportunities for them are non-existent.

Table 4.8 Education level

Variables	Below Form E	Form E	Tertiary certificate & diploma	Bachelor's degree & above
Total				
Exhaustion	8.30	10.00	9.97	9.93
Cynicism	14.20	8.22	9.61	7.58
Professional efficacy	33.20	32.78	30.41	30.39

All categories reveal high levels of professional efficacy with a mean range of 30.41 to 33.20, as shown in Table 4.8.

Operational sites

Respondents in all operational sites reveal low levels of exhaustion, with the exception of Mohale that reflects a moderate level of exhaustion at a mean of 10.92. This could be attributed to a lot of travelling that personnel members have to do in carrying out their work.

Table 4.9 Operation sites

Variables	Maseru	Katse	Mohale	Muela and Polihali
Total				
Exhaustion	9.72	9.58	10.92	9.92
Cynicism	8.41	10.17	9.92	9.03
Professional efficacy	29.92	32.25	33.62	30.00

Cynicism levels are moderate for all sites ranging from 8.41 to 10.17 with the professional efficacy levels also high at a mean range of 29.92 to 33.62.

Occupation

Occupational groups reveal low levels of exhaustion with their averages ranging from 8.64 to 10.15 as indicated in Table 4.10. However, they show moderate cynicism levels with the exception of the primary skills group revealing high levels of cynicism at 12.82. This is probably due to reasons already tabled in the previous section on educational levels.

Table 4.10 Occupation

Variables	Technical/professional	Operative/Clerical	Management	Primary skills
Total				
Exhaustion	9.91	9.91	10.15	8.64
Cynicism	8.60	9.03	7.00	12.82
Professional efficacy	29.96	32.00	32.38	31.45

Professional efficacy levels are high for all categories ranging from 29.96 to 32.38.

Tenure

Table 4.11 indicates that all tenure groups reveal moderate levels of exhaustion with the exception of respondents who have only been at the LHDA for less than five years, whose exhaustion levels are low at a mean of 7.92. These results are indicative of high job demands in the organisation, which tend to strain employees to some extent the longer they stay at the organisation. The findings could also be attributable to the reality that many employees stay in similar positions for years as growth opportunities are limited. According to the literature discussed in Chapter 2, these experiences can contribute to increased levels of exhaustion. However, the professional efficacy levels are high for all tenure groups, revealing high confidence levels across all the employee groupings.

Table 4.11 Tenure

Variables	Less than 5 years	5 - 10 years	11 - 15 years	Over 15 years
Total				
Exhaustion	7.92	11.34	10.81	11.43
Cynicism	8.23	8.90	11.19	8.93
Professional efficacy	30.06	31.34	31.75	30.95

The results reveal that the demographic groups analysed, generally reflect low exhaustion levels, moderate levels of cynicism as well as high professional efficacy. However, the following exceptional findings were also made. Males are more cynical about their jobs than women – perhaps they are more eager to grow and not remain in similar positions for a long time. People who are either widowed or divorced are experiencing moderate levels of exhaustion and have moderate professional efficacy. Possibly increased family stress is spilling into the work domain, which is consistent with the literature discussed in Chapter 2. The level of cynicism is highest amongst the individuals who never finished high school. These people also fall in the primary skills category and perhaps perceive that their work is regarded less important by the other employees. All tenure groups reveal moderate levels of exhaustion, with the exception of employees who have been in the organisation for less than five years and who seem to experience low exhaustion levels. Therefore, the length of service at the LHDA seems to contribute to burnout.

4.5 INFERENCE STATISTICS

This section discusses some of the tests used to determine whether there are significant differences among demographic groups. The tests undertaken in this analysis include the t-test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and post hoc tests.

4.5.1 T-test: Gender

The T-test is used when there are two groups to determine if the groups' means of the interval variables differ from one another. It was tested whether or not the levels of exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy differ between males and females. The p-value was used for this test and compared to the value of 0.1 (10%). If the two averages are different from each other, the p-value will be less than 0.1 and vice versa.

Table 4.12 T-test: Gender

Variables	t-statistics	P-value	Mean Difference
Exhaustion	1.449	0.149	1.515
Cynicism	3.036	0.003	3.281
Professional efficacy	0.156	0.876	0.153

The p-value for exhaustion is 0.149 which is greater than 0.1, meaning that the level of exhaustion is the same between males and females. The p-value for cynicism is 0.003 which is less than 0.1. This means that the level of cynicism differs between males and females, with males having a higher level than the females. This could be attributed to men wanting to climb the responsibility ladder as soon as possible; therefore they soon tend to feel slightly distant from their current posts. The p-value for professional efficacy is 0.876 which is greater than 0.1, meaning that the level of professional efficacy is the same between males and females.

4.5.2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

The analysis of variance was used to establish if the groups' means of interval variables differ from one another; it is applicable when there are three groups or more to compare. It was thus used for the following demographics: age, marital status, education, operational sites, occupation, as well as tenure.

Age

It was tested whether or not the levels of exhaustion, cynicism, as well as that of professional efficacy differ among the four age groups.

Table 4.13 ANOVA: Age

Variables	F statistic	P-value
Exhaustion	1.069	0.364
Cynicism	0.448	0.719
Professional efficacy	0.983	0.403

All p-values are greater than 0.1 which indicates that there are no significant differences among the different age groups. This means that the levels of exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy are the same across all age groups.

Marital status

It was tested whether or not the levels of exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy differ among the three marital status groups.

Table 4.14 ANOVA: Marital status

Variables	F statistic	P-value
Exhaustion	1.833	0.164
Cynicism	1.157	0.317
Professional efficacy	0.289	0.750

From Table 4.14, it can be concluded that all p-values are greater than 0.1 which indicates that there are no significant differences among the different marital status groups. This means that the levels of exhaustion, cynicism, as well as professional efficacy are the same across all marital status groups.

Education

The levels of exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy were tested whether or not they differ among the four education groups.

Table 4.15 ANOVA: Education

Variables	F statistic	P-value
Exhaustion	0.214	0.886
Cynicism	3.520	0.017
Professional efficacy	1.110	0.347

The p-value for cynicism is 0.017 which is less than 0.1, meaning that the levels of cynicism differ among the education groups. The p-values for exhaustion and professional efficacy are greater than 0.1 (0.886 and 0.347 respectively) which indicates that there are no significant differences among the different educational groups. This means that the levels of exhaustion as well as professional efficacy are the same across all educational groups. The Tukey test had to be used because there are significant differences for cynicism, requiring a post hoc analysis to determine which of the groups are significantly different.

Table 4.16 Post hoc test: Tukey HSD (cynicism)

Education		Mean Difference	P-value
Below Form E	Bachelor's degree & above	6.623	0.015

The difference in levels of cynicism is between those who never completed high school education (below Form E) and those with at least a bachelor's degree qualification. This is attributed to the factors discussed in the previous section on educational levels.

Operational sites

It was tested whether or not the levels of exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy differ among the four operational sites groups.

Table 4.17 ANOVA: Operational sites

Variables	F statistic	P-value
Exhaustion	0.150	0.929
Cynicism	0.558	0.643
Professional efficacy	2.178	0.093

From Table 4.17 all p-values are greater than 0.1 which indicate that there are no significant differences among the four operational sites. This means that the levels of exhaustion, cynicism, as well as professional efficacy are the same across all operational sites.

Occupation

The levels of exhaustion, cynicism and professional efficacy were tested to determine whether they differ among the four occupational groups.

Table 4.18 ANOVA: Occupation

Variables	F statistic	P-value
Exhaustion	0.150	0.929
Cynicism	1.740	0.161
Professional efficacy	1.482	0.222

All p-values are greater than 0.1 which indicates that there are no significant differences among the four occupational groups. This means that the levels of exhaustion, cynicism, as well as professional efficacy are the same across all occupational groups.

Tenure

It was also tested whether or not the levels of exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy differ among the four tenure groups.

Table 4.19 ANOVA: Tenure

Variables	F statistic	P-value
Exhaustion	3.763	0.012
Cynicism	0.852	0.468
Professional efficacy	0.564	0.639

The p-value for exhaustion is 0.012 which is less than 0.1. This means that the levels of exhaustion differ among the four tenure groups. The p-values for cynicism and professional efficacy are greater than 0.1 (0.486 and 0.639 respectively) which indicates that there are no significant differences among different tenure groups. This means that the levels of exhaustion, cynicism, as well as professional efficacy are the same across all tenure groups. However, the Tukey test was required due to the significant differences for cynicism, to determine which of the tenure groups are significantly different.

Table 4.20 Post hoc test: Tukey HSD (exhaustion)

Tenure		Mean Difference	P-value
Less than 5 years	5 - 10 years	-3.423	0.062
	Over 15 years	-3.503	0.025

The difference in levels of exhaustion is between those with less than five years of service and those with 5–10 years as well as those with less than five years of service and those with more than 15 years of service. The level of exhaustion is lower for those

with less than five years of service. It can be deduced that exhaustion increases as the years of service increase and this is attributable to factors already presented in the previous section on tenure.

The results from the analysis of the inferential statistics reveal that levels of cynicism differ significantly between men and women. Men are more cynical about their work than women. The difference is also significant between the levels of cynicism felt by graduates in the company and individuals who never completed high school education. The latter feels more cynical about their work than the former, attributable to reasons already presented in the previous sections of this chapter. The levels of exhaustion significantly differ between employees with less than five years of service and other age groups. The other age groups reflect higher exhaustion levels, indicating that tenure contributes to burnout at the LHDA. The levels of exhaustion, cynicism, as well as professional efficacy are the same across all age groups, all occupational groups and all marital status groups.

4.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the findings from the research study were presented and discussed. The demographic data were analysed as well as the descriptive statistics. The inferential statistics, including the results from the t-test and ANOVA, were also discussed. The conclusions and recommendations for this study are presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 discussed the findings and interpretations of the quantitative data of the study. The data were analysed in consideration of the biographical variables and different categories of employees at the LHDA reflected varying degrees of burnout. This last chapter of the study discusses the conclusions drawn from the research study, followed by the recommendations which are substantiated by the literature from Chapter 2.

5.2 MAIN CONCLUSIONS

The primary objective of the study was to determine the level of employee burnout at the LHDA. In addition, the first secondary objective was to determine the level of burnout with regard to the various dimensions of burnout at the LHDA. The final secondary objective identified the category of employees experiencing the highest level of burnout at the LHDA. Burnout was measured using the MBI-GS questionnaire, which measures burnout based on three dimensions, namely exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy.

The results in Chapter 4 indicate that there are various levels of exhaustion at the LHDA. The majority of the LHDA employees who completed the questionnaire do not experience exhaustion at all; the second largest group experiences moderate levels of exhaustion, and the smallest group experiences exhaustion daily. These findings are consistent with the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.2) where it is stated that in large organisations like the LHDA surveys tend to establish that people are on the continuum of feeling exhausted on a daily basis to never feeling exhausted at all. The conclusion reached is that the majority of the employees who completed the questionnaire may not be exposed to factors that contribute to exhaustion or they have personal qualities like emotional intelligence and self-efficacy. These qualities, as

discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.14, have substantial negative effects on burnout. The results reveal that the LHDA employees who completed the questionnaire generally experience low exhaustion levels with a mean of 9.84. The exceptions, however, include the widowed or divorced, and employees who have been working at the LHDA for more than five years; these individuals appear to be experiencing moderate levels of exhaustion. Even though the analysis on inferential statistics does not reveal significant differences regarding exhaustion levels across marital groups, the mean for the widowed or divorced group indicates that this group experiences a moderate level of exhaustion. This is consistent with the literature as discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.10, which indicates that there is a probability of burnout occurring if strain spills over from the family domain to the work domain or vice versa. Employees with tenure of more than five years also have moderate exhaustion levels. This finding is inconsistent with the discussion in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.7, which reveals that the older and more experienced workers experience the lowest level of burnout. Perhaps job demands increase with tenure at the LHDA since the discussion in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.1 suggests that excessive demands and inadequate resources increase exhaustion. Chapter 2, Section 2.4.2 indicates that lack of organisational support and growth opportunities tend to contribute to exhaustion as much as high job demands. On the contrary, where employers provide support and growth opportunities, employees tend to feel more dedicated to their work. Limited growth opportunities is a reality for most of the LHDA employees, as the tendency in the organisation is to recruit new employees from outside the company.

The level of cynicism, the second burnout dimension, was also measured and the results indicate that the overall level of cynicism is moderate at the LHDA. The majority of the LHDA employees who completed the questionnaire are almost not cynical at all about their work, others are moderately cynical about their work and those who are highly cynical represent the minority. Therefore, it can be concluded that most of the employees who completed the questionnaire feel interested and enthusiastic about their work. However, the overall cynicism average of 8.87 indicates that the level of cynicism at the LHDA is moderate. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1.2, states that cynicism tends to be mostly related to inadequate organisational esteem and excessive demands. The

research results reveal that men are more cynical about their work than women, probably because they are much more eager to climb the responsibility ladder and not remain in similar positions for a long time. Therefore, if the expected recognition is not forthcoming, they start to feel negatively or are indifferent to their current jobs. Remarkably, significant difference exists between the levels of cynicism felt by employees with university degrees and individuals who never completed high school education. The latter group reflects higher levels of cynicism at their work than the graduates. On the other hand, the employees with at least a bachelors' degree are more interested and enthusiastic about their work. The mean of 12.82 reflects a high level of cynicism for the primary skills category, even though the inferential statistics did not reveal any significant difference in levels of cynicism across the occupational groups. Most of the employees in this category did not complete high school education and they perform either labourers' or housekeeping activities. Perhaps they perceive that their duties are being undermined by colleagues in other occupational categories and tend to feel indifferent to their work as a result. According to Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1.2, inadequate organisational esteem is positively related to cynicism. Chapter 2, Section 2.4.9, also suggests that constant negative and tormenting behaviour that the individual has no control over can deplete one's emotional energy and sense of identity with the work.

Overall the LHDA employees who completed the questionnaire reflect high levels of professional efficacy. Thus, they generally feel competent and have the confidence required to achieve their work. They also believe in themselves and in their capabilities. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1.3 indicates that the level of autonomy someone has over the work is directly correlated to the level of personal accomplishment. Perhaps employees in various positions have the latitude to exercise some autonomy at work. The exception was the widowed or divorced employees, who indicated moderate professional efficacy with an average of 28.90; however, the inferential statistics did not indicate any significant difference in the levels of professional efficacy across the marital status groups. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the level of professional inefficacy, the third burnout dimension, is low at the LHDA.

The results lead to the conclusion that the overall level of burnout is low at the LHDA. In view of the burnout-engagement continuum theory described in Chapter 2, these results are indicative of high employee engagement levels at the LHDA. However, further research on engagement in a similar context should be conducted to confirm the inference. The burnout dimensions overall reveal low exhaustion, moderate cynicism as well as high professional efficacy. The levels of exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy are the same across all ages, all occupational groups and all marital status groups. Men are more cynical about their work than women. People who did not finish high school education reflect high levels of cynicism, whereas those employed at the LHDA for more than five years reveal moderate exhaustion levels. Further research needs to be undertaken to establish the factors influencing these results.

The conclusions reached provide the following responses to the research questions tabled in Chapter 1 of this study. Firstly, that the overall burnout level is low at the LHDA. Secondly, that generally the level of exhaustion at the LHDA is low, cynicism level moderate while the level of professional efficacy is high. Thirdly, employees who did not finish high school education are experiencing the highest level of burnout at the LHDA, followed by those who have been in the company for more than five years and male employees. On the other hand, employees who are less than 25 years of age reflect the lowest level of burnout. This could be attributable to the fact that young employees tend to have a lot of vigour, dedication, and eagerness to perform in their jobs. The LHDA management reflects the second lowest burnout level. Perhaps the autonomy they have and the resources at their disposal assist in curbing burnout. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3 suggests that job resources promote work engagement. In line with the conclusions reached in this section recommendations are next presented.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The results reveal that the levels of burnout at the LHDA are low despite the restructuring phases that the organisation had had to go through; this is highly commendable. It also indicates a noteworthy positive, in the sense that it could be

revealing that most of the employees are engaged in their respective works. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2 states that burnout and engagement have opposite effects on the work outcomes, such as job satisfaction and turnover. The company is reported to be experiencing very low turnover rates and the most recent salary survey conducted in the country revealed that the LHDA pays better salaries than companies in similar industries. Chapter 2, Section 2.4.1 suggests that a fair wage system or economic resources can be used as an instrument for curbing burnout and raising job satisfaction. However, further research needs to be conducted to confirm that the high retention rate is due to favourable working conditions and not the limited job opportunities in the country. Employee wellness programmes implemented by the company provides the organisational support and commitment to personnel members. According to Chapter 2, Section 2.4.2, lack of organisational support contributes to extensive exhaustion, whereas organisational commitment provides feelings of belonging and stability within the workforce. Despite the positives explained above, the researcher would like to put forward some recommendations in line with the shortcomings observed.

5.3.1 Prevention of burnout

The organisation should consider groups that experience burnout as development areas going forward and not overlook the situation as negligible. Chapter 2, Section 2.2 indicates that many people experience resource reduction in ways that edge off their vigour, confidence, and dedication. Thus, burnout can subtly set in until it is fully fledged and therefore needs to be prevented. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2 indicates that engagement represents a desired goal for any strategy of burnout intervention. The best intervention strategy is prevention instead of treatment, as the latter is more costly in terms of health and productivity. Enhancing engagement is another good strategy; engaged employees tend to cope better when faced with challenges. Lastly, organisational interventions tend to be more effective than individual interventions.

5.3.2 Organisational support

Obviously the widowed or divorced require to be given some attention; according to the mean values analysis they experience moderate levels of all three burnout qualities. Even though the inferential statistics did not establish significant differences in comparison to other marital status groups, it is reasonable to provide some support mechanism for these people. Chapter 2, Section 2.4.10 indicates that employees who are exposed to organisational values that are supportive of non-work life significantly curbs work-family conflict levels. In other words, more supportive work environments curb transfer of strain in the work domain into the family domain or vice versa.

5.3.3 Growth opportunities

The literature suggests that lack of growth opportunities and recognition can be stressful, leading to burnout. Chapter 2, Section 2.4.1 considers all forms of recognition as social resources which can be used to curb burnout and enhance job satisfaction. The LHDA should try to balance their recruitment process with promotions within the company, so that employees could have hope for a better future. Regarding the employees without high school qualifications that reflect high levels of cynicism, the company needs to give them more recognition. They need to feel that they are valued by their supervisors, their colleagues, and management. The company should help this category of employees realise the importance of their duties and where they fit in the overall business strategy. More learned employees should be sensitised with regards to specifically valuing the roles played by the primary skills employees.

5.4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research study has established the state of burnout at the LHDA. Management will be informed of the study results and may consider implementing the recommendations. Consequently, burnout might be prevented in the workplace and reduced in areas where its symptoms are already prevalent. The recommendations

presented could enhance employee engagement leading to high job satisfaction and high performance. Addressing burnout will improve employees' health status and ensure that sick leave is minimised.

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7.0. APPENDICES



Lesotho Highlands Development Authority

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Ref : HR/157/15/CO
File : LHDA/CONF/P/7146

18 May 2015

Mr. Poloko Sephelane
C/O LHDA – 'Muela
MASERU 100
Lesotho

Dear Mr. Sephelane

AUTHORISATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITHIN THE LHDA

Please note that the Chief Executive has granted approval to your request of conducting a research study for your Masters in Business Administration with the University of the Free State.

Please note however, that all information should be used solely for the purpose of the study and that the approval is granted on condition that you should submit a copy of your completed dissertation to the LHDA.

Yours sincerely

A. KHALEMA
HUMAN RESOURCES BRANCH MANAGER

NO:

Biographical Questionnaire

Make an "X" or a "tick" mark in the box representing the appropriate option.

1. I read the cover letter and voluntarily agree to respond to the questionnaire.

2. Gender

Male

Female

3. Age

Less than 25 years

25 – 35 years

36 – 45 years

Over 45 years

4. Marital status

Married

Single

Widowed/divorced

Other

5. Highest Education level

Below Form E

Form E

Tertiary certificate and diploma

Bachelor's degree and above

6. Operation site

Maseru

Katse

Mohale

Muela

Polihali

7. Occupation

Technical/professional

Operative/Clerical

Management

Primary skills

8. Years of service

Less than 5 years

5 – 10 years

11 -15 years

Over 15 years

MBI-General Survey

Wilmar B. Schaufeli, Michael P. Leiter, Christina Maslach & Susan E. Jackson

The purpose of this survey is to discover how staff members view their job, and their reactions to their work.

Instructions: On the following page are 16 statements of job-related feelings. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about *your* job. If you have *never* had this feeling, write the number "0" (zero) in the space before the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate *how often* you feel it by writing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way. An example is shown below.

Example:

How often:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

How Often 0-6	Statement:
1. _____	I feel depressed at work.

If you never feel depressed at work, you would write the number "0" (zero) under the heading "How Often." If you rarely feel depressed at work (a few times a year or less), you would write the number "1." If your feelings of depression are fairly frequent (a few times a week but not daily), you would write the number "5."

MBI-General Survey

How often:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

How Often 0-6	Statements:
1. _____	I feel emotionally drained from my work.
2. _____	I feel used up at the end of the workday.
3. _____	I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.
4. _____	Working all day is really a strain for me.
5. _____	I can effectively solve the problems that arise in my work.
6. _____	I feel burned out from my work.
7. _____	I feel I am making an effective contribution to what this organization does.
8. _____	I've become less interested in my work since I started this job.
9. _____	I have become less enthusiastic about my work.
10. _____	In my opinion, I am good at my job.
11. _____	I feel exhilarated when I accomplish something at work.
12. _____	I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.
13. _____	I just want to do my job and not be bothered.
14. _____	I have become more cynical about whether my work contributes anything.
15. _____	I doubt the significance of my work.
16. _____	At my work, I feel confident that I am effective at getting things done.

(Administrative use only)

EX: _____ cat: _____ CY: _____ cat: _____ PE: _____ cat: _____

MBI—General Survey Scoring Key Professional Efficacy (PE) Subscale

Directions: Line up the item numbers on this key with the same numbers on the survey form. Looking at the unshaded items only, add the scores in the "How Often" column and enter the total in the "PE" space at the bottom of the survey form.

How Often 0-6	
1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____
6.	_____
7.	_____
8.	_____
9.	_____
10.	_____
11.	_____
12.	_____
13.	_____
14.	_____
15.	_____
16.	_____

Categorization: Professional Efficacy*	
	Frequency
High PE	30 or over
Moderate PE	24-29
Low PE	0-23

*Interpreted in the opposite direction from EX and CY.

Note to Researchers: Research reports using the MBI—General Survey usually report the average rating rather than the total. To determine the average rating for each subscale, divide the total by the number of items responded to. The Professional Efficacy scale contains 6 items.

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MBI—General Survey Scoring Key Exhaustion (EX) Subscale

Directions: Line up the item numbers on this key with the same numbers on the survey form. Looking at the unshaded items only, add the scores in the "How Often" column and enter the total in the "EX" space at the bottom of the survey form.

How Often 0-6	
1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____
6.	_____
7.	_____
8.	_____
9.	_____
10.	_____
11.	_____
12.	_____
13.	_____
14.	_____
15.	_____
16.	_____

Categorization: Exhaustion	
	Frequency
High	16 or over
Moderate	11-15
Low	0-10

Note to Researchers: Research reports using the MBI—General Survey usually report the average rating rather than the total. To determine the average rating for each subscale, divide the total by the number of items responded to. The Exhaustion scale contains 5 items.

MBI—General Survey Scoring Key Cynicism (CY) Subscale

Directions: Line up the item numbers on this key with the same numbers on the survey form. Looking at the unshaded items only, add the scores in the "How Often" column and enter the total in the "CY" space at the bottom of the survey form.

How Often 0-6	
1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____
6.	_____
7.	_____
8.	_____
9.	_____
10.	_____
11.	_____
12.	_____
13.	_____
14.	_____
15.	_____
16.	_____

Categorization: Cynicism	
	Frequency
High	11 or over
Moderate	6-10
Low	0-5

Note to Researchers: Research reports using the MBI—General Survey usually report the average rating rather than the total. To determine the average rating for each subscale, divide the total by the number of items responded to. The Cynicism scale contains 5 items.

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