EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BURNOUT, EMOTIONAL LABOUR AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: A STUDY ON CALL CENTRE REPRESENTATIVES

by

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, Bernadette Anne Furnell, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously, in its entirety or in part, submitted it to any university for a degree.

SIGNATURE:

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ABSTRACT

Bernadette Anne Furnell, M Comm (University of Stellenbosch)

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BURNOUT, EMOTIONAL LABOUR AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:
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Supervisor: Ms G Ekermans, M Comm (Industrial Psychology)

The aim of this study was to explore the relationships between burnout, emotional labour (EL) and emotional intelligence (EI) in the call centre industry and to determine whether EI played a moderating role in the relationship between EL and burnout. A non-experimental research design (i.e. exploratory survey study) was used to explore the relationships between the three constructs. The constructs were defined as follows: burnout, as a syndrome consisting of three negative response patterns which include: emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and diminished personal accomplishment (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996); EI, as the capacity to effectively perceive, express, understand and manage emotions in a professional and effective manner at work (Palmer & Stough, 2001); and EL, as the process where employees regulate their emotional display in an attempt to meet organisationally-based expectations specific to their roles (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). A convenience sample of 250 employees was drawn from two inbound customer care call centres of a leading South African telecommunications company that was approached to participate in the research. The Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey (Maslach et al., 1996), the Emotional Labour Scale (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003) and the Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (Palmer & Stough, 2001) were administered. Two hundred and ten (210) respondents completed and returned the questionnaires.

The results showed that surface acting (a dimension of EL) was positively related to and predicted emotional exhaustion (i.e. increased burnout). Conversely, deep acting (a dimension of EL) was related to an increase in personal accomplishment scores (i.e. decreased burnout). As hypothesised, EI was found to relate negatively to surface acting and positively to deep acting and emerged as a strong predictor of deep acting, explaining 20% of the variance in deep acing scores. These results revealed that those individuals higher in EI were more likely to engage more often in deep acting techniques, which could likely influence their levels of burnout. Furthermore, EI was related to an increase in personal accomplishment (i.e. decreased burnout) and emotional management (a dimension of EI) emerged as the strongest predictor of increased personal accomplishment. Whilst EI did not emerge as a moderator in the relationship between EL and burnout, support was found for the value of developing EI interventions that foster deep acting techniques in the call centre environment. Tenure (length of service) was found to be positively related to emotional exhaustion and negatively related to deep acting, indicating that the implementation of EI interventions in call centres should not be restricted to the induction phase of an employee's career but continue throughout their working lives. The limitations of the study and recommendations for future research were discussed.

OPSOMMING

Bernadette Anne Furnell, M Comm (Universiteit van Stellenbosch)

'N ONDERSOEK NA DIE VERWANTSKAP TUSSEN UITBRANDING, EMOSIONELE ARBEID EN EMOSIONELE INTELLIGENSIE: 'N STUDIE ONDER INBELSENTRUMVERTEENWOORDIGERS

Studieleier: Me G Ekermans, M Comm (Bedryfsielkunde)

Die doel van hierdie studie was om die verwantskap tussen uitbranding, emosionele arbeid (EA) en emosionele intelligensie (EI) in die inbelsentrum bedryf te ondersoek en om te bepaal of EI 'n modererende effek op die EA en uitbranding verwantskap het. Daar is gebruik gemaak van 'n nie-eksperimentele navorsingsontwerp (nl. 'n verkennende opnamestudie) ten einde die verband tussen die drie konstrukte en hul sub-dimensies te ondersoek. Die konstrukte is soos volg gedefinieer: uitbranding, as 'n sindroom bestaande uit drie negatiewe respons komponente: emosionele uitputting, depersonalisasie en verminderde gevoel van persoonlike bekwaamheid (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996); EI, as die individu se kapasiteit om emosies binne die werksomgewing effektief waar te neem, uit te druk, te verstaan en op 'n professionele en effektiewe wyse te bestuur (Palmer & Stough, 2001); en EA, as die proses waardeur werknemers hulle eksterne, sigbare emosies reguleer in 'n poging om aan die verwagte vertoon reëls van hul organisasie (spesifiek tot hulle werksrol) te voldoen (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). 'n Gerieflikheidsteekproef van 250 werknemers verbonde aan twee inbelkliëntedienssentrums van 'n toonaangewende Suid Afrikaanse telekommunikasie maatskappy was genader om aan die navorsing deel te neem. Die respondente het drie vraelyste voltooi: die Maslach Uitbrandingsvraelys – Algemene Opname (Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey) (Maslach et al., 1996); die Emosionele Arbeid Skaal (Emotional Labour Scale) (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003); en die Swinburne Universiteit Emosionele Intelligensie Toets (Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test) (Palmer & Stough, 2001). Twee honderd en tien (210) respondente het die vraelyste voltooi en terugbesorg aan die navorser.

Die bevindinge toon dat oppervlakkige toneelspel (“surface acting”) (‘n dimensie van EA) ‘n positiewe verwantskap het met emosionele uitputting, asook om dit te voorspel (nl. vermeerderde uitbranding). Omgekeerd, was diep toneelspel (“deep acting”) (‘n dimensie van EA) verwant aan ‘n vermeerdering in persoonlike bekwaamheid (nl. verminderde uitbranding). EI het ‘n negatiewe verwantskap met oppervlakkige toneelspel maar ‘n positiewe verwantskap met diep toneelspel getoon, en het 20% van die variansie in diep toneelspel voorspel. Die resultate wys daarop dat mense met hoër EI meer waarskynlik diep toneelspel tegnieke sal gebruik, wat uitbranding vlakke sal beinvloed. Verder was EI verwant aan ‘n vermeerdering in persoonlike bekwaamheid (nl. verminderde uitbranding). Emosionele bestuur (‘n dimensie van EI) het die grootste variansie in persoonlike bekwaamheid voorspel. Die resultate toon dat EI nie ‘n moderator in die verwantskap tusseen EA en uitbranding is nie. Ondanks hierdie bevinding, was daar genoeg bewyse gevind vir die waarde van die ontwikkeling van EI intervensies (wat diep toneelspel tegnieke bevorder) in die inbelsentrum bedryf. Dienstyd was positief verwant aan emosionele uitputting en negatief verwant aan diep toneelspel. Die resultate bewys dat EI intervensies in inbelsentrums nie net in die begin van ‘n werknemer se loopbaan geïmplementeer moet word nie, maar deur die hele loopbaan moet voortduur. Die beperkinge van die studie en voorstelle vir toekomstige navorsing is bespreek.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The economic trend in developing countries has involved a shift in focus from a manufacturing to a service-driven industry, resulting in a substantial change in the nature of job role requirements (Chu & Murrmann, 2006). Employees are no longer hired solely for their intellectual skill and practical expertise but also for their ability to display sincerity and concern for the customer (Chu & Murrmann, 2006). In addition, little differentiation between competing products has motivated customers to choose service and support above product performance (Nel & De Villiers, 2004). This shift has resulted in the development of a relatively new labour market characterised by job roles that emphasise interactions between front-line service workers and customers (Lewig & Dollard, 2003). One example of an industry that is solely service driven is that of call centre work.

In comparison to the conventional retail context where face–to-face interactions are the norm, call centres focus on voice-to-voice interactions where call centre representatives (CCRs) are required to utilise telecommunication and information technologies to generate sales, to provide company information, and to help maintain good customer service relations (Lewig & Dollard, 2003; Siong, Mellor, Moore & Firth, 2006). Call centres are growing at the astonishing rate of 40% per annum globally (Lewig & Dollard, 2003). In South Africa, call centres are reportedly one of the fastest growing service industries, with predictions of the rate of expansion ranging from 14% to 20% per annum (BMI-Tech, 2000; Gqubule, 2006; Omar, 2005; Sithole, 2005).

CCRs are required to handle large volumes of incoming calls whilst being monitored, to constantly engage in routine and often scripted interactions that are provided to them electronically, all whilst working under the extreme emotional demand of maintaining a friendly manner (Holman, 2003; Siong et al., 2006). These conditions have been shown to result in highly demanding, repetitive and stressful job roles that are associated with high levels of absenteeism and high staff turnover rates (James, 1998; Siong et al., 2006). In both the United States and South Africa the average turnover rate in this

industry is reportedly as high as 30% (Benner, Lewis & Omar, 2007; Gqubule, 2006; Stuller, 1999). A recent survey on call centres in South Africa (Benner et al., 2007) has highlighted the substantial costs involved in staff turnover. It is reported that the average total cost of replacement of an employee (including advertising, screening, recruitment and training) amounts to 22% of a typical employee's yearly earnings. In light of the dramatic growth of call centres and the reported problems experienced in this industry it is vital to conduct research that could assist in gaining deeper insight into the possible reasons for such high levels of absenteeism and staff turnover and possible ways of minimising these negative outcomes.

1.2 BURNOUT

One possible predictor of absenteeism and staff turnover in call centres could be a syndrome known as 'burnout'. Research on burnout has in the past been restricted to the helping professions but more recent literature supports the view that it is experienced by a variety of occupational groups beyond nurses, teachers and social workers (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Burnout is defined as, "…a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job" (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001, p.397) and encompasses three distinct states in which employees feel emotionally "spent" (emotional exhaustion), display a detached attitude toward others (depersonalisation), and experience a low sense of efficacy at work (diminished personal accomplishment) (Maslach & Jackson, 1986; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002).

Empirical evidence has shown that burnout has dysfunctional consequences, that imply substantial cost for both organisations and the individual, such as increased staff turnover, absenteeism, reduced productivity, increased intentions to leave, negative work attitudes and physiological as well as affective outcomes for the individual (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Jackson & Maslach, 1982; Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Leiter & Maslach, 1988; Shirom, 1989). Given the forgoing, it is imperative that research extends the ability to predict burnout and that this knowledge is applied to assist organisations in setting up practices that aim to reduce its harmful effects (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Low, Cravens, Grant & Moncrief, 2001).

Previous research on burnout assumed that it was the frequency and quantity of interactions with clients that caused role overload and burnout (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993) but more recent research has now focused on the quality of the experiences as a factor that plays a role in the development of burnout (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). A growing body of research has found that the emotional content of interpersonal encounters between service workers and their clients and the need to regulate emotional expressions in a mandated way can lead to emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and eventually a diminished sense of personal accomplishment (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Diefendorff, Croyle & Gosserand, 2005; Kim, in press; Mikolajczak, Menil & Luminet, in press; Zammuner & Galli, 2005a, 2005b). These findings have increased interest in the role of emotions (i.e. emotional regulation and management) in trying to understand how increased interpersonal interactions in a job can contribute to an employee developing burnout.

1.3 EMOTIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

1.3.1 Emotional Labour

Höpfl and Linstead (1997, p.5) argue that research into organisational behaviour has been constrained because, "…organisational emphases on rationality have led to the relative neglect of emotional issues in organisational life". However, emotions permeate all aspects of our lives both inside and outside of work. Emotions not only involve a response to events encountered but are also a cause of such responses as they are so intricately woven into an individual's appraisal, evaluation and interpretation of events (Fox & Spector, 2002). The study of emotions and emotion related behaviour no longer falls solely in the realm of clinical or health psychology. In recent years, increasing research in the organisational context has highlighted the important role that emotions play in workplace behaviour.

Behaviour in organisations is profoundly influenced by organisational norms and rules and emotional behaviour is no exception (Bono & Vey, 2005). Organisational cultures

often encourage employees to exhibit only a narrow range of appropriate affective and emotional behaviours whilst at work, with the aim of delivering a professional service that ensures customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and increased market share. For example, employees are required to express cheerfulness and friendliness when interacting with difficult clients and to suppress irritation and anger when having to face an abusive client. Organisational rules and norms for emotional behaviour are communicated to employees through both formal means, such as selection, induction, training, and incentive systems, and informal means, such as social influence and pressures (Bono & Vey, 2005). Compliance with such organisationally prescribed behaviours often results in employees suppressing their true emotions or manipulating their emotional expressions (Bono & Vey, 2005). The nature of service work is that employees need to be skilled at emotional expression and management (i.e. emotional regulation) and at times skilled in projecting one emotion while simultaneously feeling another (Ashkanasy, Härtel & Daus, 2002; Hochschild, 1983). This job demand could result in the employee feeling inauthentic in their emotional display and place undue stress on them, which could result in the development of burnout.

A central assumption of this study is that specific kinds of emotion regulation can be, under specific conditions, subjectively taxing and dysfunctional, thus contributing to the development of employee burnout (Zammuner & Galli, 2005a). Research has suggested that it is not only the frequency or quantity of interactions with customers that contribute to role overload, stress and subsequent burnout in CCRs (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993) but also the demands placed on them to regulate their emotions in a mandated way by remaining friendly and cheerful even when customers are irate (Montgomery, Panagopolou, de Wildt & Meenks, 2006; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989). This management of feeling to create a publicly observable display of organisationally prescribed behaviours is termed emotional labour (EL) (Hochschild, 1983). EL may be performed in different ways. An individual could surface act, by acting or pretending to feel a required display rule (e.g. putting on a happy mask with a client when one is terribly sad). Alternatively, an individual could deep act, by trying to actually feel a required display rule and expressing this emotion authentically (e.g. expressing true concern for a client's complaint and being sincere and genuine when doing so).

Recent studies have provided empirical evidence for the notion that EL is associated with poor physical and psychological health (Bono & Vey, 2005). Individuals holding jobs involving high EL (such as health care workers, flight attendants, frontline customer services representatives and CCRs) have reported both work-related stress and emotional exhaustion (Bono & Vey, 2005; Singh, Goolsby & Rhoads, 1994). In a recent study conducted by Zapf, Seifert, Schmutte, Mertini and Holz (2001) it was found that EL played a unique role in contributing to burnout, over and above the contribution of other organisational job stressors (such as role conflict, role stress and workload) and social stressors (such as social animosities, conflicts with colleagues and supervisors, negative group climate and lack of social support). As a result of the preliminary research evidence that suggests linkages between jobs that are high in EL and subsequent elevated levels of burnout, it is crucial to gain a deeper understanding of this relationship. In addition it may be of great value to investigate whether individual differences in the management and regulation of emotion could moderate this relationship in any way. By conducting research into the factors and conditions that contribute to burnout, human resource professionals will be better equipped to design intervention programmes aimed at possibly reducing the development of burnout and in turn its negative outcomes such as absenteeism and high staff turnover.

1.3.2 Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EI) involves the ability to accurately perceive and express emotions; to use emotions to facilitate mental processes; to understand the nature and meaning of emotions; and to effectively manage and regulate emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). In view of the assumption earlier (i.e. that specific kinds of emotion regulation can be subjectively taxing and dysfunctional) it might be logical to propose that the presence or absence of an individual's EI could play a moderating role in the EL – burnout relationship. For example, high levels of EI might assist in reducing levels of burnout and so improve employee health, and increase productivity (Ogińska-Bulik, 2005).

In reviewing the literature on mood regulation (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Totterdell & Parkinson, 1999) it would seem that various individual characteristics and emotion management techniques have been identified as enabling employees in reducing their levels of EL and possibly burnout. Research conducted by Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) has shown that an individual's emotion management style can create positive outcomes, not just negative outcomes (e.g. stress). For example, it was found that surface-level EL (surface acting) or faking predicted depersonalisation, whilst perceiving the demand to display positive emotions and the use of deep-level EL (deep acting) were associated with a heightened sense of personal accomplishment, a quality that plays a role in the prevention of burnout (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002).

In view of the fact that organisations, particularly in the service orientated industry, increasingly put pressure on employees to maintain a positive "face" to the public and others in the workforce, it would make business sense for them to not only select employees that display characteristics and emotion management techniques that are protective against emotional stress and possibly burnout, but also to promote the development thereof through training programmes (Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000). If individuals can be supported in their attempts to manage their emotions in healthy ways, it is likely that their emotional displays will be more effectively regulated, possibly resulting in more authentic displays of emotions (Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000). Furthermore the encouragement of such emotion management techniques may enhance overall health in the work environment by improving not only the psychological experiences of the employee but also the quality of the interpersonal relationships (Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000) the employee engages in during their working day.

Hence the proposed study will endeavour to investigate the relationship between burnout, EL and EI in an attempt to determine if EI could serve as a moderating variable in the relationship between EL and burnout. The benefit of such knowledge could be utilised to assist organisations in developing human-resource practices that ensure the maintenance of employees' level of competence, productivity and wellbeing through effective selection, recruitment and training programmes (Nel & de Villiers, 2004).

This thesis will firstly, in chapter 2, present the theoretical framework for each of the three constructs and elucidate on the major research conducted on each of these constructs and their relationships amongst each other. This will be done to ground the current research and pave the way to establishing the need and utility for this study. Chapter 3 will introduce the rationale, aims and objectives of this research and detail how the participants were sampled, the measurement instruments utilised and how the data was collected and analysed. The results will be presented in chapter 4, followed in chapter 5 by a discussion of the results, limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

1.4 SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to provide an overview of this study. The research environment (i.e. the call centre) was introduced and the major problems experienced in this industry where highlighted. Furthermore the main constructs, burnout, EL and EI was introduced and both the motivation for and purpose of the study within the call centre context were clarified. The next chapter will provide a detailed overview of the constructs already introduced in this chapter and specific reference will be made to important literature and previous research involving these constructs.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the following section the relevant literature and current research related to the constructs burnout, EL and EI will be reviewed and discussed. To date most research conducted on the antecedents of burnout has focused on job and situational stressors that contribute to the development of burnout such as workload, role stress and role conflict. Little research has focused on the emotional aspects associated with burnout, in particular the job stress known as EL. The bulk of research in this field has focused mostly on the helping professions (nursing and teaching) with little focus on the relationship between EL and burnout in the service-related industry, such as the call centre environment. The current research aims to investigate the relationship between EL and burnout in the call centre industry to establish if the construct EI has any theoretical links to EL and burnout and, more particularly, whether it in any way moderates the proposed EL – burnout relationship.

2.2 BURNOUT

2.2.1 Defining Burnout

Early research on burnout focused largely on the concept of emotion arousal, and the way in which people cope with, or manage, the arousal (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Unfortunately this early research consisted largely of the authors' personal experiences, on narratives based on specific programmes and on case studies, and was fraught with conceptual disagreement (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Herbert Freudenberger (1974) was the first to introduce the term 'burnout'. He used this term to describe the symptoms of exhaustion, wearing out and failing that he noted amongst young highly committed volunteers with whom he was working in a free health care clinic. Later definitions expanded the concept to include conceptualisations such as loss of creativity; loss of commitment to work; an estrangement from clients, co-workers and job; a response to the chronic stress of making it to the top; and, finally, a syndrome of inappropriate attitudes toward clients and toward self, often associated with uncomfortable physical and emotional symptoms (Perlman & Hartman, 1982).

It was only in the late 1970s and early 1980s that systematic studies were conducted and published on burnout (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993), so paving the way for a clearer conceptualisation and definition thereof. Maslach and Jackson (1981, 1986) further refined the conceptualisation of burnout by developing an accepted, standardised and psychometrically sound instrument, the Maslach Burnout Inventory, to measure the construct (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993).

Today, the most commonly accepted definition of burnout is the three-component conceptualisation used by Maslach and Jackson (1981, 1986). It views the burnout syndrome as a particular type of job stress, where a pattern of negative affective responses result from a variety of work demands or stressors (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Shirom, 1989). Burnout is defined as, "…a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job" (Maslach et al., 2001, p.397). Within this conceptualisation of the construct, burnout is made up of three negative response patterns, which include: emotional exhaustion; depersonalisation; and diminished personal accomplishment (Maslach, 1982; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Pines and Maslach, 1981). Emotional exhaustion is characterised by a lack of energy and feeling that one's emotional resources are depleted. It often results in mental, emotional and physical tiredness and may coexist with feelings of frustration and tension as employees realise they cannot continue to give of themselves or be responsible for clients in the same way as they have been in the past (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). A common symptom is dread at the prospect of returning to another day of work (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Depersonalisation is marked by the display of negative, callous and unsympathetic attitudes towards the recipients of one's service and treating them as objects rather than people. Visible symptoms include the use of derogatory language when referring to clients, withdrawal from the job through taking longer breaks, engaging in extended conversations with co-workers during work time or the increased use of work related terminology or jargon which would be unfamiliar and alienating to the client (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). The final component of burnout, diminished personal accomplishment, is characterised by a tendency to evaluate oneself negatively and is evidenced in the person experiencing helplessness and a low sense of self-efficacy at work (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Often coupled with

these experiences is the perception of a lack of progress or feeling that one is less successful (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993).

Whilst burnout is viewed as a particular type of job stress, it should not be confused with occupational stress ***per se***. Burnout differs from occupational stress in that it is specific to work that requires intense emotional involvement (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996). The defining feature of occupational stress is an imbalance between occupational demands and available coping resources. Burnout goes one step further and integrates feelings of exhaustion with employees' involvement in their work, especially the people with whom they work (i.e. clients) (Maslach et al., 1996). Burnout is usually thought of as the outcome of chronic stress (Cushway, Tyler & Nolan, 1996).

Existing research on burnout has focused mostly on individuals in the helping professions, specifically health services, social services, teaching and childcare, where it is typically believed to be most frequently and intensely experienced because of the high level of arousal from direct, frequent and rather intense interactions with clients (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Low et al., 2001). Ganster and Schaubroeck (1991), for example, have argued that burnout is a chronic affective response pattern to stressful working conditions that features a high level of interpersonal contact. Furthermore Cordes and Dougherty (1993) argue that burnout is not exclusively the domain of these traditional helping professions but may also be prevalent in other types of occupations, such as supervisory and managerial positions and work settings, which are focused on client service delivery. High emotional demands resulting from interactions with clients is seen as a core characteristic of service jobs (Zapf et al., 2001) and has led to increased research into how such emotional demands impact on the development of burnout in employees (Zapf et al., 2001).

2.2.2 Antecedents of Burnout

In a recent meta-analysis of literature on the predictors of burnout (Lee & Ashforth, 1996), it was found that workload, role stress, and role conflict, were among the best predictors of the construct. In commenting on this meta-analysis, Zapf (2002) noted that little attention had been paid in research to the possible emotional aspects that could

also predict the burnout phenomenon. Zapf (2002) argued that given the fact that burnout is indicative of an employee's inability to adequately manage his/her emotions when interacting with clients; it is imperative that research be conducted into the emotional aspects associated with burnout. He further noted that most empirical studies on burnout failed to directly measure emotional demands at work, such as: how often employees have to show or control certain emotions (i.e. remaining friendly and courteous to clients at all times and controlling irritation and anger when interacting with clients).

Cordes and Dougherty (1993), in their review of literature on burnout, concluded that in customer service work (such as the call centre industry), job context, and particularly the role of interpersonal interactions, seemed to be important antecedents of burnout. Further research has confirmed that the frequency or quantity of interactions with clients in addition to the need to conform to organisationally mandated emotional display rules will result in role overload, psychological strain and burnout (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Hochschild, 1983; Montgomery et al., 2006; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989). For example, in the call centre industry, as the volume of client contact increases (as is the case with high incoming call volumes) so the demands on the employee's personal resources (e.g. resilience to stress; self-efficacy beliefs; and social support) increase. This situation may leave an employee feeling less able to efficiently and quickly deal with client queries in a positive and friendly manner and may result in him/her feeling stressed, as there is no reprieve from the constant client contact. If personal resources, specifically emotional resources, are overtaxed in this way it has the possibility of reducing the quality of the interpersonal interactions the employee has with the client and could impact negatively on the client's overall impression of service delivery. Research has shown (Cordes & Dougerty, 1993; Jackson, Schwab & Schuler, 1986) that if these demands (for example, having to remain calm and friendly during all client interactions even when a client becomes rude and aggressive and continuing in this friendly tone with subsequent clients, who could possibly also be rude, all while being aware that call volumes are high and that there are many clients waiting in the telephone queue) are continuous, rather than intermittent, the employee may be vulnerable to developing burnout (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Furthermore, Cordes and Dougherty (1993) found

that the potential stressfulness of such employee–client interactions is also likely to be affected by the extent to which the client exhibits aggressive, defensive or argumentative behaviour during these interactions. Consequently, it could be argued that it is the emotional content of the interaction that is a crucial factor in understanding why burnout occurs.

2.2.3 Outcomes of Burnout

The three negative response patterns of burnout (i.e. emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and diminished personal accomplishment) have been linked with a variety of emotional and physical consequences (Burke & Greenglass, 1995; Cherniss, 1992; Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Lee & Ashforth, 1996) such as depression, irritability, helplessness and anxiety (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Jackson & Maslach, 1982), as well as fatigue, insomnia, headaches and gastrointestinal disturbances (Kahill, 1988). Burnout has also been linked to consumption behaviours such as smoking and drug and alcohol use (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Research has shown (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993) that prolonged emotional stress can have harmful and debilitating effects for an individual. For this reason, research on stress has been included when investigating the phenomenon of burnout, in an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of its antecedents.

Interpersonal consequences of burnout include: changes in the nature or frequency of interactions with clients and co-workers (Jackson & Schuler, 1983); less tolerance; greater impatience and moodiness; and withdrawal from client contact by either spending more time talking to other employees or taking longer breaks and lunch periods (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Maslach & Pines, 1977). The development of negative work attitudes as a result of burnout have also been found in studies on police workers (Burke, Shearer & Deszca, 1984); public service lawyers (Jackson, Turner & Brief, 1987) and nurses (Leiter & Maslach, 1988). On a personal level, burnout has been associated with increased marital and family conflict (Maslach et al., 1996).

Organisational outcomes of burnout include low morale, absenteeism, increased staff turnover, increased intention to quit and reduction in the quality and quantity of job performance (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Jackson et al., 1987; Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Maslach et al., 1996; Wright & Bonett, 1997; Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). Another interesting outcome is that of burnout contagion. Research has shown that through various mechanisms, members of work groups may get "infected" by colleagues who experience burnout and in fact show similarly high levels of burnout (Zapf, 2002). This phenomenon can prove detrimental, especially in a call centre environment where people work closely together in a highly stressful working environment.

As a result of these negative outcomes for the individual, their interpersonal relationships, and for the organisation as a whole, it is possible that burnout could lead to deterioration – not only in an employee's personal life but also in working conditions and ultimately in the quality of service and care that clients will receive (Maslach et al., 1996). In a key study by Zapf et al., (2001) it was argued that burnout was an indication of an employees' growing inability to adequately manage their emotions when interacting with other individuals, employees, colleagues and clients. In an attempt to seek ways of minimising the detrimental effects of burnout on the individual and the organisation and to ensure general well-being, further research is needed: firstly, to understand the process by which burnout develops by focusing largely on the concept of emotion work (i.e. EL) and, secondly, to investigate whether individual attributes such as EI could possibly influence the experience of EL and the development of burnout. The present study aims to address these research needs by investigating the relationships between burnout, EL and EI.

2.3 EMOTIONAL LABOUR

2.3.1 The Origin of Emotional Labour

Hochschild was the first to define the concept of EL as the, "…management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display" (1983, p.7). Hochschild's (1983) theoretical approach to EL drew on Goffman's (1959) work on impression management, which focused on the "dramaturgical" or "acting" perspective of emotional display in

social interactions (Kruml & Geddes, 2000). Goffman (1959) saw people as actors who consciously manage their outer demeanour (Kruml & Geddes, 2000) and who are guided by the norms and rules established by organisations, which dictate appropriate behaviour for specific situations involving client interactions.

Hochschild (1983) viewed EL as a form of emotional management, which she believed was once largely a private act (i.e. an individual would decide in his/her private life whether to display certain emotions or not). Hochschild (1983) further argued that with the increase in service-related industries, this private act of emotional management has now evolved to be directed and controlled by organisations (through the prescription of explicit or implicit display rules), where it is performed in exchange for a wage. For example, it is one of the job requirements of an air hostess to remain calm and friendly to passengers at all times and to not show any alarm or panic when being informed that the aeroplane is experiencing technical difficulties. The need for high emotional control is viewed by organisations in helping and service-related industries (i.e. nursing, teaching, banking, air carriage, hospitality and call centre work) as vital in order to sustain a competitive advantage and positive customer relations across time and in different situations (Hochschild, 1983). It is self-evident that no client would want to deal with a sullen or ill-tempered customer service representative when contacting a service provider for assistance or to lodge a complaint.

Hochschild (1983) conceptualised EL in terms of various emotion management strategies based on the key element of dissonance. Emotional dissonance is experienced when an employee is required to express emotions, which are not genuinely felt in the particular situation. Hochschild (1983) hypothesised that emotional dissonance would lead to the alienation of one's feelings, which in turn has been shown to cause psychological strain. According to Hochschild (1983), employees feeling discordance or dissonance between the felt and the required (i.e. job congruent) emotions will most likely engage in one of two emotion management strategies. Firstly, an individual could temporarily suppress or mask a job incongruent felt emotion (e.g., one's anger at an annoying client; one's own happiness during an interaction with a worried client) and express a job congruent one (e.g., smiling at, or talking calmly to an

annoying client; expressing concern for the client's worries) (Zammuner & Galli, 2005a). This strategy, known as surface acting, is accomplished by careful presentation of verbal and non-verbal cues such as facial expressions; gestures and voice tone in such a manner that the individual knows that they are acting (Mann, 2005). Brotheridge and Lee (2003) refer to it as "pushing down" the authentic expression of self in favour of an emotional mask. Secondly, and alternatively, an individual could change emotions to match the organisation's display rules. This strategy, known as active deep acting, involves suppressing a job incongruent felt emotion and attempting to actually experience or feel the job congruent one which the individual can then express authentically (Zammuner & Galli, 2005a). Feelings are actively induced as the individual "psyches" themselves into the desired persona (Mann, 2005). It has also been defined as "pumping emotions up" by either focusing one's attention on the positive aspects of the situation and/or engaging in cognitive change (e.g. reappraise the situation in a more positive way) to bring one's true feelings into alignment with the job congruent emotion that needs to be displayed (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Bono & Vey, 2005; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Grandey, 1998; Grandey, 2000; Mikolajczak et al., in press).

Work involving EL (i.e. emotion work) typically possesses the following characteristics (Hochschild, 1983; Zapf, 2002):

- Emotion work involves either face-to-face or voice-to-voice interactions with the public/clients. Zapf (2002) noted that emotion work was the domain of the "service sector" where people were engaged largely in "person-related" work as opposed to physical work that involved only the production of goods;
- Emotions are displayed to influence the client's emotions, attitudes and behaviours to produce an emotional state of ease and contentment in the client. Being able to manage clients' emotions, as well as to accurately perceive and appraise their emotions, is an important prerequisite for emotion work (Zapf, 2002). This would mean that the basic social skills needed to perform this type of work would relate to the regulation of emotions and differentiated sensitivity, expression and control of emotions, which would accord with the literature on the concept of EI (Zapf, 2002); and lastly

- The display of emotions has to follow certain organisationally sanctioned rules or norms. Employers will differ in their attempts to control and direct how employees display their emotions to clients (Zapf, 2002). Some will sanction these display rules explicitly through their mission statements or occupational training, whilst in other organisations these display rules would be part of their organisational culture and implied through their high-performance expectations and professional ethos (Zapf, 2002).

2.3.2 Further Conceptualisation and Operationalisation of the Emotional Labour Construct

As is often the trend with numerous psychological constructs, scholars tend to agree on the preceding conceptualisation of EL, but are less consistent in the operationalisation of the construct (Bono & Vey, 2005; Erickson & Ritter, 2001).

Ashforth and Humphreys (1993, p. 90) defined EL as, "…the act of displaying the appropriate emotion (i.e. conforming to a display rule)". This definition, according to Bono and Vey (2005), has defined EL in more behavioural terms than Hochschild (1983), as the authors, in their conceptualisation of EL, chose to focus more on observable behaviour than on internal feelings or emotional states. The advantage of this approach is that it focuses on observable behaviour. However, by focusing only on observable behaviour rather than on internal emotional management, this conceptualisation of EL fails to demonstrate a theoretical link between EL and its proposed outcomes such as stress and burnout (Bono & Vey, 2005). In addition, Bono and Vey (2005) highlight a vital shortfall of the Ashforth and Humphreys (1993) conceptualisation of EL. They argue that by failing to take note of internal emotional states, Ashforth and Humphreys (1993) failed to concede that the mere existence of display rules would not always mean that an individual would engage in EL (i.e. the individual may not always feel the need to "conform" to a display rule, and the feeling or emotion may occur and be displayed naturally) (Bono & Vey, 2005). For example, Hochschild (1983) recognised that emotional dissonance did not follow if an employee spontaneously felt what they were required to feel with no conscious effort. She called this passive deep acting and did not see it as part of the compensatory strategies used

when people engage in EL. Diefendorff et al. (2005) disagree with this operationalisation and argue that EL consists of surface acting, deep acting and a third independent factor, similar to Hochschild's (1983) passive deep acting, which they define as "the display of naturally felt emotions". However, despite the views of Diefendorff et al. (2005), the most commonly held view is that the internal state of emotional dissonance is central to the concept of EL and is indeed one of the crucial ingredients in the development of negative outcomes (Bono & Vey, 2005). For this reason, passive deep acting falls outside the scope of EL.

Researchers Morris and Feldman (1996, p. 987) view EL as, "…the effort, planning and control needed to express organisational desired emotion during interpersonal interactions". Morris and Feldman (1996) expanded on Hochschild's (1983) definition of EL as a consequence of emotional dissonance by proposing that the nature of a job, or the nature of the interactions required in a job, also plays a role in defining EL (Bono & Vey, 2005). They conceptualised the EL construct in terms of four dimensions that would affect the experience of EL, namely (Morris & Feldman, 1996):

- The frequency of the interpersonal interactions that involved expressing organisationally sanctioned emotions. The higher the frequency of the emotional display, the more employees would be overtaxed;
- The degree of attentiveness to display rules required by the job. The more attentiveness to display rules required, the more psychological energy and physical effort would be demanded from the employee. This dimension consists of two sub-dimensions:
    - The intensity of the emotions expressed, namely how strongly the emotion has been expressed. This will depend on the type of emotion expressed. For example, joy is considered a more intense emotion than satisfaction;
    - The duration of interactions. The longer the interaction the greater the effort expended, increasing the likelihood that EL will be engaged in;
- The variety of emotions required to be displayed during interpersonal interactions. The greater the variety of emotions the more psychological effort is required, so increasing the degree of EL engaged in; and

- The degree of emotional dissonance generated by having to express organisationally desired emotions that were not genuinely felt.

Later empirical research conducted by Morris & Feldman (1997) reduced EL to three dimensions, namely frequency and duration of interactions and emotional dissonance, which they operationalised in an attempt to measure EL.

Kruml and Geddes (2000) offer a different perspective on the operationalisation of EL. They argue that EL is a two-dimensional concept consisting of emotive dissonance and emotive effort. Emotive dissonance is believed to be the degree to which employees' displayed emotions are in alignment with their true feelings. This dimension would capture Hochschild's (1983) "surface acting" and "passive deep acting" behaviours, placing them on opposite ends of a continuum (Kruml & Geddes, 2000). Emotive effort measures the degree to which employees actively try to change their internal feelings to match those they are required to express to clients. This dimension incorporates Hochschild's (1983) "active deep acting" behaviour. Kruml & Geddes (2000) do not view active deep acting as the preferred emotional management strategy. They argue that engaging in active deep acting requires so much emotive effort (i.e. EL) to consciously align displayed feeling with those felt and that this "effort" could result in negative consequences for the individual (Kruml & Geddes, 2000). Passive deep acting (acting naturally and spontaneously and expressing true feelings) is viewed as the most appropriate emotion management strategy, as it requires no effort and results in EL that is adaptive and healthy for individuals (Kruml & Geddes, 2000). The views expressed by Kruml and Geddes (2000), albeit interesting, are contrary to the generally accepted view that passive deep acting is not part of the EL construct and that active deep acting is the more favourable emotional management strategy when compared to surface acting.

Brotheridge and Grandey (2002), in an effort to integrate previous perspectives of EL, restructured it into two categories: job-focused EL and employee-focused EL. Job-focused EL focuses on the characteristics of the job (i.e. frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays, the duration of the interaction with the client and the type of display rules required by the nature of the job). Employee-focused EL is concerned with

the emotion management processes used by employees during their interactions with clients (i.e. surface and deep acting). Following from this conceptualisation of EL, Brotheridge and Lee (2003. p. 365) incorporated both job- and employee-focused EL into the development of the Emotional Labour Scale (ELS), wherein they defined EL as the process where employees, "…regulate their emotional display in an attempt to meet organisationally-based expectations specific to their roles". In terms of this definition EL is operationalised into six dimensions of emotional display in the workplace. These include: the frequency, intensity and variety of emotional display, the duration of interaction, surface acting and deep acting. Emotional dissonance was not viewed as a separate component of EL but was seen as being associated with whether one engaged in either surface or deep acting (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). The current research will utilise Brotheridge and Lee's (2003) conceptualisation and operationalisation of EL to measure the extent to which CCRs engage in EL.

2.3.3 Antecedents of Emotional Labour

2.3.3.1 Display Rules

Service-driven organisations prescribe that certain emotionally acceptable and appropriate behaviours should be performed in the course of work (i.e. display rules). Remaining friendly and co-operative with clients at all times, and under no circumstances expressing frustration, irritation or anger at clients, is an example of such prescribed behaviours. In a recent meta-analytic study based on research conducted in the field of EL, Bono and Vey (2005) identified a number of possible antecedents of EL. The authors found a positive association between EL and display rules (***r*** = .15; ***n*** = 2090) in 90% of the studies analysed (Bono & Vey, 2005). This result indicates that the fact that organisations prescribe such display rules most likely contributes to the experience of EL in their employees. Diefendorff et al. (2005) took this investigation further by separating display rules into positive (having to express positive emotions at work) and negative (suppressing negative emotions at work) rules and found that positive rules were positively correlated with deep acting and negative rules were positively correlated with surface acting. The authors argued that organisations that required employees to display positive emotions (for example, remaining friendly and helpful to clients) resulted in better clarifications of what was expected of them and in

fact resulted in what they termed "good faith" attempts by employees to actually feel the emotion (i.e. engaging in deep acting). Conversely they argued that organisations that required employees to suppress negative emotions (i.e. not to be rude to clients, not to raise your voice at clients or appear irritated) resulted in employees just going "through the motions" and in fact faking their emotions (i.e. engaging in surface acting).

2.3.3.2 Job Characteristics

Bono and Vey (2005) found that job characteristics, such as the degree to which employees perceive they have autonomy in their jobs, was related to the experience of emotional dissonance. It was found that those employees who perceived they had more autonomy were less likely to report experiencing emotional dissonance. A possible explanation for these results could be that individuals with greater autonomy could limit or shorten interactions with clients or manage the timing of interactions so as to reduce having to engage in EL more frequently (Bono & Vey, 2005). In addition, Morris and Feldman (1997) suggested that employees who have less autonomy over their behaviour in their jobs should feel more emotive dissonance, which likely leads them to fake feelings (i.e. to surface act). Conversely, those who have more autonomy in their jobs experience less emotive dissonance; therefore they are more likely to express their true emotions (i.e. to deep act). In a study conducted by Kim (in press) support was found for the link between job autonomy and deep acting. In a sample of hotel service workers, Kim (in press) found that as perceptions of job autonomy increased, so did the individual's use of deep acting techniques ($r = .18$, $n = 197$, $p < .05$).

Some authors, in testing the interaction effects of the various dimensions of EL, have found that the job-focused dimensions (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays) play an antecedent role in the experience of EL by influencing the type of emotion management strategy adopted (i.e. the employee-focused dimensions - surface and deep acting). Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) report that frequency and variety of emotional displays were positively related to surface and deep acting, and that the duration of these emotional displays was positively related to deep acting. This is probably because the longer one needs to engage with a client; the more one needs to

guard against “faking” thereby employing deep acting techniques to be more authentic (Kim, in press).

Bono and Vey (2005) found that no clear conclusions could be reached about the relationship between social support (co-worker and supervisor) and EL (Bono & Vey, 2005). Previous studies found that employees who report surface acting did not report having access to strong social support, whilst those who engage more frequently in deep acting appear to have strong social support even though these associations were small (Bono & Vey, 2005).

2.3.3.3 Individual Characteristics

Individual differences as a predictor of EL has received much less attention than situational characteristics such as organisational display rules and job characteristics (Bono & Vey, 2005). Despite this, EL researchers seem to agree that service workers’ emotional “acting” (surface and deep acting) can be explained by personality traits, because personal dispositions largely underlie the way that people think and behave (Ashkanasy et al., 2002; Kim, in press). Dispositional factors that are frequently mentioned in relation to EL are positive affectivity (PA) and negative affectivity (NA) (Kim, in press). Various studies reviewed by Bono and Vey (2005) (i.e. Diefendorff & Richard, 2003; Erickson & Ritter, 2001; Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000) in their meta-analysis showed that PA was negatively related to EL (***r*** = -.13; ***n*** **=** 501); NA was positively related to EL (***r*** = .19; ***n*** = 501); and self-monitoring was positively associated with both deep and surface acting (***r*** = .10 and .26 respectively; ***n***= 386). In addition, NA was positively related to surface acting, whilst PA demonstrated a negative association with surface acting (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Dieffendorff et al., 2005; Kim, in press). In other words, more positive people are less likely to engage in “faking bad” or surface acting. Interestingly, affectivity variables have shown to be largely irrelevant to deep acting (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Dieffendorff et al., 2005; Kim, in press). These findings suggest that how an individual typically feels relates to whether they fake emotions at work, but not to whether they directly modify their feelings as is done during deep acting (Diefendorff et al., 2005).

To further investigate the impact of individual differences (i.e. personality variables) on EL, Diefendorff et al. (2005) operationalised PA with extraversion and NA with neuroticism and hypothesised that individuals high in extraversion experience positive emotions more often, and thus had less need to surface act and were more likely to display naturally felt emotions, than individuals low in extraversion. In contrast, they hypothesised that people high in neuroticism tend to experience negative emotions more often and may be more likely to surface act, and less likely to express naturally felt emotions, than individuals low in neuroticism. The authors expected deep acting to be unrelated to both extraversion and neuroticism. Furthermore, they categorised the personality variables conscientiousness and agreeableness as variables that denoted a "willingness to display organisationally desired emotions" (i.e. display rules) and tested their relationship to EL (Diefendorff et al. 2005). The results for extraversion suggested that individuals who feel positive emotions more often tend to fake their emotions less than those who experience fewer positive emotions. The results for neuroticism suggested that individuals who generally experience negative emotions may "need" to feign positive emotions to meet role expectations. In addition, the results for the "willingness to" variables suggested that individuals who were low in conscientiousness (less dependable) were more likely to fake their emotions at work. In addition, individuals who were high in agreeableness (value positive interactions with others) were less likely to fake their emotions at work. The authors concluded that the fact that dispositional factors accounted for nearly three times the variance in surface acting than the situational variables (positive and negative display rules, frequency, duration and routineness) measured, suggested that "acting in bad faith" (i.e. surface acting) has more to do with the person than with the features of the job (Diefendorff et al. 2005). On the contrary, the results were different for deep acting. Whilst deep acting was uniquely predicted by agreeableness, suggesting that individuals who tend to value having positive interpersonal interactions were more likely to actively try to experience emotions so that genuine emotional displays followed, it failed to be predicted by any other individual difference tested. It was largely predicted by the situational variables (positive display rules, frequency, duration and routineness), suggesting that dispositional factors play a less prominent role in influencing whether individuals "act in good faith" (i.e. deep

act). Lastly, with regards to demographic factors such as gender, Bono and Vey (2005) found that it was unrelated to EL.

These studies suggest that individual differences play a unique and complex role in contributing to, and influencing, the way EL is experienced. To better understand this complex construct, further research is needed: firstly, to highlight the nature of the relationship between individual characteristics and EL and, secondly, to add to the fast developing research base and assist in the future refinement of the construct (Bono & Vey, 2005).

2.3.4 Outcomes of Emotional Labour

2.3.4.1 Research into the Negative Outcomes of Emotional Labour

The outcomes associated with EL have been well documented and researched in recent years. Hochschild (1983) initially argued that being required to display emotions that were not being felt at that moment could lead to alienation of one's feelings, which in turn could have negative consequences for psychological well-being. More recent research, conducted by Zapf and colleagues (Zapf, 2002; Zapf, Vogt, Siefert, Mertini & Isic, 1999), reported that not being able to feel what one should feel (i.e. the experience of emotional dissonance) may cause the individual to feel false and hypocritical, and in the long run may lead to alienation from one's own emotions, poor self-esteem, and depression. Similarly, Bono and Vey (2005) in their meta-analysis of literature on EL, found that EL over many studies was associated with poor physical and psychological health. In research that linked EL predictors directly with EL outcomes (Pugliesi, 1999) without measuring EL directly, it was found that display rules were positively associated with job stress (***r* =** .40; n **=** 1114; ***p* =** < .01) and psychological distress (***r* =** .37; ***n* =** 1114; ***p* =** < .01), and negatively associated with job satisfaction (***r* = -**.28; ***n* =** 1114; ***p* =** < .01). In a study by Schaubroeck and Jones (2000) it was found that display rules were correlated with physical symptoms (***r*** = .36; ***n* =** 217; ***p*=** < .05) such as "ill health that affected work" and "trouble sleeping at night". Furthermore, Schaubroeck and Jones (2000) showed that individuals who perceived a greater demand for them to express positive emotions reported a greater number of somatic symptoms such as sleeplessness and fatigue. In a number of studies reviewed by Bono and Vey (2005) it

was found that individuals, holding jobs involving the experience of EL, generally reported both work-related stress and emotional exhaustion (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Erickson & Ritter, 2001; Grandey, 2003; Kruml & Geddes, 2000; Morris & Feldman, 1997).

From the organisational perspective, Bono and Vey's (2005) meta-analytical research results showed that EL resulted in negative consequences for organisations where emotion work was performed. For instance, some studies found that emotional dissonance and surface acting were associated with decreased job satisfaction (Bono & Vey, 2005). In accordance with this, Zerbe (2000) reported strong positive relationships between emotional dissonance and organisational turnover (***r*** = .35; ***n*** = 408; ***p*** = < .01).

Thus, the effects of EL on psychological distress, job stress and job satisfaction are important indicators of the important role that it plays in contributing to employee stress and lack of well-being in the workplace. These results provide researchers with deeper insights into the nuances in the relationship between EL and burnout, but further investigation is still needed to understand the complex nature of this relationship. The benefit of undertaking this type of research would be to possibly uncover ways of minimising the negative consequences associated with burnout, such as absenteeism, staff turnover and lower levels of job performance (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Jackson et al., 1987; Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Wright & Bonett, 1997; Wright & Cropanzano, 1998).

2.3.4.2 The Relationship between Emotional Labour and Burnout

Burnout is considered an indicator of the fact that employees are no longer able to adequately regulate their emotions when interacting with clients. Initial results on the relationship between EL and burnout (Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Morris & Feldman, 1997) evidenced that such a relationship exists, suggesting that burnout is a response to frequent social and emotional interactions with clients (Zammuner & Galli, 2005a).

Studies that focused on the various dimensions of EL (i.e. frequency, intensity and variety of the emotional display, surface and deep acting) found the end state of surface acting to be associated with emotional misalignment and inauthenticity (i.e. emotional

dissonance, where the emotions required to be displayed were not actually felt by the employee). This in turn increased employees' experiences of psychological distress and job stress (Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000) so reducing their sense of well-being (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne & Hardi, 1997). More specifically, various studies conducted by Brotheridge and Lee (2002, 2003) and by Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) have concluded that, overall, surface acting has unfavourable results. That is, surface acting has been shown to be directly related to the concept of burnout, and has been shown to be positively associated with an increase in measured emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation, and a decrease in the sense of personal accomplishment. These results were supported by a study conducted by Kim (in press) where he studied 197 hotel service employees and concluded that those who engaged in surface acting were more likely to be emotionally exhausted (***r*** = .44; ***n*** = 197; ***p*** = < .01) than those who strove to invoke the appropriate feelings (i.e. to deep act).

Zammuner and Galli (2005b) conducted a study with 769 subjects working in different business sectors (hospital, banking, retail and the postal services) in Italy and found a strong association between EL and burnout, but with slightly different result to previous research on the dimensional level of EL. The authors reported that surface acting not only significantly predicted emotional exhaustion (***r*** = .28; ***n*** = 769; ***p*** = < .01) and depersonalisation (***r*** = .39; ***n*** = 769; ***p*** = < .01), but that it was also a significantly positive predictor of personal accomplishment (i.e. engaging in surface acting did not reduce an individual's sense of accomplishment as would be thought but in fact increased the individual's sense of accomplishment). In explaining these contradictory effects, the authors noted that surface acting was not always to be considered as a negative emotion management strategy. They argued that surface acting could result in a so-called "virtuous loop", where the intentional expression of positive emotion during interactions with a client could increase the probability of positive feedback by the interacting partner (i.e. the client) (Zapf et al., 1999), in turn increasing the employees' feelings of personal accomplishment, efficacy and emotional competence (Zammuner & Galli, 2005a). Diefendorff et al. (2005) agree with this assertion and argue that surface acting may not be "all bad". They suggest that it may in fact be better to engage in

surface acting than to display felt emotions. For example, when an employee is having a particularly bad day and needs to "fake" emotions to feel better, or when an unexpected situation creates strong negative emotions (i.e. anger and frustration) in an employee, so that surface acting may be the only option available for displaying job-congruent emotions and conforming to display rules (Diefendorff et al. 2005). Likewise, Brotheridge and Lee (2003) point out that if an individual identifies with their work role, and engages in surface acting, this may not necessarily result in any negative effects, as the faking may be in good faith to promote a "separate agenda" – such as not being truly honest with someone for the fear that it may hurt their feelings.

Despite these beneficial qualities of surface acting, the general view is that it is largely associated with negative outcomes for both the individual and the organisation. In fact, employees experiencing emotional dissonance and engaging in surface acting may not manage to mask their true emotions with great skill. The detection by clients of inauthentic emotional expressions may, in turn, lead to even poorer perceptions by the customer of service quality, resulting in a downward spiral of poor service and increasing EL (Mann, 1999; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987).

It is worth noting that in the study conducted by Zammuner and Galli (2005b) it was also found that deep acting was not related to emotional exhaustion or depersonalisation, but that it had a weak positive correlation to personal accomplishment. It would thus seem that surface and deep acting appear to have very different effects on the various dimensions of burnout, with differing consequences for individuals. This intriguing nuance of the emotion regulation or management process will provide the impetus for the investigations in the current research.

In a study assessing whether individuals varying in the level of trait EI would use different EL strategies, with different outcomes in terms of burnout, Mikolajczak et al. (in press) tested 124 nurses on two occasions three months apart. At time 1 (T1) all 124 nurses completed the surveys but only 49 usable surveys were completed at time 2 (T2). The results for this study (relating only to the EL and burnout variables) revealed that both surface and deep acting were associated with the dimensions of burnout,

namely emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation (Surface acting and Emotional Exhaustion: T1: ***r*** = .29; ***n*** = 124; ***p*** = < .001; T2: ***r*** = .37; ***n*** = 49; ***p*** = < .01; Surface Acting and Depersonalisation: T1: ***r*** = .35; ***n*** = 124; ***p*** = < .001; T2: ***r*** = .34; ***n*** = 49; ***p*** = < .05; Deep acting and Emotional Exhaustion: T1: ***r*** = .30; ***n*** = 124; ***p*** = < .001; T2: ***r*** = .08; ***n*** = 49; Deep Acting and Depersonalisation: T1: ***r*** = .20; ***n*** = 124; ***p*** = < .05; T2: ***r*** = .33; ***n*** = 49; ***p*** = < .05). The authors concluded that although surface and deep acting were both positively related to burnout, in the long term surface acting appeared more detrimental to psychological health than deep acting. It was shown, firstly, that it resulted in increased emotional dissonance and, secondly, entailed an increased expenditure of energy by requiring the individual to hide their true feelings and fake unfelt feelings (Mikolajczak et al., in press). It would therefore seem that deep acting, despite requiring a great expenditure of energy to deeply modify feelings, would result in the reduction of emotional dissonance, thereby bringing feelings in line with expressions and organisational expectations and, as a result, “annulling” the damaging effects (e.g. burnout) that would be experienced during surface acting (Mikolajczak et al., in press).

In a study conducted by Lee and Brotheridge (2006) on 198 day-care workers, it was found, firstly, that positive affect played a role in relation to deep acting and, secondly, that deep acting occurred more frequently among younger, less experienced workers, whilst older, more experienced workers were more likely to hide their emotions (i.e. engage in surface acting).

From the above review of the literature, it is clear that further research into the EL construct is needed to gain a more in-depth understanding of its possible predictors, how different individuals experience EL and how the negative outcomes associated with EL can be more effectively predicted and possibly minimised. The current research aims to bridge this gap by investigating how the individual difference construct, EI, relates to both EL and burnout, and whether it in any way moderates the anticipated relationship between EL and the dimensions of burnout (i.e. emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and diminished personal accomplishment).

2.4 EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

2.4.1 The Origins of Emotional Intelligence

Whereas early theories of psychology considered emotions as disruptive, disorganised and characteristic of poor adjustment, modern theories now propose that emotions play a significant role in organising, motivating and directing human activity (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

The roots of the development of the concept EI appear to lie in the apparent inability of traditional measures of "rational thinking" (e.g. IQ tests, academic grades) to predict who will succeed in life (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000a). For example, long before the construct of EI was coined, Thorndike (1920, p.228) developed the concept of social intelligence, which he defined as, "…the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls – to act wisely in human relations". He argued that social intelligence was a means of explaining successful outcomes that could not be attributed to IQ (Bar-On, 2006). Howard Gardner's (1983) work on multiple intelligences played a role in resurrecting EI theory in psychology (Goleman, 2001). His model of multiple intelligences included two varieties of what was called personal intelligence, namely interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence. Intrapersonal intelligence involved having access to internal emotional states and being able to distinguish subtle differences between states (i.e. self-awareness and self-regulation), whereas interpersonal intelligence involved the capacity to read the moods, intentions, and desires of others and to act on this knowledge (i.e. social awareness, empathy and relationship management) (Robins, 2002).

In reviewing the early work on EI, it is evident that the impetus to gain a deeper knowledge of EI was motivated largely by the failure of IQ tests to account for sufficient variance in success criteria both in an educational and organisational context (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000a).

2.4.2 Theoretical Models and Measures of Emotional Intelligence

2.4.2.1 Mayer and Salovey's Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence

Salovey and Mayer (1990) were the first to formally describe the construct of EI. Their original model postulated that EI was the ability to understand feeling in the self and others, and to use these feelings as informational guides for solving problems and regulating behaviour (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). According to this definition, EI was defined to consist of three components: appraisal and expression of emotions, regulation of emotions and the utilisation of emotional information in thinking and acting (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Salovey and Mayer's (1990) model has a strong cognitive emphasis as it sought to distinguish EI abilities from social traits or talents (Goleman, 2001). They argued that a model of EI needed to include a measure of "thinking about feeling" rather than just focusing on simply perceiving and regulating feelings (Goleman, 2001).

Based on empirical studies Mayer and Salovey (1997) refined their original conceptualisation of EI to include four dimensions:

i. The ability to perceive, appraise and express one's own emotions and to perceive and appraise the emotions of others accurately;
ii. The ability to use emotion to facilitate and prioritise thinking (i.e. using emotions to aid in judgement, recognising that changes in mood can influence judgement and may result in different viewpoints owing to the type of mood experienced);
iii. The ability to understand emotions and their meanings (i.e. labelling and distinguishing between emotions, for example differentiating between empathy and pity, understanding complex mixtures of feelings, such as love and hate, and formulating rules about feelings, for example, that anger often gives way to regret and that loss is usually accompanied by sadness); and
iv. The ability to regulate and manage emotions effectively.

According to this conceptualisation of EI, Mayer and Salovey (1997) connected emotion to intelligence and positioned their theory into one that viewed EI as a cognitive ability (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2000).

The current measure of Mayer and Salovey's (1997) four-dimensional model of EI is the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), an ability-based scale that focuses on how well individuals perform tasks and solve emotional problems relating to the four dimensions of EI. The MSCEIT is a performance-based assessment, which was developed in the intelligence testing tradition where an individual is assessed on either a consensus or expert scoring basis. This method of assessment is in contrast to other measures of EI, which are in a self-report format where individuals are required to provide subjective information about their perceived emotional skills (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 1999). As the MSCEIT is performance-based it is independent of the individual's reputation, making it less susceptible to rater bias (Robins, 2002).

Following on the work of Mayer and Salovey, numerous alternative conceptualisations of EI developed (Bar-On, 1997; Cooper & Sawaf, 1997; Goleman, 1995; Palmer & Stough, 2001). All of these models of EI are commonly known to employ a different approach in defining EI, as they do not view the construct purely as a cognitive ability. These models are referred to as mixed models and/or trait-based models as their approach to understanding EI often incorporates a wide range of personality variables such as empathy, self-awareness, assertiveness and optimism (Petrides & Furnham, 2000).

2.4.2.2 Goleman's Competency Based Model

Goleman popularised the EI construct in the publication of two best-selling books ***Emotional Intelligence*** (Goleman, 1995) and ***Working with Emotional Intelligence*** (Goleman, 1998). In these works, designed specifically for workplace applications, Goleman (1995, 1998) conceptualised EI as consisting of twenty emotional competencies which were not considered to be innate abilities or talents but rather learned capabilities that needed to be developed to achieve outstanding performance (Boyatzis, Goleman & Rhee, 2000). These competencies underlie four general competencies or abilities:

i. Self-awareness (i.e. the ability to understand one's emotions and their effects as well as knowing one's internal states, preferences and intuitions);
ii. Self-management (i.e. the ability to manage one's internal states, resources and impulses);

iii. Social Awareness (i.e. the ability to sense, understand and react to others' emotions while comprehending social networks); and
iv. Relationship management (i.e. the ability to inspire, influence and develop others, so as to induce desirable responses).

Based on Goleman's conceptualisation, Boyatzis and Burckle (1999) developed the Emotional Competency Inventory (ECI), which is a multi-rater instrument aimed at measuring emotional competence in the workplace. Little research is available on the validity of this conceptualisation of EI and some authors heavily criticise its lack of scientific robustness, so evident in the work of Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (Epstein, 1998). Sternberg (1999), for example, has criticised Goleman's (1995, 1998) all-encompassing conceptualisation of EI. He argues that it is highly correlated with many areas of personality (for example, extraversion) and motivation (for example, achievement drive), and includes many aspects of social and personal intelligence such as interpersonal skills, flexibility, managing self and managing others. Furthermore, a major disadvantage of using an all-encompassing net such as the ECI is that it is unclear as to what is being measured. As a result, this measure might be less predictive when narrower questions regarding emotional regulation are evaluated (Robins, 2002). Given these shortfalls, Sternberg (1999) favours a more restrictive model of EI, as proposed by Mayer and Salovey (1997), which focuses primarily on the identification and regulation of emotion.

2.4.2.3 Bar-On's Non-Cognitive Model of Emotional Intelligence

Bar-On (1997, p.14) was the first to use the abbreviation EQ (Emotional Quotient) and defined EI as, "…an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures". Based on this conceptualisation of EI, Bar-On (1997) developed the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), a 133 item self-report measure that consists of 15 components, clustered into five groups:

i. Intrapersonal EI (i.e. representing emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, self-regard, self-actualisation and independence);

ii. Interpersonal EI (i.e. representing empathy, healthy interpersonal relationships and social responsibility);
iii. Adaptability EI (i.e. representing problem solving, reality testing and flexibility);
iv. Stress management EI (i.e. representing stress tolerance and impulse control); and
v. General mood EI (i.e. representing happiness and optimism).

Bar-On (1997) proposes that the components of his EI model offers an indication of an individual's potential to succeed in life and can be developed over time and improved through training, programming and therapy (Bar-On, 2006). As with the ECI (Boyatzis & Burckle, 1999), the EQ-i attempts to measure not only personality and intellectual dimensions but also emotional dimensions (Robins, 2002). This inclusiveness has been criticised as it results in high correlations with measures of personality (for example optimism) and mental ability (for example problem solving) and, as a result, has been labelled as both a trait and mixed model approach to EI (Robins, 2002; Mayer et al., 2000).

2.4.2.4 Other Measures of Emotional Intelligence

Various measures have been developed to assess certain components of EI and are of sufficient interest to be included in this review. These measures provide valuable insights that broaden the research base of EI; which it is hoped in time will assist in building a more uniform approach to viewing the EI construct. These include: the Schutte Self-Report Inventory (SSRI) (Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden & Dornheim, 1998); the Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS) (Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey & Palfai, 1995); the Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20) (Bagby, Taylor & Parker, 1994) and the Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (SUEIT) (Palmer & Stough, 2001).

Schutte et al. (1998, p.175) propose that their measure, the SSRI, also referred to as the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS), is based on Salovey and Mayer's (1990) model of EI and that it measures "a homogeneous construct of EI". This measure assesses EI based on self-report responses to 33 items tapping the appraisal and expression of

emotions in self and others, regulation of emotions in self and others, and the utilisation of emotions in solving problems. Petrides and Furnham (2000) criticise the assertion that the SSRI measures a homogeneous construct and argue that the SSRI has low reliability and validity and, as such, cannot purport to measure a general EI factor. Similarly, Pertides and Furnham (2000) argue that the SSRI could not be successfully mapped onto Salovey and Mayer's (1990) model of EI and should, as such, rather be viewed in the trait EI framework.

The TMMS (Salovey et al., 1995) was developed to provide an index of individual differences in a mood regulation process termed the "meta-mood experience", that involves monitoring, evaluating and regulating feelings and emotions (Fitness & Curtis, 2005). The TMMS measures three cognitive components of the EI construct: attention to feelings (i.e. how much attention individual's pay to their inner feelings and emotional states); clarity (i.e. the ability to understand and discriminate among feelings); and repair (i.e. the ability to regulate moods and repair negative emotional experiences). Support has been found for the factorial structure of this measure and its construct validity as a measure of emotional management ability, in a study conducted with an Australian sample (Palmer, Gignac, Bates & Stough, 2003).

The TAS-20 (Bagby et al., 1994) measures the ability to perceive and express emotions. The alexithymia construct describes a deficit in the cognitive processing of affect. This deficit is marked by difficulties in identifying and describing subjective feelings, a limited imaginal capacity, and an externally orientated style of thinking that focuses on external events as opposed to inner feelings and experiences (Palmer, Donaldson & Stough, 2002). The measure contains three latent dimensions: difficulty in identifying feelings; difficulty in describing feelings; and externally-orientated thinking (Bagby et al., 1994). Research has shown that the TAS-20 is both a reliable and valid measure (Palmer et al., 2002).

In an attempt to deduce the most definitive dimensions of EI from the plethora of models and measures that existed at the time, Palmer and Stough (2001) performed a large factor analytic study involving six of the predominant and representative measures of EI

including: (i) the MSCEIT (Mayer et al., 1999); (ii) the EQ-i (Bar-On 1997); (iii) the TMMS (Salovey et al., 1995); (iv) the TAS-20 (Bagby et al., 1994); (v) the SSRI/EIS (Schutte et al., 1998); and (vi) the scale by Tett, Wang, Fischer, Martinez, Griebler and Linkovich (1997). The result of this study was the development of the Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (SUEIT). The SUEIT is a uni-dimensional empirically-based model of EI, which consists of five factors that represent a set of related abilities concerning how effectively emotions are dealt with in the workplace (Palmer & Stough, 2001). The five factors measured by the SUEIT are (Palmer & Stough, 2001):

i. Emotional recognition and expression (the ability to identify one's own feelings and emotional states and to express them to others);
ii. Understanding emotions (external) (the ability to identify emotions in others, to understand the causes and consequences of different emotions, and pick up on emotional-overtones in the environment);
iii. Emotions direct cognition (the ability to incorporate feelings in daily reasoning, problem solving, and decision-making);
iv. Emotional management (the ability to effectively regulate and manage positive and negative emotions within oneself and others); and
v. Emotional control (the ability to effectively control strong emotional states experienced at work such as anger, stress, anxiety and frustration and to prevent strong emotions from affecting work performance).

2.4.2.5 Alignment of the Various Theories of Emotional Intelligence

In an attempt to better align the different approaches to the study of EI, Petrides and Furnham (2000) proposed a theoretical distinction between trait EI and information-processing EI. The authors' propose that the type of measurement, rather than the theory itself, should determine the nature of the EI model. Trait EI is concerned with cross-situational consistencies in behaviour, which manifest in specific personality traits or behaviours such as empathy, assertiveness, optimism, motivation and self-awareness (Petrides & Furnham, 2000).

Trait EI is rooted within the personality framework and is assessed using self-report inventories that measure typical behaviour (e.g. Bar-On, 1997; Salovey et al., 1995). The constructs measured by these inventories, for example, Bar-On's EQ-i (1997) and Boyatzis and Burckle's ECI (1999) are seen to be potential correlates rather than essential elements of EI (Petrides & Furnham, 2000). By contrast, information-processing EI focuses on mental abilities (e.g. ability to identify, express and label emotions) and views EI as related to traditional intelligence (Petrides & Furnham, 2000). According to Petrides and Furnham (2000), the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS) developed by Mayer et al. (2000) is the only measure of information-processing EI.

From the preceding discussion it is clear that the study of EI has taken two distinct paths. Although the view of EI as a mental ability has gained greater acceptance in the academic field owing to the scientific robustness of its underlying theoretical model, both approaches are essential to gain a deeper understanding into the structure of EI. The present study will utilise the SUEIT (Palmer & Stough, 2001) as a measure of EI. This measure, which was developed through the process of factor analysis, contains five factors, which measure emotions in the workplace, and which has sought to provide an empirically sound mixed model measure of EI.

2.4.3 The Impact and Benefits of Emotional Intelligence

2.4.3.1 Performance and Leadership

Early research on the concept of EI focused mainly on the educational and physiological spheres. Initially, most claims about the success of EI in the organisational context were based on anecdotal case histories, derivative models and, in some cases, pure rhetoric, (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000a) leaving sceptics critical of the utility of the construct. However, research conducted in the last two decades has provided substantial empirical support for the value of EI in the workplace.

For example, a significant study conducted by Kelley and Caplan (1993) in the Bell Laboratories found support for the ability of EI to differentiate between high and average performers. In this study, interpersonal strategies adopted by team members were

found to account for a rating of “star” performers irrespective of the person’s IQ or academic talent. In a similar manner, Goleman (1996) argued that people who have a good mix of IQ and EI tend to be more successful in their chosen fields than those with high IQ and low EI. Despite Goleman’s statements being generally greeted with scepticism by the academic fraternity, other authors have confirmed that the impact of IQ and EI in combination play a role in determining successful performance outcomes (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Farnham, 1996). More recent research conducted by Palmer, Gardner and Stough (2003) has shown favourable workplace outcomes for individuals who possess high levels of EI. The authors report that individuals with higher levels of EI were found to be more likely to perform better in the workplace; to display higher levels of organisational commitment; have lower rates of absenteeism; higher levels of job satisfaction; and be less prone to be affected by occupational stress.

In a study assessing the effects of EI on subordinates’ workplace performance, Stough and De Guara (2003) found that EI (as measured by the SUEIT; Palmer & Stough, 2001) was positively related to several performance indicators. For example the subordinate’s emotional recognition and expression, emotional management as well as understanding emotions (external) scores were positively related to the ability to be innovative and creative in the workplace. Moreover, a significant positive correlation between emotional control and the ability to work with team members toward the success of the organisation emerged. In addition, emotional management and emotional control were positively related to customer service, whilst emotional management was positively related to obtaining the skills necessary for career development (Stough & De Guara, 2003).

In South Africa, a study undertaken by Nel and De Villiers (2004) where they investigated the relationship between EI (as measured by Boyatzis & Burckle’s ECI, 1999) and job performance (based firstly on objective indices as assessed by the organisation, such as the level of productivity on systems, closing rate of transactions, lapse index and amount of calls handled per hour, and secondly on subjective supervisor evaluations) in call centres, it was found that a statistically significant positive correlation existed between EI and job performance, with the strongest correlation with

performance occurring in the cluster of self management and self-confidence. It was further found that the combination of the emotional competencies, i.e. emotional self-awareness, trustworthiness, self-confidence and influence, explained the greatest amount of variance in job performance in the call centre environment as a whole (Nel & De Villiers, 2004).

In the field of customer service, Bardzil and Slaski (2003) argued that EI encapsulates many of the key competencies involved in creating and maintaining a positive climate for customer services. The authors proposed that, in light of evidence in support of the development of EI (Slaski & Cartwright, 2002), it is crucial for organisations to take a more proactive approach to the development of a positive service climate by incorporating EI into staff selection, performance management and training policies. In a study of three call centres (two financial and one public sector) in the UK dealing exclusively with “inbound calls” (i.e. responding to client calls), Higgs (2004) found a strong relationship between overall EI (measured in terms of the personality variables/trait EI model using a general EI measure developed by Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000b, known as the EIQ-G) and individual performance measures. Unfortunately, little information was provided on the exact nature of these performance criteria, except that it was obtained from assessments conducted by personnel departments in each of the organisations studied. The authors conceded that the performance measure employed was a limiting factor in the study. Despite these limitations, this study – along with the others cited – provides support for the need to investigate the benefits of EI in the context of customer service work and, in particular, call centres.

EI has also been shown to be essential for business leaders. The 20th century hierarchical structure of organisations has become obsolete, owing to a fast-paced business world accelerated by information technologies and globalisation. Contemporary executives are required to shift business strategies more quickly to remain competitive. In order to gain the commitment of employees to achieve in this fast-paced environment effective interpersonal skills and EI is required (Louie, Coverdale & Weiss Roberts, 2006). A study conducted by Gardner and Stough (2003) found that EI (as measured by the SUEIT) was found to account for variance in effective

leadership (measured using Bass & Avolio's Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, 1990), over and above personality Gardner and Stough (2003) in a study on leadership styles, found that EI (measured by the SUEIT) correlated highly with all components of the transformational style of leadership which is identified with effective leaders (Transformational leadership: ***r*** = .68; ***n*** = 110; ***p*** = < .01; Idealised attributes: ***r*** = .56; ***n*** = 110; ***p*** = < .01; Idealised behaviours: ***r*** = .54; ***n*** = 110; ***p*** = < .01; Inspirational motivation: ***r*** = .58; ***n*** = 110; ***p*** = < .01; Intellectual stimulation: ***r*** = .59, ***n*** = 110; ***p*** = < .01; and Individual consideration: ***r*** = .54; ***n*** = 110; ***p*** = < .01). In addition, the results further revealed that the dimensions of EI, understanding emotions (external) and emotional management were the best predictors of this style of leadership (Gardner & Stough, 2003).

2.4.3.2 The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Emotional Labour and Burnout

While the construct of EI is viewed somewhat differently by different researchers and practitioners (Bar-On, 1997; Goleman, 1995, 1998; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Mayer & Salovey, 1997), there is general agreement that the construct could provide a useful framework that could allow for the identification of specific skills needed to understand and experience emotions in ways that are most adaptive to present-day working environments (Chan, 2006). For example, Mayer and Salovey (1995) argued that individuals high in EI, as opposed to those low in EI, were more likely to engage in emotions that were adaptive to situational demands, and to use cognitive re-appraisal and other methods to regulate their emotions more effectively.

Ogińska-Bulik (2005) suggests that EI could serve as a personal resource when an individual is experiencing emotional dissonance. This view corresponds with results from a sample of nurses (Mikolajczak et al., in press), where it was found that those with higher levels of trait EI would use different EL strategies (i.e. surface and deep acing), which mediated negative outcomes associated with EL such as burnout and somatic complaints. More interestingly, in a study by Brotheridge (2006) involving undergraduate students working part-time in various service occupations, it was found that EI was not directly related to the type of EL strategy engaged in (i.e. surface and deep acting). Instead, it was found that EI played the role of predictor of perceived

situational role demands (i.e. intensity, frequency and variety of emotional displays), which then predicted the nature of EL performed (i.e. EI influenced an individuals' perception of situational role demands, which would then influence whether they engaged in surface or deep acting strategies). These studies point toward the possible protective qualities of EI alluded to by Ogińska-Bulik (2005) and require further investigation.

In a meta-analysis of research on EI published before 2003, Van Rooy and Viswesvaran (2004) found that overall EI holds promise as a predictor of various life outcomes, such as mental and physical health. More specifically, in a meta-analysis on the relationship between EI and health, it was found that of the 44 effect sizes investigated (based on the responses of 7898 participants), higher EI was associated with better health (Schutte, Malouff, Thorsteinsson, Bhullar & Rooke, 2007). EI had a weighted average association of $r =$ .29 with mental health; r = .31 with psychosomatic health; and r = .22 with physical health. Furthermore, research has shown that the better perception, understanding and management of emotions exhibited by those individuals with higher EI may prevent maladaptive emotional states associated with mood and anxiety disorders; largely because these individuals tend to have a more positive mood state, and are better able to repair mood after a negative mood induction (Schutte, Malouff, Simunek, Hollander & McKenley, 2002).

In a study of 330 human service professionals, which focused directly on the relationship between EI and occupational stress, Oginska-Bulik (2005) found that individuals with high levels of EI dealt more effectively with stress and displayed lower levels of perceived occupational stress. With regards to gaining a deeper understanding of the EI – burnout relationship, Slaski and Cartwright (2002) argued that EI could in fact serve as a moderator in the stress process. In a study conducted by Brand (2007) on a sample of 143 nurses in South Africa, it was found that EI tended towards significance as a moderator in the relationship between general work stress (as measured by the Sources of Work Stress Inventory (SWSI) developed by De Bruin & Taylor, 2005) and emotional exhaustion (β = -.323, p =< .067) (measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory – Human Service Survey (MBI-HSS), developed by Maslach et al., 1996). Similarly, it was found

that EI moderated the relationship between general work stress and depersonalisation (β = -.546, ***p*** =< .05) (measured by the MBI-HSS). Thus, the results imply that those higher in EI reported lower levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation as their perceptions of general work stress increased, so adding to the increasing body of research on the benefits of EI in the workplace.

Little research exists on direct relationships between EI and burnout as a negative outcome, but some support has been found for this relationship in a study conducted by Chan (2006) on 169 secondary school teachers in Hong Kong. This study measured EI using the SSRI/EIS, and reports a path coefficient of .29 (***p*** = <0.001) between emotional appraisal (i.e. the perception and appraisal of emotions) and emotional exhaustion, and a path coefficient of -.51 (***p*** = <0.001) between positive regulation (i.e. management and regulation of emotions) and emotional exhaustion (Chan, 2006). In interpreting these results with the view to designing possible future burnout preventative intervention efforts, Chan (2006) argued that the mere enhancement of the perception and awareness of emotions might bring into focus and possibly deepen the feelings of emotional exhaustion, if it was not coupled with an enhancement of positive management or a regulation of emotions.

Given the results from these studies, it becomes apparent that EI could, likely play a role in how EL is experienced and may possibly act as a protective barrier against the development of one of the negative outcomes of EL, namely burnout. The current study aims to provide a detailed analysis of the relationships between burnout, EL and EI.

2.4.3.3 Emotional Intelligence and Socio-Demographic Variables

With regards to the influence of socio-demographic variables on levels of EI, it has been found that women generally have higher EI scores than men (Mayer et al., 1999; Slaski & Cartwright, 2002). Older individuals seem to score higher on EI than younger individuals (Nikolaou & Tsaousis, 2002), and length of service has failed to be a predictor of EI (Landa, López-Zafra, Martos & Aguilar-Luzón, in press).

2.4.4 The Relationship between Burnout, Emotional Labour and Emotional Intelligence in the Call Centre Industry

Call centre work is indicative of emotion work. On a daily basis, CCRs are required to engage in repetitive voice-to-voice interactions with clients where they are required to display organisationally endorsed emotions with the view to influencing clients' attitudes and behaviours to ensure their satisfaction and retention (Hochschild, 1983; Zapf, 2002). Hochschild (1983) hypothesised that the display of emotions to meet organisational demands, in return for the payment of a wage (i.e. EL), could result in psychological strain and loss of emotional control. In view of the fact that organisations encourage the display of a limited range of emotions to ensure uniformity in interactions with clients (e.g. scripts used in call centres), as well as customer satisfaction and retention, it is likely that this could result in employees, at times, having to display emotions that they do not truly feel (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Emotional strain or exhaustion may occur when employees expend energy in order to realign their feelings (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003) with the display of acceptable emotions often advocated by organisations in the service industry.

Numerous research studies confirm that EL plays a unique role in the prediction of burnout (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Palmer & Carstairs, 2003; Zapf et al., 2001). Kruml and Geddes (2000) showed that individuals experience stress when they fake emotions, rather than genuinely express what they feel. In a study conducted by Zapf et al. (2001), EL was shown to contribute to burnout, over and above the contribution of other organisational and social variables. It is not only the frequency and quantity of interactions with the public that contribute to the stress of CCRs, but also the demands that are placed on them to regulate their emotional states in a mandated way (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Montgomery et al., 2006; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989). As stated earlier in the meta-analytic study conducted by Bono and Vey (2005), significant relationships were found between EL and two dimensions of burnout, namely emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation. Furthermore, Grandey, Fisk and Steiner (2005) found that the suppression and faking of emotional expressions depleted personal resources and predicted job-strain for customer-contact employees.

EL, "…requires one to induce or suppress feelings in order to sustain a countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (Hayes & Kleiner, 2001, p.81). Emotion regulation includes all efforts to increase, maintain, or decrease one or more components of an emotion (Gross, 1999). Two types of emotion regulation identified by Gross (1999) are deep acting and surface acting. Emotional dissonance alone is not enough to understand the outcomes of EL; one needs a deeper understanding of the actual emotion at play, and whether surface or deep acting is used before one can understand its relationship to strain (Côté, 2005). Effective emotion regulation is present when employees choose to modify their situations, monitor and adjust their cognitions, and respond appropriately to clients in ways that do not result in dissonance and stress for extended periods of time (Grandey & Brauberger, 2002). Brotheridge and Lee (2003) found that emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation were significantly correlated with surface acting, suggesting that emotional strain stems largely from the effort required to hide one's true feelings or to pretend to feel those that were expressed. Palmer and Carstairs (2003) showed that greater use of deep acting techniques is protective against burnout, whereas surface acting results in the depersonalisation of clients. The present study aims to establish whether the emotion regulation abilities (such as evidenced in people who possess high levels of EI) would in any way moderate the relationship between EL and burnout.

In reviewing the literature available, it is evident that there is a dearth of research on the link between EI and EL. Although Hochschild (1983) argued that being required to display unfelt emotions, especially in service interactions, would result in negative effects such as the loss of emotional control and psychological strain, there still remains little empirical evidence on whether an individual's emotional management and regulation (i.e. how they appraise and respond to their own emotions and those of others) would have an effect on how they experience EL. Recent research (Brotheridge, 2006) suggests that in service-related industries, what would matter most is the process of internal regulation i.e. how service workers choose to regulate their own emotional expression. Therefore, it is necessary to consider whether individual differences might influence internal emotional regulation capabilities in service workers. For example,

research on emotional regulation (Gross, 1998) has found that there are considerable differences in the extent to which individuals adjust their emotions in response to their social environment (Friedman & Miller-Herringer, 1991).

A study conducted by Brotheridge (2006) on a sample of service workers (retail sales, restaurant servers, and hotel catering staff) found that those with higher levels of EI, as measured with Mayer and Salovey's MSCEIT (1997), were more likely to perceive the need to frequently display emotions as part of their work role, and to perform deep acting in response to situational demands. These results suggest that EI seemed to be a predictor of the perceived situational demands (frequency, duration and intensity of emotional display), which, in turn, predicted the nature of the EL that was performed (i.e. whether surface or deep acting techniques were used). Research conducted into the use of surface acting has shown that it results in a reduced sense of well-being as a result of increased psychological distress and job stress (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000; Sheldon et al., 1997). Mikolajczak et al. (in press) provided further evidence of the possible protective qualities of EI, as a possible moderator in the relationship between EL and burnout, by reporting that the level of EI (measured with the French translated short version of Petrides & Furnham's Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire, 2003) possessed by an individual influenced the type of EL engaged in, and that this choice mediated the experience of burnout and somatic complaints. Lastly, Zapf (2002) argued that being able to manage the emotions of clients and being able to make accurate perceptions of their emotions was an important individual quality in work involving EL.

Research on the relationship between EI and burnout is also on the increase. Whilst to date most of the research focuses on the EI – stress relationship, it still provides one with a basis to investigate if EI could, in any way, also reduce the negative states experienced during burnout (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). For example, Slaski and Cartwright (2002) view EI as a potential moderator in the stress process. Slaski and Cartwright (2003) propose that training to develop EI may be a potentially effective technique for improving an individual's resilience to stress. Other authors have similarly advocated that higher levels of EI may assist individuals in dealing better with stress,

displaying lower levels of perceived stress, being less prone to being affected by stress and possessing better overall health (Gardner & Stough, 2003; Oginska-Bulik, 2005; Schutte et al., 2007). The results found by Brand (2007), reported earlier, indicate that EI plays a beneficial role in protecting individuals against the negative responses of burnout (i.e. emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and diminished personal accomplishment).

2.5 SUMMARY

Having reviewed the literature on burnout, EL and EI, it is clear that future research is needed into the complex relationships between EL and burnout, and whether EI plays a role in this relationship. The present research aims to investigate, not only the relationship between EL and burnout in the call centre industry, but, more specifically, to determine whether EI predicts variance in the dimensions of EL and burnout. Furthermore, this research aims to assess whether EI plays a moderating role in the proposed relationship between EL and burnout. Ultimately, the objective of this research is to ascertain if EI can be viewed as a possible protective quality that could minimise or eliminate the development of burnout specifically in the call centre context. The implications for this research is to determine if EI should be used as a criteria during selection and/or as a possible tool that can be learnt and developed through training and coaching exercises, with the view to assisting employees and organisations in fostering work effectiveness and personal well-being in the workplace. The next chapter will state the various research hypotheses and the methodology to be used to test these relationships.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Having reviewed the theoretical background of the burnout, EL and EI constructs, this chapter will focus firstly on the rationale, aims and objectives of this research. This discussion will lay the foundation for what will be investigated in this research and will culminate in the development of various research hypotheses to test the anticipated relationships between the constructs. The second part of the chapter will focus on the research methodology, the sample, how the data was collected and what measurement instruments were utilised to measure the identified constructs.

3.2 RATIONALE AND AIM OF THIS RESEARCH

3.2.1 Rationale for this Research

Research has shown that CCRs regularly engage in emotion work as they are required by the nature of their jobs to suppress felt emotions in favour of organisationally prescribed display rules (i.e. EL). Furthermore, research has found that ineffective management of emotions during such interactions with clients (i.e. engaging in surface rather than deep acting) can lead to negative consequences such as psychological strain and burnout (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Hochschild, 1983; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002).

Research conducted by Brotheridge (2006) has investigated the role of EI in the regulation of emotions in employees who traditionally experience high levels of EL. In this study the author measured EL using the ELS developed by Brotheridge and Lee (2003) while EI was measured using the MSCEIT developed by Mayer et al., (2000). The results indicated that an individual's level of EI influenced their perceptions of the situational demands of the job (i.e. frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays), which in turn influenced whether they engaged in surface or deep acting. These findings highlight the need for continued investigation into the effect that EI could have not only on EL but also on burnout.

Burnout is a detrimental outcome of continued emotional strain and stress that has negative consequences for the individual, their family members, the organisation they work for, their co-workers and their clients (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Research that assists in gaining a better understanding of the predictors of burnout (such as EL) and possible techniques that could be used to reduce burnout is of great value in the workplace. The current study aims to investigate the relationship between burnout, EL and EI, in an attempt to investigate whether EI could possibly play a moderating role in the EL– burnout relationship.

3.2.2 Aims and Objectives of this Research

As a replication of previous research this study aims, firstly, to investigate whether a significant positive relationship exists between EL and the three dimensions of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and diminished personal accomplishment. It is proposed, albeit tentatively, that the strongest correlations between EL and burnout will emerge between surface acting (a dimension of EL) and emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation (dimensions of burnout) respectively. Research has shown that the extensive use of surface acting, in order to meet organisational demands to display certain emotions in the workplace, leads to psychological strain, lack of emotional control and emotional dissonance (Hochschild, 1983). This could in turn contribute to feelings of one's emotional resources being depleted (i.e. emotional exhaustion) and as a result treating customers in a callous and alienating manner (i.e. depersonalisation).

Secondly, it will be investigated whether a relationship exists between EI and EL. It is believed that individuals who have lower EI scores will engage more regularly in surface- rather than deep acting techniques to meet organisationally prescribed display rules as they fail to perceive, appraise, express and use emotions effectively and appropriately in the workplace. As a result a significant negative relationship is anticipated between EI and surface acting, with the converse being anticipated for the relationship between EI and deep acting.

Thirdly, it will be determined if a significant relationship exists between EI and burnout. It is anticipated that EI will have significant negative relationships with two of the dimensions of burnout: emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation. A significant positive relationship is anticipated with the final dimension of burnout, diminished personal accomplishment. It is believed that those individuals who have higher EI scores may be more likely to manage and control their emotions effectively, which could contribute to lower levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation. Furthermore, it is anticipated that those individuals who score higher on EI are more likely to have positive client interactions (with positive feedback from clients), which could likely influence their feelings of efficacy and accomplishment at work (i.e. higher scores on diminished personal accomplishment means greater feelings of personal accomplishment and hence lower burnout).

Fourthly, to gain deeper insights into the effect of EI on EL and burnout, regression analyses will be conducted to establish how much of the variance in EL and burnout can be explained by the EI dimensions. In addition this will also indicate the relative contribution of each independent variable (i.e. separate EI dimensions). For example, it is believed that by being able to manage and control emotions effectively, individuals will be better equipped in coping with stressful situations that could contribute to the levels of burnout they experience.

Finally, it is anticipated that the aforementioned proposed relationships will indicate that EI could play a moderating role in the relationship between EL and burnout. The moderating effect of EI on the relationship between EL and burnout will be tested directly through investigating the interaction effects between EI and EL on burnout. It is hypothesised that high levels of EI as measured by the SUEIT will equip an individual with the ability to manage and control their emotions in a more effective and appropriate manner so as to possibly lessen the development of burnout.

The objective of this study is to provide the call centre industry with insight into how burnout can be lessened in the workplace. In turn it is anticipated that these results will provide indirect insights into possible ways of alleviating the problem of burnout in the workplace and its recognised negative outcomes (i.e. high levels of absenteeism, staff turnover and reduced productivity). More specifically, it is expected that this study will highlight the importance of emotional regulation (for example, recognising and appraising emotions; expressing emotions effectively, being able to read customer's emotions) in the call centre industry and the need for selection, recruitment and training practices to focus on the significance of identifying and developing EI as a possible protective quality that influences the experience of EL and burnout and the relationship between these constructs. Furthermore, it is hoped that this research will expand the research base on EI and provide further empirical support for the value of EI assessment and development in the workplace.

3.3 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Work performed by CCRs is classified exclusively as service related / customer service work, which falls within the domain of emotion work (underpinned by the construct EL). Research has shown that EL is linked to the construct of burnout, which in turn has negative consequences for both the employee (i.e. depression, anxiety, insomnia and fatigue) and the organisation (i.e. high levels of absenteeism and staff turnover). For this reason it is pertinent that organisations that utilise call centres in the course of their business take heed of the current investigation into the relationships between these variables. The challenge for such organisations is to attempt to identify those factors that might negatively impact on the well-being of CCRs, as well as to investigate ways to either eliminate them or assist with better mechanisms of coping with such negative outcomes. The goal of such investigations is to better realise the competitive advantage that call centres are meant to offer to the organisation as a whole. The current research focuses on the relationship between EL and burnout and investigates the possibility of EI playing a role in this relationship, in order to provide useful and relevant insights that will benefit CCRs and their organisations alike.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to explore the various relationships between the three constructs: EL, burnout and EI. The first objective of this study is to determine if EL relates to the experience of burnout, by testing the relationships between the various dimensions of EL and burnout. To investigate these relationships, it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 1: Significant positive relationships exist between the dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays) and emotional exhaustion.
Hypothesis 2: Significant positive relationships exist between the dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays) and depersonalisation.
Hypothesis 3: Significant negative relationships exist between the dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays) and diminished personal accomplishment.
Hypothesis 4: A significant positive relationship exists between surface acting and emotional exhaustion.
Hypothesis 5: A significant positive relationship exists between surface acting and depersonalisation.
Hypothesis 6: A significant negative relationship exists between surface acting and diminished personal accomplishment.
Hypothesis 7: A significant negative relationship exists between deep acting and emotional exhaustion.
Hypothesis 8: A significant negative relationship exists between deep acting and depersonalisation.
Hypothesis 9: A significant positive relationship exists between deep acting and diminished personal accomplishment.
Hypothesis 10: A significant positive relationship exists between the duration of the interaction (EL) and emotional exhaustion.
Hypothesis 11: A significant positive relationship exists between the duration of the interaction (EL) and depersonalisation.
Hypothesis 12: A significant negative relationship exists between the duration of the interaction (EL) and diminished personal accomplishment.

The second objective of this study is to determine whether any significant relationships exist between EI and the various dimensions of EL and burnout and thereafter to determine firstly, which dimensions of EL might predict the most variance in burnout and secondly, which dimensions of EI might predict the most variance in EL and burnout respectively. To investigate these relationships, it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 13: Significant positive relationships exist between EI (total score) and the dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays).

Hypothesis 14: Significant positive relationships exist between the dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) and the dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays).

Hypothesis 15: A significant negative relationship exists between EI (total score) and surface acting.

Hypothesis 16: Significant negative relationships exist between the dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) and surface acting.

Hypothesis 17: A significant positive relationship exists between EI (total score) and deep acting.

Hypothesis 18: Significant positive relationships exist between the dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) and deep acting.

Hypothesis 19: A significant negative relationship exists between EI (total score) and emotional exhaustion.

Hypothesis 20: Significant negative relationships exist between the dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) and emotional exhaustion.

Hypothesis 21: A significant negative relationship exists between EI (total score) and depersonalisation.

Hypothesis 22: Significant negative relationships exist between the dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) and depersonalisation.

Hypothesis 23: A significant positive relationship exists between EI (total score) and diminished personal accomplishment.

Hypothesis 24: Significant positive relationships exist between the dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) and diminished personal accomplishment.

Hypothesis 25: The different dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays, surface acting and deep acting) can be used to predict emotional exhaustion (as a dimension of burnout).

Hypothesis 26: The different dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays, surface acting and deep acting) can be used to predict depersonalisation (as a dimension of burnout).

Hypothesis 27: The different dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays, surface acting and deep acting) can be used to predict diminished personal accomplishment (as a dimension of burnout).

Hypothesis 28: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict frequency of emotional displays (a dimension of EL).

Hypothesis 29: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict intensity of emotional displays (a dimension of EL).

Hypothesis 30: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict variety of emotional displays (a dimension of EL).

Hypothesis 31: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict surface acting (a dimension of EL).

Hypothesis 32: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict deep acting (a dimension of EL).

Hypothesis 33: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict emotional exhaustion (a dimension of burnout).

Hypothesis 34: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict depersonalisation (a dimension of burnout).

Hypothesis 35: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict diminished personal accomplishment (a dimension of burnout).

Finally, it will be investigated whether EI plays a moderating role in the relationship between EL and burnout. The following was hypothesised to test this effect:

Hypothesis 36: EI is a moderator in the relationship between EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays, surface acting and deep acting) and burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and diminished personal accomplishment).

The proposed theoretical research model and anticipated relationships between the variables is graphically represented in figure 3.1. The various relationships to be tested in the present research suggest that individuals who experience EL will be more prone to experiencing higher levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation and lower levels of personal accomplishment. It is also suggested that individuals who have higher EI scores will more likely engage in deep rather than surface acting and be less likely to develop burnout. Moreover, it is argued that EI might act as a moderating

variable when individuals experience EL, in that the presence or absence of different levels of EI in the individual might influence the experience of EL. This might, depending on the empirical support found regarding the relationship between EL and burnout, have subsequent positive and negative effects in terms of the levels of burnout experienced by the individual.

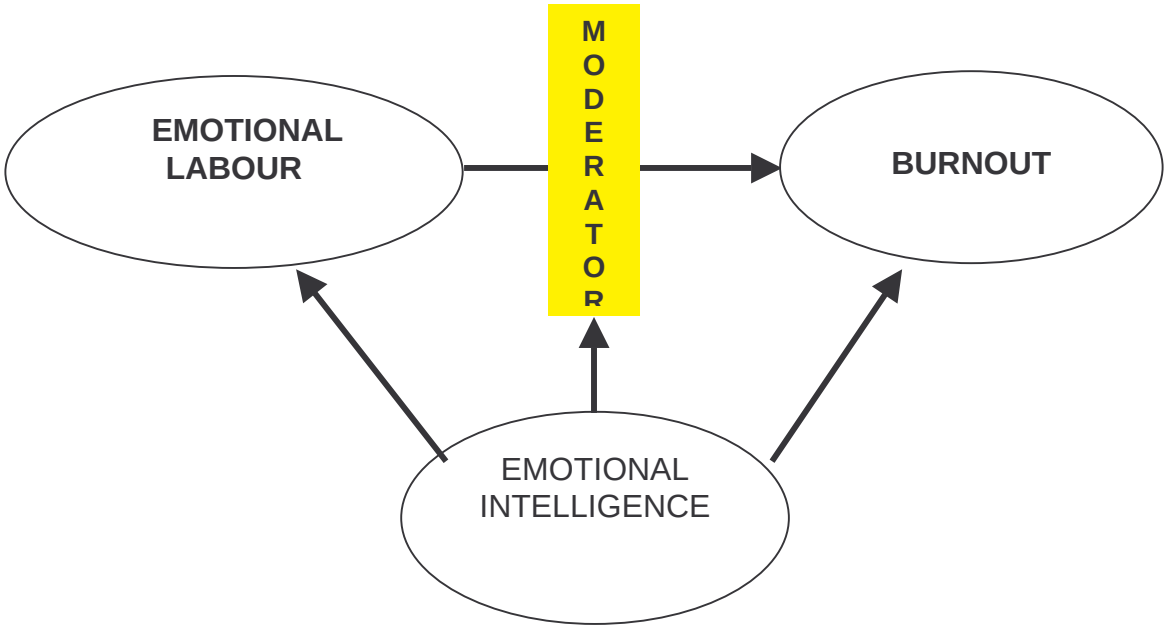

Figure 3.1: Theoretical Model of the proposed relationships between EL, EI and Burnout

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

3.4.1 Research Design

A non-experimental research design (i.e. exploratory survey study) was used to explore the relationships between burnout, EL and EI. Non-experimental research is used when the researcher wants to observe relationships between variables without controlling or manipulating the variables in any way (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). Hypotheses of the relationships between the variables are based on the theoretical framework and proposed model (see figure 3.1) and were studied without direct manipulation of the variables (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000).

A relational approach was adopted whereby the researcher determined how two or more variables were related to each other (Elmes, Kantowitz & Roediger, 1999). Both correlational and multivariate statistical techniques were used to gain a deeper understanding of the strength and direction of the relationships and interaction effects between the variables studied.

3.4.2 Sampling

The sampling technique employed for this survey research was non-probability sampling, more specifically availability sampling (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Owing to the nature of the research question this sampling method was utilised, as it was the most practical method to gather the data (Babbie & Mouton, 2001) given the type of sample identified for this research (i.e. CCRs) and the nature of the variables investigated.

Whilst it could be argued that the method of sampling adopted in this research places restrictions on the degree to which the findings can be generalised, it should be noted that given the fair sample size (***n*** = 210) it is proposed that reliable generalisations can be made not only to the company that partook in the research but also to other call centres in that industry where the organisational context is similar.

3.4.3 Participants

The participants in this study (***n*** = 210) consisted of three hierarchical levels of employees (i.e. supervisors, team leaders and call centre consultants/agents) who work in the customer care call centre division of two branch offices of a leading South African telecommunications company located in the Western Cape. This industry was chosen as it employs large numbers of call centre consultants/agents and places a high regard on the need for service delivery through the use of call centres.

3.4.4 Data Collection

Data collection in this research was preceded by a lengthy process of negotiation and presentations to the company that partook in this research. Upon receipt of ethical clearance to conduct this research (copy attached as appendix 1), the researcher made

contact with the call centre management of the identified company, to obtain their commitment to the research project. To begin the data collection process a letter was forwarded to the senior call centre manager in the Western Cape identifying the benefits of the research. A copy of this letter is attached as appendix 2. Following on this correspondence, the researcher conducted a presentation to all senior call centre supervisors and team leaders setting out the rationale, aims and objectives of the research as well as the direct benefit for the telecommunications call centre industry. A copy of this presentation is attached as appendix 3. Executive approval was obtained from the company to commence the research.

Data was collected by way of three questionnaires (measuring each of the identified variables in this research) and a demographic information form. Copies of the covering letter to participants and the demographic information form are attached as appendices 4 and 5 respectively. Various meetings were held with supervisors and team leaders at the two call centre branches where they were administered the demographic information form and questionnaires in the presence of the researcher. The researcher explained to the team leaders all the ethical considerations relating to the completion and administration of the questionnaires and distributed various packs of questionnaires to each team leader for distribution amongst their various consultants/agents. A copy of the letter given to the team leaders setting out what they needed to communicate to their consultants/agents when handing out the questionnaire packs is attached as appendix 6. The questionnaires were distributed at two of the company's customer care call centre branches.

The questionnaires handed to the team leaders were generally completed by their consultants/agents over a period of 48 to 72 hours. They were then returned to the team leaders for onward transmission to the researcher. Most questionnaires were completed anonymously with some participants consenting to their results being made available to the company's human resource department for coaching and developmental purposes.

3.5 MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENTS

Three prominent well-validated existing questionnaires were utilised to measure the constructs as contained in the proposed theoretical model.

3.5.1 Burnout

The Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey (MBI-GS) (Schaufeli, Leiter, Maslach & Jackson, 1996) was used to measure the three dimensions of burnout. The MBI-GS is a modified version of the original MBI, and was designed to measure burnout in a broader range of occupations. The MBI-GS is a self-report questionnaire, which measures a respondent's relationship with their work on a continuum from engagement (dedicated to excellent performance of work and confident in one's effectiveness) to burnout (state of exhaustion in which one is cynical about the value of one's occupation and doubtful of one's capacity to perform) (Schaufeli et al., 1996). Despite the terminology (i.e. dimension labels) of two of the dimensions of burnout being altered in this modified version of the MBI-GS, their original underlying meaning has not been changed. "Cynicism" now replaces depersonalisation and "professional efficacy" replaces diminished personal accomplishment. For the purposes of this research the old dimension labels will be utilised as it conforms to the terminology used in earlier research conducted on the relationship between EL and burnout.

The MBI-GS was tested across three cultural groups, namely a North American sample (NAm) (***n*** = 3727); a Dutch (D) sample (***n*** = 941) and a Finnish (F) sample (***n*** = 290) and found to have fairly similar reliability statistics across these three sample groups. The number of items, the Cronbach alphas (for each sample group) and item samples for the three dimensions are as follows (Maslach et al., 1996): emotional exhaustion (8 items, NAm: α= .89; D: α= .87; F: α= .87, sample item: "I feel used up at the end of the workday"); depersonalisation (4 items, NAm: α= .80; D: α= .73; F: α= .84, sample item: "I have become less enthusiastic about my work"), and diminished personal accomplishment (4 items, NAm: α= .76; D: α= .77; F: α= .84, sample item "I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job"). All items (16 in total) are scored on a 7-point Likert-type scale. Individuals are required to indicate how frequently they feel a certain way about their job ranging from "never" (0) to "every day" (6). High scores on

emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and low scores on diminished personal accomplishment (owing to the negative scoring on this dimension) are indicative of burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). The descriptive statistics and Cronbach alphas obtained from the sample in this research for the variables emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and diminished personal accomplishment are set out in table 3.1.

Table 3.1: The current study's means, standard deviations and reliability statistics for the MBI-GS

MBI-GS dimensions	Means	Standard Deviations	N of items	Cronbach's Alpha
EE	17.98	7.31	5	.88
DP	9.17	6.59	5	.79
PA	31.01	5.03	6	.72

n = 210; EE = Emotional Exhaustion; DP = Depersonalisation; PA = Diminished Personal Accomplishment

3.5.2 Emotional Labour

The Emotional Labour Scale (ELS), developed and validated by Brotheridge and Lee (2003), was used to measure EL. The ELS is a self-report questionnaire consisting of 15 items that measure five dimensions of EL (frequency of emotional display, intensity of emotional display, variety of emotional display, surface acting and deep acting). The ELS employs a 5-point Likert-type scale. Individuals are required to state how frequently they engage in a certain action on an average day at work, ranging from "never" (1) to "always" (5). The sixth dimension of EL, duration of the interaction, is an additional item that is used to measure the average number of minutes required for a typical service interaction.

The ELS was validated in two separate studies, the first (S1) (***n*** = 296) consisted of students enrolled in various undergraduate and postgraduate level business classes at a university located in Canada, whilst the second study (S2)(***n*** = 238) consisted of older more experienced full-time workers ranging from service/sales workers (***n*** = 143) to office workers (***n*** = 22), labourers (***n*** = 29), human service professionals (***n*** = 29) and managers or professionals (***n*** = 15). Estimates of internal consistency for the dimensions over these two studies ranged from .74 to .91 (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003).

Confirmatory factor analysis results provided support for the existence of six uni-dimensional subscales (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). With regards to the five dimensions of EL (duration excluded), the number of items, the Cronbach alphas (for each study group) and item samples are as follows (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003): frequency of emotional displays (3 items, S1: α= .75; S2: α= .88; sample item: "Display specific emotions required by your job"); intensity of emotional displays (2 items, S1: α= .58; S2: α= .74; sample item: "Show some strong emotions"), variety of emotional displays (4 items, S1: α= .68; S2: α= .76; sample item: "Display many different emotions when interacting with others"), surface acting (3 items, S1: α= .85; S2: α= .79; sample item: "Resist expressing my true feelings"), and deep acting (3 items, S1: α= .82; S2: α= .83; sample item: "Really try to feel the emotions I have to show as part of my job"). The descriptive statistics and Cronbach alphas obtained for the sample in this research relating to the different EL dimensions (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays, surface acting and deep acting) are set out in table 3.2.

Table 3.2: The current study's means, standard deviations and reliability statistics for the ELS

ELS dimensions	Means	Standard Deviations	N of items	Cronbach's Alpha
FRE	11.15	2.10	3	.74
INT	5.85	1.65	2	.56
VAR	13.79	2.89	4	.75
SA	8.49	2.45	3	.66
DA	9.84	2.22	3	.74

n = 210; FRE = Frequency of emotional displays; INT = Intensity of emotional displays; VAR = Variety of emotional displays; SA = Surface acting; DA = Deep acting

3.5.3 Emotional Intelligence

EI was measured using the SUEIT developed by Palmer and Stough (2001). The SUEIT is a self-report questionnaire that measures individuals' perceptions of the way they think, feel and act at work on the basis of emotional information (Palmer & Stough, 2001). The SUEIT was developed from a large factor-analytic study involving the factors from six other EI scales. The results of this study identified five factors that

accounted for 58% of the variance and thus provided the framework for the SUEIT. The five factors measured by the SUEIT are (Palmer & Stough, 2001):

i. Emotional recognition and expression (the ability to identify one's own feelings and emotional states and to express them to others – sample item: "I can portray how I am feeling to others through my body language");
ii. Understanding emotions (external) (the ability to identify emotions in others, to understand the causes and consequences of different emotions, and pick up on emotional-overtones in the environment – sample item: "I can tell how colleagues are feeling at work");
iii. Emotions direct cognition (the extent to which emotions and emotional knowledge are incorporated in decision-making and problem-solving – sample item: "My moods and emotions help me generate new ideas");
iv. Emotional management (the ability to manage positive and negative emotions within oneself and others – sample item: "I generate positive moods and emotions within myself to get over being frustrated at work"); and
v. Emotional control (the ability to effectively control strong emotional states experienced at work such as anger, stress, anxiety and frustration – sample item: "When I am anxious I can remain focused on what I am doing").

The SUEIT comprises 64 items and is measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from "never" (1) to "always" (5). Respondents are required to indicate the extent to which each statement is true of the way they typically think, feel and act at work. The SUEIT has both general and executive Australian norms. The average EI level in general scores, as measured by the SUEIT is 221.75 (α = .88). The Cronbach alphas for each factor in the SUEIT as reported in the technical manual are (Palmer & Stough, 2001): emotional recognition and expression: α = .73; understanding emotions (external): α = .83; emotions direct cognition: α = .63; emotional management: α = .72; and emotional control: α = .72. The descriptive statistics and Cronbach alphas obtained for the sample in this research for each of the dimensions of EI (including total EI) are set out in table 3.3.

Table 3.3: The current study's means, standard deviations and reliability statistics for the SUEIT

SUEIT dimensions	Means	Standard Deviations	N of items	Cronbach's Alpha
EREXP	35.955	5.65	11	.70
UEX	72.54	9.33	20	.79
EDC	33.35	5.16	12	.57
EM	42.03	6.69	12	.61
EC	33.32	5.08	9	.72
EI (TOTAL SCORE)	215.39	19.99	64	.57

n = 210; EREXP = Emotional Recognition and Expression; UEX = Understanding Emotions (external); EDC = Emotions Direct Cognition; EM = Emotional Management; EC = Emotional Control;

3.6 STATISTICAL ANALYSES

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to perform a range of statistical analyses on the questionnaire data and to test the theoretical model. Specifically, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlations were calculated, and Multiple Regression analyses were conducted to test the relationships between EI, EL and burnout and the moderating effect of EI on the EL – burnout relationship. A series of one-way between groups analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) were conducted to explore differences between firstly, tenure (length of service) groups and secondly, shift versus non-shift workers. Once significant differences were found Bonferroni ***post-hoc*** comparisons were performed to determine where the differences between the groups existed.

3.7 SUMMARY

This chapter dealt with the rationale, aims, objectives and resultant research hypotheses to be investigated in this research. Once this had been established the research methodology was then set out, detailing how the participants were sampled, how data was collected and the types of measurement instruments used to assess the identified constructs. The next chapter will set out in detail the results obtained in this research

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the results of the research and whether they support the various research hypotheses stated in chapter 3. Various statistical techniques were utilised to determine the relationships amongst the constructs, the degree to which certain of the independent variables (e.g. EI dimensions) predicted variance in the dependent variables (e.g. EL and burnout) and finally the moderating effects of EI on the EL - burnout relationship. The impact of socio-demographic variables on the constructs EL and burnout were also investigated.

4.2 SAMPLE

Questionnaires and demographic information forms were distributed to 250 CCRs in two branches of a leading South African telecommunication company's call centres located in the Western Cape. Two hundred and ten useable questionnaires were returned (a response rate of 84%). The descriptive statistics reflected a mean age (***n*** = 186) of 28 years, with the boundaries at 18 years (minimum age) and 61 years (maximum age). The race distribution reported in table 4.1 was 51.0% Coloured, 22.4% African, 8.1% White and 3.8% Asian. According to table 4.2 and 4.3 the largest proportion of the participants were male (49.5%), English speaking (62.9%), single (51.4%), in possession of a Grade 12/Standard 10 level of education (48.6%), made use of their own transport (64.8%), were employed on a permanent basis (72.4%), had worked for less than one year for the company (19.5%) and did shift work (81.7%). Descriptive statistics for the sample group is presented in tables 4.1 to 4.3 below.

Table 4.1: Race distribution

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	**COLOURED**	107	51.0	59.8	59.8
	AFRICAN	47	22.4	26.3	86.1
	WHITE	17	8.1	9.5	95.6
	ASIAN	8	3.8	4.5	100.1
	Total	179	85.2	100.0	
Missing	**System**	31	14.8		
Total		210	100.0		

Table 4.2: Gender distribution

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	**MALE**	104	49.5	53.3	53.3
	FEMALE	91	43.3	46.7	100.0
	Total	195	92.9	100.0	
Missing	**System**	15	7.1		
Total		210	100.0		

Table 4.3: Descriptive statistics

Item	Category	n	Percentage
Language	**English**	132	62.9
	Xhosa	40	19.0
	Afrikaans	21	10.0
	Other language	5	2.4
Level of Education	**Grade 12/Std 10**	102	48.6
	Post matric certificate	49	23.3
	Undergraduate degree/ 3-year diploma	37	17.6
	Post-graduate qualification	10	4.8
	Grade 10/Std 8 or below	1	.5
Marital Status	**Single**	108	51.4
	Married	76	36.2
	Divorced	12	5.7
	Co-habiting	9	4.3
Transport	**Own transport**	136	64.8
	Public transport	61	29.0
Work status	**Permanent**	152	72.4
	Contract/Flexi	52	24.8
Tenure	**Less than 1 year**	41	19.5
	1 – 2 years	35	16.7
	2 – 4 years	40	19.0
	4 – 6 years	15	7.1
	6 – 8 years	30	14.3
	8 – 10 years	27	12.9
	10+ years	6	2.9
Rank	**Consultant/Agent**	183	87.1
	Team leader	24	11.4
	Supervisor	3	1.4
Shift work	**Shift worker**	165	81.7
	Non-shift worker	37	17.6

4.3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: BURNOUT, EMOTIONAL LABOUR AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Descriptive statistics were calculated using SPSS for all three of the constructs measured: burnout, EL and EI. All the results reported in this chapter were calculated by using the sum of the individual raw scores for each of the dimensions of the constructs measured.

Burnout is not reflected in a total score but is seen to exist if an individual has a high score on emotional exhaustion ($\geq$ 3.20) and depersonalisation ($\geq$ 2.20) and a low score on diminished personal accomplishment ($\leq$ 4.00) (Maslach et al., 1996). To assess the level of burnout experienced by the sample group, individual raw scores for the three dimensions of burnout were calculated by adding the values of the relevant items together and then dividing by the number of items that measure that dimension (i.e. the average score). The average mean scores obtained from the sample group for burnout are: emotional exhaustion (2.55), depersonalisation (1.83) and diminished personal accomplishment (5.17). Interpretation of these scores indicates that CCRs have average, tending to high levels of both emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation and possess high levels of personal accomplishment (i.e. because of the negative scoring in the MBI-GS, a high score on diminished personal accomplishment means that the individual has a greater sense of personal accomplishment and possesses feelings of self-efficacy at work and as a result would experience less burnout). The summed individual raw scores used in all the calculations reported here are reflected in table 3.1.

EL scores are given on a dimensional level, as the EL construct cannot be reflected in a total score (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Low scores on the dimensions of EL are evidenced by scores below 2, average scores range from between 2 and 4 and high scores are those above 4. To determine the level of EL experienced, the total raw scores on each of the dimensions were calculated and then divided by the number of items measuring that dimension (i.e. the average score). The average mean scores obtained from the sample group for EL are: frequency (3.72), intensity (2.93), variety (3.45), surface acting (2.83) and deep acting (3.29). These results indicate that CCRs

experience the frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays to be at average levels and that they report engaging more frequently in deep as opposed to surface acting. The data revealed the mean duration of an interaction with a client (***n*** = 153) generally lasts for 6.42 minutes, with a standard deviation of 4.45. The boundaries were at 1 minute (minimum time) and 30 minutes (maximum time). As with burnout, the EL mean scores used for the calculation of the results reported in this chapter were calculated by summing the individual raw scores, the results of which are reflected in table 3.2.

Table 3.3 sets out the means and standard deviations for the five dimensions of EI, including the total EI score for the sample.

4.4 CORRELATION RESULTS

The first objective of this study was to determine whether relationships exist between the three constructs, burnout (as measured by the MBI-GS, Maslach et al., 1996), EL (as measured by the ELS, Brotheridge & Lee, 2003) and EI (as measured by the SUEIT, Palmer & Stough, 2001).

4.4.1 The Relationship between Emotional Labour and Burnout

In terms of the relationship between EL and burnout, it was proposed that:

Hypothesis 1: Significant positive relationships exist between the dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays) and emotional exhaustion.
Hypothesis 2: Significant positive relationships exist between the dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays) and depersonalisation.
Hypothesis 3: Significant negative relationships exist between the dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays) and diminished personal accomplishment.
Hypothesis 4: A significant positive relationship exists between surface acting and emotional exhaustion.

Hypothesis 5: A significant positive relationship exists between surface acting and depersonalisation.

Hypothesis 6: A significant negative relationship exists between surface acting and diminished personal accomplishment.

Hypothesis 7: A significant negative relationship exists between deep acting and emotional exhaustion.

Hypothesis 8: A significant negative relationship exists between deep acting and depersonalisation.

Hypothesis 9: A significant positive relationship exists between deep acting and diminished personal accomplishment.

Hypothesis 10: A significant positive relationship exists between the duration of the interaction (EL) and emotional exhaustion.

Hypothesis 11: A significant positive relationship exists between the duration of the interaction (EL) and depersonalisation.

Hypothesis 12: A significant negative relationship exists between the duration of the interaction (EL) and diminished personal accomplishment.

The relationships between the dimensions of EL and burnout were investigated through the calculation of various Pearson Product-Moment Correlation coefficients. The results are presented in table 4.4, with few statistically significant relationships emerging between the dimensions of EL and burnout. Only partial evidence emerged in support of hypothesis 1 as a weak, significant positive relationship was found to exist between intensity of emotional displays and emotional exhaustion ($\boldsymbol{r}$ = .177, $\boldsymbol{n}$ = 210, $\boldsymbol{p}$ < .05). This result indicates that where respondents report higher levels of intense emotional displays it is more likely that they will report higher levels of emotional exhaustion. This result suggests that an increase in the intensity of emotional displays at work (i.e. the more irate/angry a client becomes with the CCR during an interaction) could likely have an impact on the level of emotional exhaustion reported by CCRs. No significant relationships were found between frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays and both depersonalisation and diminished personal accomplishment respectively and therefore hypotheses 2 and 3 are not supported. Again only partial evidence emerged in support of hypothesis 4 as a weak, significant positive relationship was found to exist

between surface acting and emotional exhaustion (***r*** = .139, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .05). This result suggests that those who report engaging more often in surface acting are more likely to report higher levels of emotional exhaustion, so confirming previous research conducted in this regard (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002, 2003; Kim, in press; Mikolajczak et al., in press; Zammuner & Galli, 2005b). It suggests that greater use of surface acting by CCRs (e.g. being friendly to clients when that emotion is not felt) could likely have an impact on their level of reported emotional exhaustion. No significant relationships were found between surface acting and depersonalisation and diminished personal accomplishment respectively, resulting in hypotheses 5 and 6 not being supported. In addition, no significant relationships were found with deep acting, emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation respectively. Hence no support for hypotheses 7 and 8 were found. Hypothesis 9 was supported as a weak, significant positive relationship emerged between deep acting and diminished personal accomplishment (***r*** = .165, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .05). This result indicates that where respondents report engaging more often in deep acting it is more likely that they will report higher levels of personal accomplishment (i.e. they will have a higher score on diminished personal accomplishment which will reflect that their feelings of personal accomplishment are high and not diminished). This result would imply that that those CCRs who engage more often in deep acting (e.g. trying to feel the frustration of a client who has been experiencing problems and responding in a empathetic and understanding manner that is authentic) are more likely to experience feelings of personal accomplishment, self-efficacy and success in their work. This result may be due to the positive feedback that CCRs receive from clients because of their sincerity and genuineness during client interactions. No significant relationships were found with duration of the interaction and any of the dimensions of burnout and therefore hypotheses 10 – 12 were not supported.

Table 4.4: Correlations between EL (ELS) and Burnout (MBI-GS)

Construct	Measurement Scale sub-Dimensions	FRE	INT	VAR	SA	DA	DUR
Burnout	**EE**	-.052	.177*	.101	.139*	-.044	.141
	DP	-.046	.120	.085	.048	-.097	.078
	PA	.022	.027	.127	-.090	.165*	-.115

n = 210; ** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed); * Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)

EE = Emotional Exhaustion; DP = Depersonalisation; PA = Diminished Personal Accomplishment; FRE = Frequency of emotional displays; INT = Intensity of emotional displays; VAR = Variety of emotional displays; SA = Surface acting; DA = Deep acting; DUR = Duration of Interaction

4.4.2 The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Labour

In order to explore the relationships between EI and EL, the following hypotheses were formulated:

Hypothesis 13: Significant positive relationships exist between EI (total score) and the dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays).

Hypothesis 14: Significant positive relationships exist between the dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) and the dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays).

Hypothesis 15: A significant negative relationship exists between EI (total score) and surface acting.

Hypothesis 16: Significant negative relationships exist between the dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) and surface acting.

Hypothesis 17: A significant positive relationship exists between EI (total score) and deep acting.

Hypothesis 18: Significant positive relationships exist between the dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) and deep acting.

The relationships between the various dimensions of EI and EL were investigated through the calculation of various Pearson Product-Moment Correlation coefficients. The results are presented in table 4.5. The results revealed many significant relationships between the dimensions of EI and EL but most were of weak to moderate strength. Partial evidence emerged in support of hypothesis 13, as weak, significant positive relationships existed between EI (total score) and both frequency (***r*** = .245, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01) and variety (***r*** = .302, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01) of emotional displays. These results indicate that where CCRs report higher levels of EI it is more likely that they will report more frequent and varied emotional displays in their workplace. This result suggests that those CCRs who have the capacity to deal effectively with their own and others' emotions (Palmer & Stough, 2001) are more likely to also perceive that they frequently engage in varied emotional displays at work. Similarly Brotheridge (2006), in a study of undergraduate students who engaged in service related work, found that EI (measured by the MSCEIT) was positively related to frequency of emotional displays. Whilst it may seem at first glance that this result indicates that EI plays a negative role in EL, on deeper analysis one can understand why this relationship exists. CCRs who are more "in-touch" with their own and others' emotions and its effect on their own and others' behaviours, would be more predisposed to interpret situations using their emotions (i.e. perceiving emotional displays to be more frequent and varied than those who are lower on EI and consequently less "in-touch" with their feelings and less likely to identify emotional displays at work). This result was mirrored in the results that were obtained between the various individual dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays) and the various dimensions of EI reported later on.

Partial evidence emerged in support of hypothesis 14 with some of the dimensions of EI being related to some of the dimensions of EL. Frequency of emotional displays showed a weak, significant positive relationship with only one dimension of EI, understanding emotions (external) (***r*** = .287, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01). This result indicates that CCRs who have the ability to effectively "read" the emotions of others and understand the context within which they arise (Palmer & Stough, 2001) are more likely to interpret emotional displays to be more frequent. This may be due to the fact that they are more sensitive to the emotions of others and therefore more regularly perceive

interactions as being emotionally charged (i.e. that emotional information and more naturally emotions are part and parcel of their behaviours and interactions with others). Intensity of emotional displays showed weak, significant relationships with three dimensions of EI: a positive relationship with emotional recognition and expression (***r*** = .140, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .05), a positive relationship with emotions direct cognition (***r*** = .204, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01) and a negative relationship with emotional control (***r*** = -.280, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01). These results indicate that CCRs who are more "in tune" with recognising and expressing their own emotions and use their emotions in decision-making and problem solving are more likely to perceive interactions with clients to be more emotionally intense. This is probably because they are more aware of the role emotions play in interactions with others and are thus more sensitive to perceiving client interactions as being emotionally intense. The results further suggest that CCRs who scored higher on emotional control reported to perceive emotional displays as less intense. This may be because these individuals are more likely to be able to inhibit strong emotions from affecting their thoughts (Palmer & Stough, 2001) and as such are more "conservative" when labelling an emotional display as intense (i.e. an individual who is able to control emotions of anger and frustration when dealing with a client will not let a client's intense emotion influence him/her that much and consequently they would not perceive the emotion to be as intense as an individual who is lower on emotional control). Finally, variety of emotional displays showed weak, significant relationships with four of the dimensions of EI: emotional recognition and expression (***r*** = .184, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01), understanding emotions (external) (***r*** = .288, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01), emotions direct cognition (***r*** = .219, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01) and emotional management (***r*** = .181, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01). These results indicate that CCRs who are able to appropriately express their emotions, effectively read the emotions of others, use emotions when making decisions and effectively manage their emotions through mood regulation are more likely to perceive emotional displays as more varied. It may be this all-round ability to perceive, express, understand and manage emotions that predisposes these individuals to have the ability to recognise a variety of different emotions, hence they perceive emotional interactions at work to be more varied. From these results it is evident that EI plays a very intricate and complex role in the perception

of the job-focused dimensions of EL, which will be explored in more depth through multiple regression analyses in later sections.

EI (total score) was found to have a weak, significant negative relationship with surface acting (***r*** = -.201, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01) resulting in support for hypothesis 15. This result indicates that CCRs who report higher levels of EI are less likely to engage in surface acting (i.e. those who exhibit higher levels of EI are less likely to fake their emotions when dealing with clients). Based on the results of the relationships between the various dimensions of EI and surface acting, only partial evidence emerged in support of hypothesis 16. Weak, significant negative relationships emerged between surface acting and two of the dimensions of EI: emotional recognition and expression (***r*** = -.222, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01) and emotional management (***r*** = -.187, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01). These results make intuitive sense. They suggest that those CCRs who are more adept at identifying their own feelings and emotional states, expressing them to others, as well as managing their emotions more effectively would be less likely to engage in surface acting. It may be that the stronger presence of these EI dimensions, facilitate a better capacity to authentically and appropriately deal with client interactions on a daily basis.

EI (total score) was found to have a moderate to strong, significant positive relationship with deep acting (***r*** = .427, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01) resulting in hypothesis 17 being supported. This result indicates that CCRs who report higher levels of EI are more likely to engage in deep acting more often (i.e. those who exhibit higher levels of EI are more likely to actually try to feel the emotion they are required to feel when dealing with clients). This could be due to the fact that they are more aware of their own emotions and those of others and as a result have the capacity to understand the effect of their emotions on others. Hence, possessing higher EI “creates” the ability to be more authentic and as such they are more likely to naturally access deep acting as an EL strategy. For example such individuals will try to feel the frustration felt by a client who has been experiencing problems and express true concern with the problem in a sincere and genuine manner. In accordance with this, weak to moderate significant positive relationships emerged between deep acting and all five of the dimensions of EI, resulting in hypothesis 18 being supported. Deep acting was related to emotional

recognition and expression (***r*** = .317, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01), understanding emotions (external) (***r*** = .315, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01), emotions direct cognition (***r*** = .223, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01), emotional management (***r*** = .278, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01) and emotional control (***r*** = .152, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01). These results suggest that those individuals who have the capacity to perceive, express, understand and manage emotions in a professional and effective manner at work (Palmer & Stough, 2001) are more likely to engage in deep acting techniques when dealing with clients. These results are an indirect replication of the results reported by Brotheridge (2006) where she found that individuals with higher levels of EI were more likely to perceive the need to frequently display emotions as part of their job role and perform deep acting in response to these situational demands. From these results it is implied that EI plays a role in how CCRs interact with their clients. Moreover the results suggest that the use of deep acting seems to have a relationship with feelings of personal accomplishment and could likely play a role in protecting CCRs against feeling emotionally exhausted and wanting to depersonalise clients.

Table 4.5: Correlations between EI (SUEIT) and EL (ELS)

Construct	Measurement Scale sub-Dimensions	FRE	INT	VAR	SA	DA
EI	**EI (TOTAL SCORE)**	.245**	-.001	.302**	-.201**	.427**
	EREXP	.087	.140*	.184**	-.222**	.317**
	UEX	.287**	-.013	.288**	-.079	.315**
	EDC	.084	.204**	.219**	-.111	.223**
	EM	.108	-.057	.181**	-.187**	.278**
	EC	.116	-.280**	-.010	-.035	.152*

n = 210; ** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed); * Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)

EREXP = Emotional Recognition and Expression; UEX = Understanding Emotions (external); EDC = Emotions Direct Cognition; EM = Emotional Management; EC = Emotional Control; FRE = Frequency of emotional displays; INT = Intensity of emotional displays; VAR = Variety of emotional displays; SA = Surface acting; DA = Deep acting

4.4.3 The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Burnout

In order to investigate the relationship between EI and burnout, it was hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 19: A significant negative relationship exists between EI (total score) and emotional exhaustion.

Hypothesis 20: Significant negative relationships exist between the dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) and emotional exhaustion.

Hypothesis 21: A significant negative relationship exists between EI (total score) and depersonalisation.

Hypothesis 22: Significant negative relationships exist between the dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) and depersonalisation.

Hypothesis 23: A significant positive relationship exists between EI (total score) and diminished personal accomplishment.

Hypothesis 24: Significant positive relationships exist between the dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) and diminished personal accomplishment.

The relationships between the various dimensions of EI and burnout were investigated through the calculation of various Pearson Product-Moment Correlation coefficients. The results are presented in table 4.6. Some support was found for the hypothesised relationship between EI and burnout, with the strongest relationships being found with diminished personal accomplishment. It can be reported that, firstly, emotional exhaustion was not significantly related to EI (total score), hence hypothesis 19 is not supported. Emotional exhaustion showed only weak to moderate significant negative relationships with two of the dimensions of EI: emotional management (***r*** = -.222, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01]) and emotional control (***r*** = -.312, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01). Therefore only partial evidence emerged in support of hypothesis 20. This result indicates that CCRs who are able to effectively foster positive moods and emotions in themselves and others

and not let strong emotions override their capacity to think and act effectively (Palmer & Stough, 2001) are less likely to report experiencing emotional exhaustion. This makes sense as it could be argued that individuals who are able to mange and control emotions in the above way should feel less emotionally depleted by emotional interactions at work and more able to maintain a positive disposition. This, in turn, could result in greater feelings of self-efficacy regarding their ability to cope with the emotional demands of a normal workday.

No significant relationship emerged between depersonalisation and EI (total score) hence hypothesis 21 is not supported. Depersonalisation did show weak, significant negative relationships with two dimensions of EI: emotional management (***r*** = -.236, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01) and emotional control (***r*** = -.266, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .01), so resulting in partial support of hypothesis 22. These results suggest that CCRs who are able to engage in mood regulation to foster positive moods and control strong emotions from affecting their thoughts and actions are less likely to report experiencing depersonalisation, where they objectify the client and alienate them so as to have as little emotional contact as possible. It is noteworthy that a weak, positive relationship was found between depersonalisation and emotions direct cognition (***r*** = .156, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .05). This result seems to suggest that CCRs who make more use of emotional content when making decisions are more likely to report engaging in depersonalisation. This could possibly be because they are more prone to be overwhelmed by their emotions when considering decisions, which could escalate the amount of emotion "work" they experience. This could, in turn, possibly result in decreased productivity as they place a greater emotional burden on themselves in an already "emotionally laden" environment. In attempting to alleviate this increased emotional burden they might try to distance themselves from the client (i.e. "alienating"/depersonalising the client), in the hope that this will reduce the emotional burden. Palmer and Stough (2001) argue that low/average scores on this dimension of EI are more closely related to success than higher scores, which would mean that excessive use of emotions when making decisions can have unfavourable results. What has emerged from multiple regression analyses, reported on below, is that emotional management and emotional control play a role in "tempering" the negative effects of using emotions too liberally when interacting

with clients. These results highlight the complexity of the relationship between EI and burnout and require extensive investigation in future research projects.

Finally, diminished personal accomplishment showed a weak to moderate significant positive relationship with EI (total score) (***r*** = .314, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .05), resulting in hypothesis 23 being supported. Similarly diminished personal accomplishment showed weak to moderate, significant positive relationships with four of the dimensions of EI: emotional recognition and expression (***r*** = .223, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .05), understanding emotions (external) (***r*** = .190, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .05), emotional management (***r*** = .341, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .05) and emotional control (***r*** = .213, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** = < .05)], resulting in hypothesis 24 being supported. This result implies that CCRs who are more adept at perceiving, expressing, understanding, managing and controlling emotions in the workplace are more likely to exhibit a higher sense of personal accomplishment. This is possibly due to the fact that expressing and dealing with emotions effectively in the workplace (owing to the specific nature of the work and type of client interactions in call centres) will result in better feedback from clients and colleagues and likely result in an increased sense of accomplishment and success on the job.

Table 4.6: Correlations between EI (SUEIT) and Burnout (MBI-GS)

Construct	Measurement Scale sub-Dimensions	EE	DP	PA
EI	**EI (TOTAL SCORE)**	-.073	-.073	.314**
	EREXP	.077	-.018	.223**
	UEX	.049	.077	.190**
	EDC	.131	.156*	-.013
	EM	-.222**	-.236**	.341**
	EC	-.312**	-.266**	.213**

n = 210; ** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed); * Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)

EREXP = Emotional Recognition and Expression; UEX = Understanding Emotions (external); EDC = Emotions Direct Cognition; EM = Emotional Management; EC = Emotional Control; EE = Emotional Exhaustion; DP = Depersonalisation; PA = Diminished Personal Accomplishment

4.5 MULTIPLE REGRESSION RESULTS

The second objective of this study was to determine firstly, which dimensions of EL (as measured by the ELS), explained most of the variance in each of the burnout dimensions (emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and diminished personal accomplishment), as measured by the MBI-GS. Secondly, which dimensions of EI (measured by the SUEIT), explained the most variance in the dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays, surface acting and deep acting). And finally, which dimensions of EI explained most of the variance in the three dimensions of burnout. To this end a series of standard regression analyses were conducted to explore firstly, how much variance in the dependent variable is explained as a whole by all the independent variables (in the various models) and secondly, to determine which specific independent variables (in each respective model) explain the most unique variance in the dependent variable.

4.5.1 Regression: Emotional Labour and Burnout

The following hypotheses were investigated to determine which of the EL dimensions predicts the greatest variance in the burnout dimensions.

Hypothesis 25: The different dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays, surface acting and deep acting) can be used to predict emotional exhaustion (as a dimension of burnout).

Hypothesis 26: The different dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays, surface acting and deep acting) can be used to predict depersonalisation (as a dimension of burnout).

Hypothesis 27: The different dimensions of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays, surface acting and deep acting) can be used to predict diminished personal accomplishment (as a dimension of burnout).

Three regression models were tested to investigate these hypotheses. The first model includes frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays, surface acting and deep acting as predictors (independent variables) and emotional exhaustion as the criterion (dependent variable). The results are presented in table 4.7 and 4.8 below. The

standard regression results indicate that the model was significant (***p*** < .05) and that it explained 7% of the variance in emotional exhaustion. Only two of the independent variables entered into the regression model made a significant unique contribution to explaining the variance in emotional exhaustion scores. Intensity of emotional displays (*β* = .213, ***p*** < .05) made the strongest, unique significant contribution to the equation, followed by a significant unique contribution by surface acting (*β* = .139, ***p*** < .05). The ***R*** for regression was significantly different from zero, ***F*** (5, 210) = 3.277, ***p*** < .05. Hypothesis 25 is therefore supported.

Table 4.7: Model summary: EL and Emotional Exhaustion

Model	Multiple R	Multiple R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of the estimate	F	Sig.
1	.273	.074	.052	7.119	3.277 .	007

a. Predictors: (Constant), Frequency, Intensity and Variety of Emotional Displays, Surface Acting, Deep Acting

b. Dependent Variable: Emotional Exhaustion

Table 4.8: Coefficients obtained from the regression between the dimensions of EL and Emotiona Exhaustion

		Standardised Coefficients		
Model		**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**
EI	**(Constant)**		3.693	.000
	Frequency	-.124	-1.689	.093
	Intensity	.213	2.868	.005
	Variety	.072	.947	.345
	Surface Acting	.139	2.035	.043
	Deep Acting	-.076	-1.040	.299

a. Dependent Variable: Emotional Exhaustion

The second model includes frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays, surface acting and deep acting as predictors (independent variables) and depersonalisation as the criterion (dependent variable). The standard regression results indicate that the model was not significant ($p > .05$). Hypothesis 26 is therefore not supported.

The third model includes frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays, surface acting and deep acting as predictors (independent variables) and diminished personal accomplishment as the criterion (dependent variable). The standard regression results indicate that the model was not significant (***p* >**. 05). Hypothesis 27 is therefore not supported.

4.5.2 Regression: Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Labour

The following hypotheses were investigated to determine which of the EI dimensions predicts the greatest variance in the dimensions of EL.

Hypothesis 28: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict frequency of emotional displays (a dimension of EL).

Hypothesis 29: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict intensity of emotional displays (a dimension of EL).

Hypothesis 30: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict variety of emotional displays (a dimension of EL).

Hypothesis 31: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict surface acting (a dimension of EL).

Hypothesis 32: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict deep acting (a dimension of EL).

Five regression models were tested to investigate these hypotheses. The first model includes emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions (external), emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control as predictors (independent variables) and frequency of emotional displays as the criterion (dependent variable). The results are presented in table 4.9 and 4.10 below. The standard regression results indicate that the model was significant (***p*** < .05) and that it explained 9% of the variance in frequency of emotional displays. Only one of the independent variables entered into the regression model, i.e. understanding emotions (external) (*β* = .284, ***p*** < .05) made a unique significant contribution to the equation. The ***R*** for regression was significantly different from zero, ***F*** (5, 210) = 3.965, ***p*** < .05. Hypothesis 28 is therefore supported.

Table 4.9: Model summary: EI and Frequency of Emotional Displays

Model	Multiple R	Multiple R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of the estimate	F	Sig.
1	.298	.089	.066	2.033	3.965	.002

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Recognition and Expression, Understanding Emotions (external), Emotions Direct Cognition, Emotional Management, Emotional Control

b. Dependent Variable: Frequency of Emotional Displays

Table 4.10: Coefficients obtained from the regression between the dimensions of EI and Frequency of Emotional Displays

Model		Standardised Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
EI	**(Constant)**		3.365	.001
	Emotional Recognition and Expression	-.007	-.093	.926
	Understanding Emotions (external)	.284	3.562	.000
	Emotions Direct Cognition	.063	.897	.371
	Emotional Management	-.059	-.654	.514
	Emotional Control	.074	.832	.407

a. Dependent Variable: Frequency of Emotional Displays

The second model includes emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions (external), emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control as predictors (independent variables) and intensity of emotional displays as the criterion (dependent variable). The results are presented in table 4.11 and 4.12 below. The standard regression results indicate that the model was significant ($p < .01$) and that it explained 12% of the variance in intensity of emotional displays. Only one of the independent variables entered into the regression model made a significant unique contribution to explaining the variance in intensity of emotional display scores. Emotional control ($\beta = -.324$, $p < .05$) made a unique significant contribution to the equation. The R for regression was significantly different from zero, $F(5, 210) = 5.792$, $p < .01$. Hypothesis 29 is therefore supported.

Table 4.11: Model summary: EI and Intensity of Emotional Displays

Model	Multiple R	Multiple R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of the estimate	F	Sig.
2	.353	.124	.103	1.560	5.792	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Recognition and Expression, Understanding Emotions (external), Emotions Direct Cognition, Emotional Management, Emotional Control

b. Dependent Variable: Intensity of Emotional Displays

Table 4.12: Coefficients obtained from the regression between the dimensions of EI and Intensity of Emotional Displays

Model		Standardised Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
EI	**(Constant)**		4.588	.000
	Emotional Recognition and Expression	.110	1.544	.124
	Understanding Emotions (external)	-.016	-.209	.835
	Emotions Direct Cognition	.123	1.781	.076
	Emotional Management	.127	1.432	.154
	Emotional Control	-.324	- 3.730	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Intensity of Emotional Displays

The third model includes emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions (external), emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control as predictors (independent variables) and variety of emotional displays as the criterion (dependent variable). The results are presented in table 4.13 and 4.14 below. The standard regression results indicate that the model was significant ($p < .01$) and that it explained 14% of the variance in variety of emotional displays. Only two of the independent variables entered into the regression model made a significant unique contribution to explaining the variance in variety of emotional display scores. Understanding emotions (external) ($\beta = .223$, $p < .05$) made the strongest, unique significant contribution to the equation, followed by a significant unique contribution by emotions direct cognition ($\beta = .159$, $p < .05$). The R for regression was significantly different from zero, $F(5, 210) = 6.648$, $p < .01$. Hypothesis 30 is therefore supported.

Table 4.13: Model summary: EI and Variety of Emotional Displays

Model	Multiple R	Multiple R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of the estimate	F	Sig.
3	.374	.140	.119	2.712	6.648	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Recognition and Expression, Understanding Emotions (external), Emotions Direct Cognition, Emotional Management, Emotional Control

a. Dependent Variable: Variety of Emotional Displays

Table 4.14: Coefficients obtained from the regression between the dimensions of EI and Variety of Emotional Displays

		Standardised Coefficients		
Model		**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**
EI	**(Constant)**		2.138	.034
	Emotional Recognition and Expression	.056	.789	.431
	Understanding Emotions (external)	.223	2.880	.004
	Emotions Direct Cognition	.159	2.312	.022
	Emotional Management	.163	1.863	.064
	Emotional Control	-.145	- 1.68230	.094

a. Dependent Variable: Variety of Emotional Displays

The fourth model includes emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions (external), emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control as predictors (independent variables) and surface acting as the criterion (dependent variable). The results are presented in table 4.15 and 4.16 below. The standard regression results indicate that the model was significant ($p < .05$) and that it explained 9% of the variance in surface acting. Only two of the independent variables entered into the regression model made significant unique contributions to explaining the variance in surface acting scores. Emotional management ($\beta = -.212$, $\boldsymbol{p} < .05$) made the strongest, unique significant contribution to the equation, followed by a significant unique contribution by emotional recognition and expression ($\beta = -.191$, $\boldsymbol{p} < .05$). The ***R*** for regression was significantly different from zero, $\boldsymbol{F}$ (5, 210) = 3.798, $\boldsymbol{p} < .05$. Hypothesis 31 is therefore supported.

Table 4.15: Model summary: EI and Surface Acting

Model	Multiple R	Multiple R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of the estimate	F	Sig.
4	.292	.085	.063	2.373	3.798	.003

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Recognition and Expression, Understanding Emotions (external), Emotions Direct Cognition, Emotional Management, Emotional Control

a. Dependent Variable: Surface Acting

Table 4.16: Coefficients obtained from the regression between the dimensions of EI and Surface Acting

		Standardised Coefficients		
Model		**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**
EI	**(Constant)**		7.229	.000
	Emotional Recognition and Expression	**-**.191	-2.627	.009
	Understanding Emotions (external)	.078	.979	.329
	Emotions Direct Cognition	-.098	-1.387	.167
	Emotional Management	-.212	-2. 48	.020
	Emotional Control	.048	.538	.591

a. Dependent Variable: Surface Acting

The fifth model includes emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions (external), emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control as predictors (independent variables) and deep acting as the criterion (dependent variable). The results are presented in table 4.17 and 4.18 below. The standard regression results indicate that the model was significant (***p*** < .01) and that it explained 20% of the variance in deep acting. Two of the independent variables entered into the regression model made significant unique contributions to explaining the variance in deep acting scores. Emotional recognition and expression (β = .216, ***p*** < .05) made the strongest, unique significant contribution to the equation, followed by a significant unique contribution by emotions direct cognition (β = .206, ***p*** < .05). The ***R*** for regression was significantly different from zero, ***F*** (5, 210) = 10.486, ***p*** < .01. Hypothesis 32 is therefore supported.

Table 4.17: Model summary: EI and Deep Acting

Model	Multiple R	Multiple R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of the estimate	F	Sig.
5	.452	.204	.185	2.004	10.486	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Recognition and Expression, Understanding Emotions (external), Emotions Direct Cognition, Emotional Management, Emotional Control

b. Dependent Variable: Deep Acting

Table 4.18: Coefficients obtained from the regression between the dimensions of EI and Deep Acting

		Standardised Coefficients		
Model		**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**
EI	**(Constant)**		-.698	.486
	Emotional Recognition and Expression	.216	-3.187	.002
	Understanding Emotions (external)	.129	1.735	.084
	Emotions Direct Cognition	.206	3.115	.002
	Emotional Management	.139	1.649	.101
	Emotional Control	.070	.844	.400

a. Dependent Variable: Deep Acting

4.5.3 Regression: Emotional Intelligence and Burnout

In order to investigate which of the EI dimensions predicts the greatest variance in the dimensions of burnout, it was hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 33: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict emotional exhaustion (a dimension of burnout).

Hypothesis 34: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict depersonalisation (a dimension of burnout).
Hypothesis 35: The different dimensions of EI (emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions external, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control) can be used to predict diminished personal accomplishment (a dimension of burnout).

Three regression models were tested to investigate these hypotheses. The first model includes emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions (external), emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control as predictors (independent variables) and emotional exhaustion as the criterion (dependent variable). The results are presented in table 4.19 and 4.20 below. The standard regression results indicate that the model was significant ($p < .01$) and that it explained 14% of the variance in emotional exhaustion. Only two of the independent variables entered into the regression model made significant unique contributions to explaining the variance in emotional exhaustion scores. Emotional control ($\beta = -.279$, $p < .05$) made the strongest, unique significant contribution to the equation, followed by a significant unique contribution by understanding emotions (external) ($\beta = .185$, $p < .05$). The ***R*** for regression was significantly different from zero, $F(5, 210) = 6.426$, $p < .01$. Hypothesis 33 is therefore supported.

Table 4.19: Model summary: EI and Emotional Exhaustion

Model	Multiple R	Multiple R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of the estimate	F	Sig.
1	.369	.136	.115	6.878	6.426	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Recognition and Expression, Understanding Emotions (external), Emotions Direct Cognition, Emotional Management, Emotional Control

b. Dependent Variable: Emotional Exhaustion

Table 4.20: Coefficients obtained from the regression between the dimensions of EI and Emotional Exhaustion

Model		Standardised Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
EI	**(Constant)**		4.247	.000
	Emotional Recognition and Expression	.049	.699	.485
	Understanding Emotions (external)	.185	2.388	.018
	Emotions Direct Cognition	.028	.414	.679
	Emotional Management	-.146	-1.667	.097
	Emotional Control	-.279	-3.229	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Emotional Exhaustion

The second model includes emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions (external), emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control as predictors (independent variables) and depersonalisation as the criterion (dependent variable). The results are presented in table 4.21 and 4.22 below. The standard regression results indicate that the model was significant ($p < .01$) and that it explained 14% of the variance in depersonalisation. Three of the independent variables entered into the regression model made significant unique contributions to explaining the variance in depersonalisation scores. Understanding emotions (external) ($\beta = .249$, $p < .05$) made the strongest, unique significant contribution to the equation, followed by significant unique contributions by emotional management ($\beta = -.207$, $p < .05$), and emotional control ($\beta = -.205$, $p < .05$). The R for regression was significantly different from zero, $F(5, 210) = 6.380$, $p < .01$. Hypothesis 34 is therefore supported.

Table 4.21: Model summary: EI and Depersonalisation

Model	Multiple R	Multiple R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of the estimate	F	Sig.
2	.368	.135	.114	6.201	6.380	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Recognition and Expression, Understanding Emotions (external), Emotions Direct Cognition, Emotional Management, Emotional Control

b. Dependent Variable: Depersonalisation

Table 4.22: Coefficients obtained from the regression between the dimensions of EI and Depersonalisation

Model		Standardised Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
EI	**(Constant)**		2.651	.009
	Emotional Recognition and Expression	-.061	-.863	.389
	Understanding Emotions (external)	.249	3.209	.002
	Emotions Direct Cognition	.073	1 .057	.292
	Emotional Management	-.207	-2.357	.019
	Emotional Control	-.205	-2.371	.019

a. Dependent Variable: Depersonalisation

The third model includes emotional recognition and expression, understanding emotions (external), emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control as predictors (independent variables) and diminished personal accomplishment as the criterion (dependent variable). The results are presented in table 4.23 and 4.24 below. The standard regression results indicate that the model was significant (***p*** < .01) and that it explained 14% of the variance in diminished personal accomplishment. Only two of the independent variables entered into the regression model made significant unique contributions to explaining the variance in diminished personal accomplishment scores. Emotional management (β = .282, ***p*** < .05) made the strongest, unique significant contribution to the equation, followed by a significant unique contribution by emotional recognition and expression (β = .161, ***p*** < .05). The ***R*** for regression was significantly different from zero, ***F*** (5, 210) = 6.624, ***p*** < .01. Hypothesis 35 is therefore supported.

Table 4.23: Model summary: EI and Diminished Personal Accomplishment

Model	Multiple R	Multiple R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of the estimate	F	Sig.
3	.374	.140	.119	4.724	6.624	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Recognition and Expression, Understanding Emotions (external), Emotions Direct Cognition, Emotional Management, Emotional Control

b. Dependent Variable: Diminished Personal Accomplishment

Table 4.24: Coefficients obtained from the regression between the dimensions of EI and Diminished Personal Accomplishment

Model		Standardised Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
EI	**(Constant)**		4.168	.000
	Emotional Recognition and Expression	.161	2.274	.024
	Understanding Emotions (external)	-.003	-.043	.966
	Emotions Direct Cognition	**-**.008	-.114	.909
	Emotional Management	.282	3.220	.001
	Emotional Control	.038	.446	.656

a. Dependent Variable: Diminished Personal Accomplishment

4.6 RESULTS OF BETWEEN GROUPS ANALYSIS

A series of one-way between groups analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) were conducted to explore differences between various length of service groups (i.e. tenure groups) and shift workers (i.e. shift versus non-shift worker groups) in terms of the reported mean scores on the dimensions of EL and burnout. Level of education was used as the covariate in these analyses. Once it was established that there were significant differences between the groups, a series of between group comparisons, by means of Bonferroni ***post-hoc*** comparisons were performed to determine where the significant differences between the groups existed.

4.6.1 Between Group Comparisons for the Dimensions of Emotional Labour and Burnout

Tenure is an important criterion when determining how an individual will experience EL. When designing intervention programmes it will be important to know whether less experienced employees will engage in more or less deep acting (or surface acting) than their more experienced counterparts. Lee and Brotheridge (2006) in their study on child-care workers found that younger, less experienced employees engaged more in deep acting when compared to their older more experienced counterparts. This finding provided the theoretical justification for determining the effect of tenure on the experience of EL (specifically the dimensions surface and deep acting) as the demographic breakdown of the sample revealed that CCRs with longer tenure were also older. The correlation results for tenure and the EL dimensions, revealed deep acting to have a statistically significant negative relationship with tenure (***r*** = -.15, ***p*** < .05). This result suggests that the longer CCRs are employed with the company the less likely they are to engage in deep acting techniques. The results of the one-way between groups analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) revealed that no significant differences existed between different tenure groups and their mean scores on surface acting (with level of education as the covariate), but significant results emerged for deep acting [***F*** (5, 174) = 3.3418, ***p*** < .05]. Bonferroni ***post hoc*** comparisons between the various tenure groups revealed that the mean score on deep acting for those CCRs who had been working for 8 – 10 years for the company (***M*** = 9.07, ***SD*** = 1.69) was statistically lower than the mean scores for those CCRs who had been working for the company for less than one year (***M*** = 10.73, ***SD*** = 2.13). This result was expected given the negative correlation between tenure and deep acting and suggests that less experienced CCRs use deep acting techniques more frequently than their more experienced (and older) counterparts.

Next, comparisons were done between the different tenure groups and mean scores on burnout. Scant research exists on the relationship between tenure and burnout and differing theoretical arguments could be tendered in this regard. Firstly, it could be argued that the longer someone works for a company, the more they are able to cope with the stressors and strains of the job (e.g. the EL required by the position) and hence experience lower levels of burnout. Given the complexity of this situation, the converse

can also be true. That is, the longer someone remains in a job where they are exposed to stressors (i.e. constant EL) the more likely that they will become emotionally exhausted, experience a low sense of personal accomplishment and be more likely to depersonalise clients. Given this uncertainty about the impact of tenure on burnout levels, it became imperative to determine whether it played a role in the levels of burnout experienced in the sample group. The results revealed a statistically significant correlation between tenure and emotional exhaustion (***r*** = .23, ***p*** < .05). This result suggests that the longer CCRs are employed with the company the more likely they are to report experiencing emotional exhaustion. The results of the one-way between groups analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), with level of education as the covariate, revealed that no significant differences existed between different tenure groups and their mean scores on depersonalisation and diminished personal accomplishment. Significant between groups' differences did, as anticipated, exist between tenure and emotional exhaustion [***F*** (5, 174) = 3.8445, ***p*** < .05]. Bonferroni ***post hoc*** comparisons between the various tenure groups revealed that the mean score on emotional exhaustion for those CCRs who had been working for 6 – 8 years for the company (***M*** = 22.13, ***SD*** = 7.42) was statistically higher than the mean scores for the three tenure groups below 4 years of service (less than one year: ***M*** = 16.65, ***SD*** = 6.52; 1 – 2 years: ***M*** = 16.05, ***SD*** = 7.64; 2 – 4 years: ***M*** = 16.47, ***SD*** = 6.74). This result was expected given the strong positive correlation between tenure and emotional exhaustion and suggests that less experienced CCRs report lower levels of emotional exhaustion in comparison to their more experienced counterparts.

Shift work was also investigated to determine whether differences existed between shift and non-shift workers on mean scores for EL and burnout. The known negative effects of shift work range from reduced quality of sleep and more health complaints to problems with social and domestic relations (Kroemer, Kroemer, & Kroemer-Elbert, 2001). Given that shift work would place additional job stress on CCRs, it was anticipated that a significant difference would emerge between shift and non-shift workers as to how they experience EL and develop burnout. The results of the one-way between groups analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) with level of education as the covariate, revealed that no significant differences existed between shift worker groups

on EL or burnout scores. In an attempt to explain these results it was established that the company had designed the CCRs shift schedules to ensure that the shift programme (i.e. the number of days on a certain shift and number of days off between shifts periods) and the shift rotation procedures (i.e. the forward rotation of shift hours) were in keeping with broadly accepted guidelines for the ergonomic design of shift work (Kroemer et al., 2001). It is likely that this well-designed shift programme contributed to the lack of effect seen between shift and non-shift workers as it minimised the negative effects believed to be associated with shift work.

4.6.2 Interaction Effect: Emotional Intelligence on Emotional Labour and Burnout

In order to explore whether EI might act as a moderator in the EL - burnout relationship, a moderated multiple regression was conducted to test the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 36: EI is a moderator in the relationships between EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays, surface acting and deep acting) and burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and diminished personal accomplishment).

An interaction effect will exist when the impact of one independent variable (i.e. EL) depends on the value of another independent variable (i.e. EI) (Lewis-Beck, 1980). In order to execute this regression, a dichotomous variable, named EILowHigh was computed with the median as reference point. The specific type of regressions employed to measure the interaction effect, involves forming a multiplicative term. That is multiplying those dimensions of EL (i.e. intensity, surface acting and deep acting), which were found to correlate with two of the dimensions of burnout (i.e. emotional exhaustion and diminished personal accomplishment) with the new dichotomous variable (EILowHigh), so creating new variables named EILowHighIntensity, EILowHighSurfaceActing and EILowHighDeepActing respectively.

In the first regression analysis, emotional exhaustion (as a dimension of burnout) was entered as a dependent variable and intensity of emotional displays (as a dimension of EL); EILowHighIntensity (EI as moderator) and EILowHigh were entered as independent variables. The results from the regression shown in table 4.25 indicate that the model

was significant (***p*** < .05) but that it explains only 4% of the variance in emotional exhaustion. The standardised coefficients presented in table 4.26 indicate that the EI interaction (EILowHighIntensity) was not significant, meaning that EI did not moderate the relationship between intensity of emotional displays and emotional exhaustion. Although there was no proven interaction effect, the scatter plot (figure 4.1) below illustrates that those higher in EI experience lower levels of emotional exhaustion when the emotional displays are perceived as less intense. Given the slope of the regression line, it can be seen that those higher in EI experience higher levels emotional exhaustion as the emotional intensity of client interactions increases. Whilst it could be argued that this effect negatively predisposes those higher on EI to experience higher levels of emotional exhaustion, it should be noted that their perceptions of emotional exhaustion always remain lower than their low EI counterparts. In addition it is likely that those individuals high on EI would possess other EI abilities such as emotional management and control which could "buffer" the negative impact of increased emotional exhaustion levels. This assertion is confirmed by the negative relationship that emerged between intensity of emotional displays and emotional control (***r*** = -.280, ***p*** < .01).

Table 4.25: Model summary: Interaction Effect for Emotional Exhaustion and Intensity of Emotional Displays

Model	Multiple R	Multiple R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of the estimate	F	Sig.
1	.208	.043	.029	7.203	3.092	.028

a. Predictors: (Constant), Intensity, EILowHigh, EILowHighIntensity,

b. Dependent Variable: Emotional Exhaustion

Table 4.26: Coefficients: Interaction Effect for Emotional Exhaustion and Intensity of Emotional Displays

Model		Standardised Coefficients		
		Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)		5.201	.000
	Intensity	.153	1.432	.154
	EILowHigh	-.187	-.732	.465
	EILowHighIntensity	.090	.332	.740

a. Dependent Variable: Emotional Exhaustion

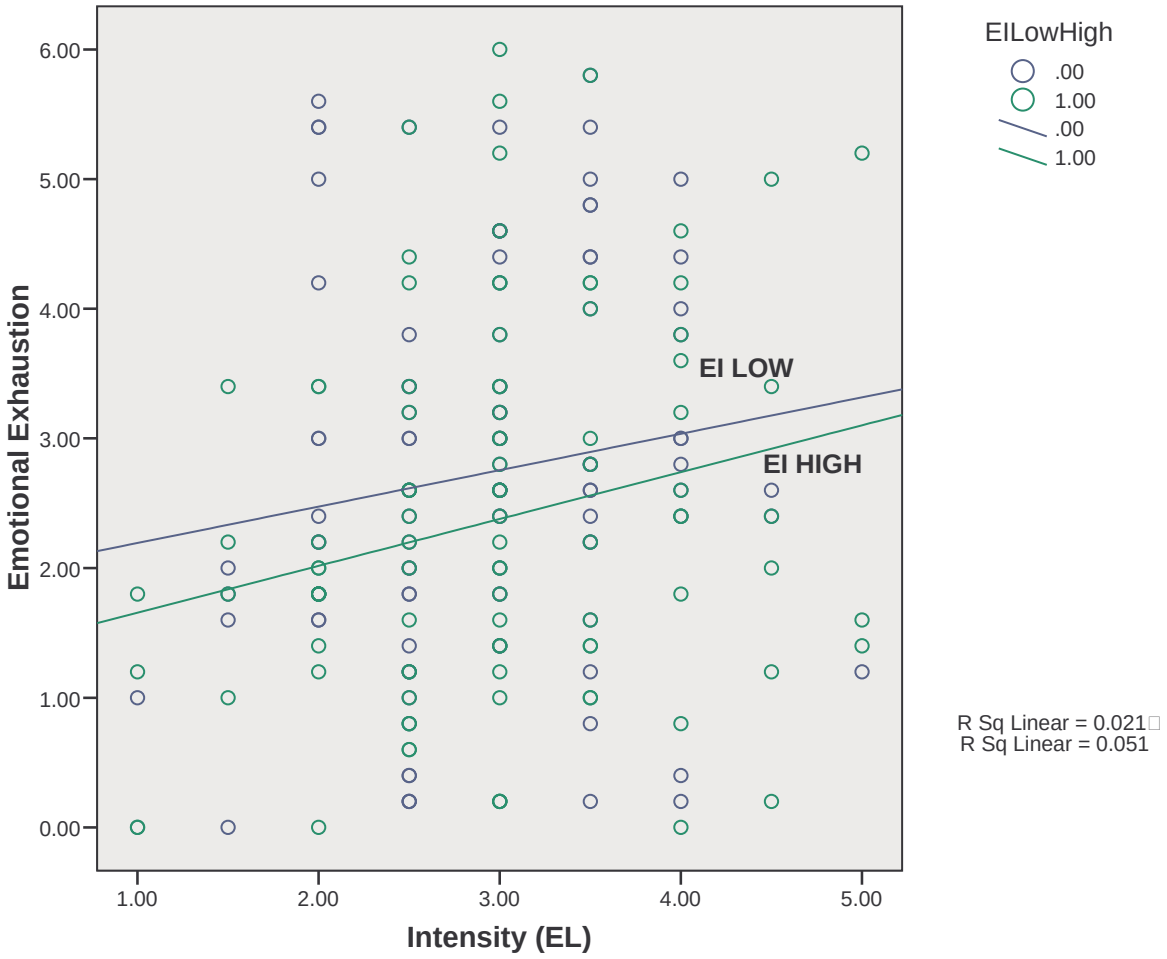

Figure 4.1: Interaction effect: Emotional Exhaustion and Intensity of Emotional Displays

In the second regression analysis, emotional exhaustion (a dimension of burnout) was entered as dependent variable and surface acting (a dimension of EL); EILowHighSurfaceActing (EI as moderator) and EILowHigh were entered as independent variables. The results from the regression indicate that the model was not significant as ***p*** >.05. As a result EI did not moderate the relationship between surface acting and emotional exhaustion. The results from the regression are shown in table 4.27 and the standardised coefficients are presented in table 4.28. Although there was no proven interaction effect, the scatter plot (figure 4.2) below illustrates those low and high in EI experience similar levels of emotional exhaustion when engaging in surface acting. What is noteworthy is that as the frequency of surface acting increases the situation changes. That is, those who are high in EI report lower levels of emotional exhaustion the more they engage in surface acting. This is probably because they possess more resources to deal with the negative effects of surface acting (i.e. emotional dissonance). For example, they may be more able to control and manage their emotions whilst engaging in surface acting so that the negative effects are not experienced. In addition, they may opt to engage in more deep acting techniques which could likely result in a greater sense of personal accomplishment which in turn could influence the degree of emotional exhaustion perceived and experienced.

Table 4.27: Model summary: Interaction Effect for Emotional Exhaustion and Surface Acting

Model	Multiple R	Multiple R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of the estimate	F	Sig.
2	.167	.028	.014	7.260	1.970	.120

a. Predictors: (Constant), Surface Acting, EILowHigh, EILowHighSurfaceActing ,

b. Dependent Variable: Emotional Exhaustion

Table 4.28: Coefficients: Interaction Effect for Emotional Exhaustion and Surface Acting

Model		Standardised Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)		5.462	.000
	Surface Acting	.162	1.656	.099
	EILowHigh	.024	.094	.925
	EILowHighSurfaceActing	-.116	-.461	.645

a. Dependent Variable: Emotional Exhaustion

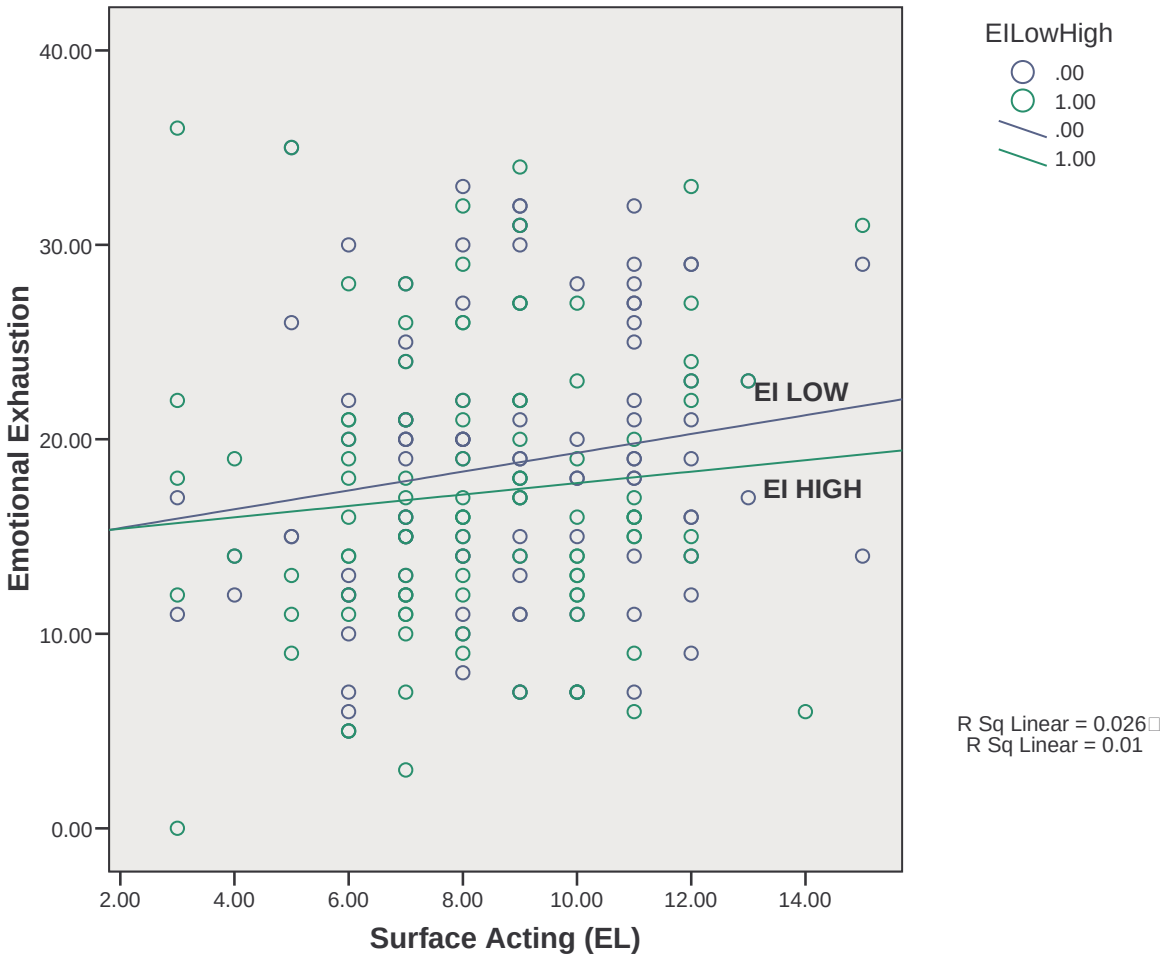

Figure 4.2: Interaction effect: Emotional Exhaustion and Surface Acting

In the final regression analysis, diminished personal accomplishment (a dimension of burnout) was entered as dependent variable and deep acting (a dimension of EL); EILowHighDeepActing (EI as moderator) and EILowHigh were entered as independent variables. The results from the regression shown in table 4.29 indicate that the model was significant (***p*** < .01) and that it explains 13% of the variance in diminished personal accomplishment. The standardised coefficients presented in table 4.30 indicate that the EI interaction (EILowHighDeepActing) was not significant, meaning that EI did not moderate the relationship between deep acting and diminished personal accomplishment. Although no interaction effect emerged, the scatter plot (figure 4.3) below illustrates that those who are higher in EI consistently report higher levels of personal accomplishment (in relation to those low in EI) the more they engage in deep acting. Whilst the regression slopes for both EI high and EI low appear similar there does seem to be a slightly more rapid increase in personal accomplishment scores by those who are higher in EI (as opposed to their lower EI counterparts), the more they engage in deep acting.

Table 4.29: Model summary: Interaction Effect for Diminished Personal Accomplishment and Deep Acting

Model	Multiple R	Multiple R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of the estimate	F	Sig.
3	.355	.126	.113	.78979	9.889	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Deep Acting, EILowHigh, EILowHighDeepActing,

b. Dependent Variable: Diminished Personal Accomplishment

Table 4.30: Coefficients: Interaction Effect for Diminished Personal Accomplishment and Deep Acting

Model		Standardised Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
3	**(Constant)**		13.691	.000
	Deep Acting	.033	.334	.739
	EILowHigh	.316	.988	.324
	EILowHighDeepActing	.025	.073	.942

a. Dependent Variable: Diminished Personal Accomplishment

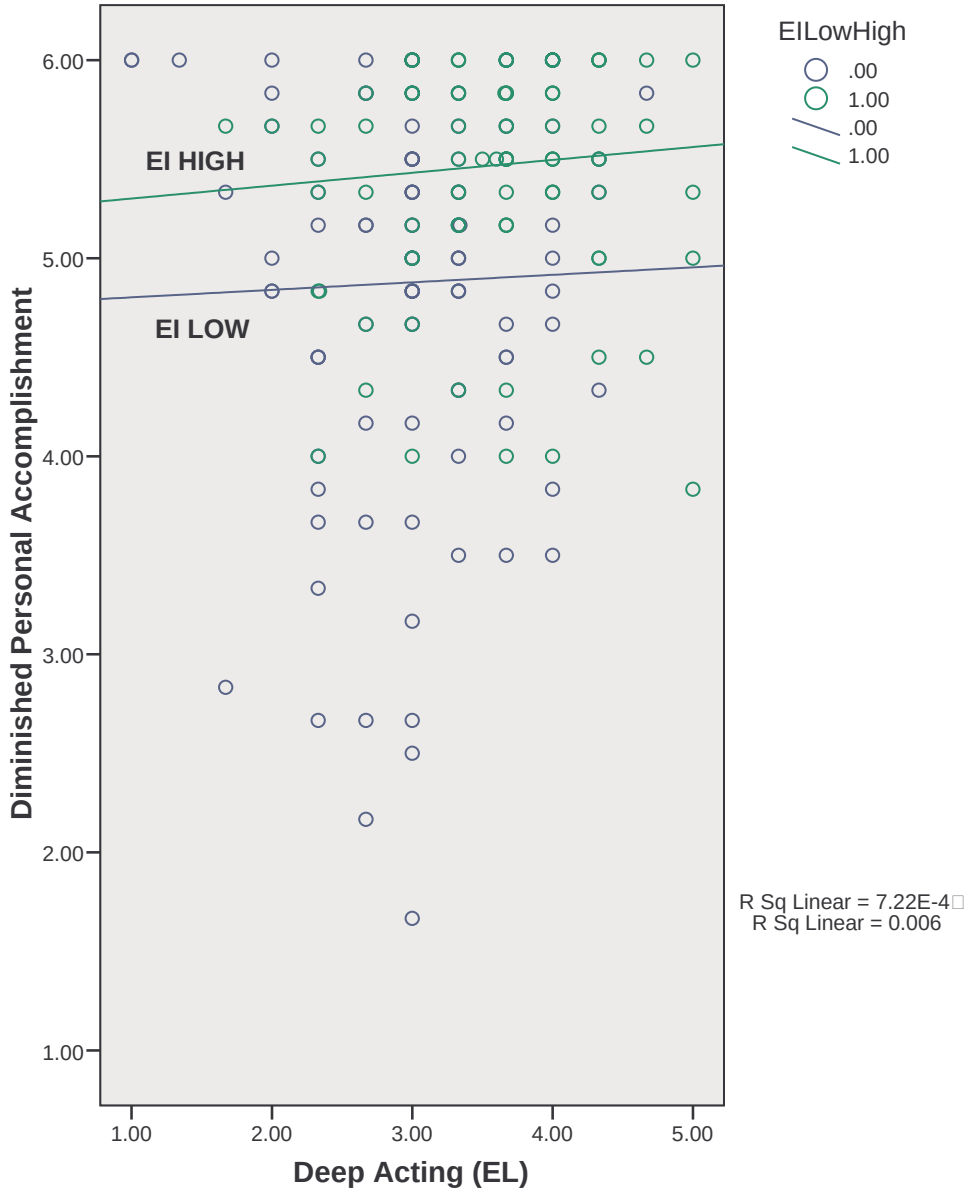

Figure 4.3: Interaction effect: Diminished Personal Accomplishment and Deep Acting

The implication of these results is that in the present sample, EI did not play a moderating role in the relationship between EL (intensity, surface acting and deep acting) and burnout (emotional exhaustion and diminished personal accomplishment) and therefore hypothesis 36 is not supported. What is evident is that more research is needed to investigate the relationship between EL and burnout and the possible moderating effect of EI.

4.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter the research results were reported and interpreted. Results obtained through the various data analyses were discussed and differences between various groups were explored and highlighted. The following chapter will focus on a discussion of the reported results with reference to relevant literature. Limitations of this study will then be noted and recommendations for future research will be proposed.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Research on burnout has increased dramatically over the past decade. With the rapid increase in the use of technology in the workplace and the impact of globalisation, organisations are now pressured into ensuring client satisfaction and retention through fast and efficient client services. Call centres are a strategic and cost effective way to ensure that these demands are met, but can prove problematic if the organisation fails to take cognisance of the negative effects of this type of work and its consequent detrimental effects on employee well-being, productivity and overall market share.

The aim of this study was to investigate the levels of burnout experienced by CCRs in two call centres of a leading South African telecommunications company. The objectives of the study were firstly, to ascertain whether the experience of EL, so prevalent in service orientated work (Bono & Vey, 2005; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000) could be related to the development of burnout and secondly, whether the presence of EI in some way influenced the experience of EL and burnout to the extent that it could act as a possible “buffer” against the development of burnout.

This chapter will provide an integrated and holistic discussion of the empirical evidence obtained in this research. References to, and comparisons with, the relevant literature and previous research findings will also be presented.

5.2 FINDINGS: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BURNOUT, EMOTIONAL LABOUR AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

5.2.1 Emotional Labour and Burnout

Data analysis revealed only three statistically significant relationships between EL and burnout. The strong relationships anticipated between surface acting and both emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation reported in other studies (Brotheridge &

Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002, 2003; Kim, in press; Mikolajczak et al., in press; Zammuner & Galli, 2005b) did not emerge from the data. Instead a weak correlation emerged between surface acting and emotional exhaustion. Whilst this result is weak it does confirm the anticipated relationship, which was postulated, i.e. that the increased use of surface acting would be associated with an increase in reported emotional exhaustion. An interesting finding was that intensity of emotional displays showed the strongest association with emotional exhaustion, indicating that when client interactions are perceived as more intense, reported emotional exhaustion increases. The results revealed no significant relationships between deep acting and emotional exhaustion or depersonalisation. However a weak positive association between deep acting and diminished personal accomplishment emerged (i.e. personal accomplishment increased). This finding corroborates with results found by other authors (e.g. Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Zammuner & Galli, 2005b). It would thus seem that as the use of deep acting techniques increases so does the individual's feelings of personal efficacy. It is likely, as argued above, that clients provide CCRs who deep act with positive feedback, which in turn, could result in increased feelings of success and accomplishment on the job.

Regression analyses were performed to determine whether any of the dimensions of EL, predicted variance in the three dimensions of burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and diminished personal accomplishment). The results showed little support for the predictive value of EL in the development of burnout, as EL was found to predict only 7% of the variance in emotional exhaustion. Intensity of emotional displays and surface acting emerged as unique predictors of variance in emotional exhaustion, with intensity of emotional displays being the stronger of the two predictors. The result for surface acting was corroborated in the findings of Kim (in press) (β = .30, $p < .01$) and Zammuner and Galli (2005b) (β = .17, $p < .01$), who both found surface acting to be a predictor of emotional exhaustion. Furthermore, EL was not found to predict variance in either depersonalisation or diminished personal accomplishment as had been found in other studies (Kim, in press; Zammuner & Galli, 2005b).

In an attempt to shed light on the results, various aspects of the sample and organisational context were explored. Analysis of the burnout scores (according to Maslach et al., 1996 recommendations) revealed that the burnout levels found in this study, fell in the average range, indicating that the individuals in the current sample were not considered to be in a state of burnout. Individuals who engaged in deep acting were found to have higher scores on diminished personal accomplishment, which is indicative of lower burnout (i.e. they experienced a higher sense of self efficacy on the job). It is thus likely that this could influence their perception of their work role being successful which in turn could have an impact on their perceived emotional exhaustion levels and resultant levels of depersonalisation when interacting with clients. It could thus be argued that engaging in deep acting "buffers" them from developing burnout. Another interesting reason for why the EL – burnout relationship was so weak could be that put forward by Bono and Vey (2005). They argued that when employees try to change emotions in response to organisational demands they may no longer perceive emotional dissonance after the emotions have changed (Bono & Vey). In other words, it is possible that the amount of EL required in the job is very high during the learning stages and levels off at some point in time, once employees adapt to the job. When employees understand that ***cheerful*** is the appropriate work emotion for a particular job, perhaps they make emotional adjustments at the start of the workday and thus find no need to manage emotions throughout the day (Bono & Vey, 2005) (i.e. with less impact on their reported burnout levels). Personality may also play a role in how EL and consequent burnout is experienced. Bono and Vey (2005) argue that if asked to display personality congruent emotions, certain individuals may not experience high levels of EL (i.e. if an individual is high in agreeableness they will favour positive and sincere interactions with others and not experience EL when asked to remain friendly and courteous whilst dealing with clients). Similarly, if an individual is high in positive affectivity, this may buffer them from the negative effects of EL (i.e. emotional exhaustion and diminished personal accomplishment) owing to their positive dispositions and outlook on life (Diefendorff et al., 2005). Finally, cognisance should be taken of the situation where the individual spontaneously feels the emotions that need to be displayed (i.e. passive deep acting). Zammuner and Galli (2005a, 2005b) and Diefendorff et al. (2005) both agree

that in this instance no emotional dissonance will result and as such no negative outcomes will be associated with EL.

An investigation of the organisational context within which the CCRs worked, also provided possible explanations for the EL – burnout results reported here. Firstly, the call centres involved in the research consisted of CCRs who were provided with supervisor support through the presence of both team leaders and senior consultants. Research has consistently shown that social support (i.e. supervisor support) is negatively correlated to burnout, in particular emotional exhaustion (Brotheridge, 2001; Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Zapf et al., 2001). In the present sample CCRs could rely on the support of team leaders when dealing with human resource issues and when calls become too technical or clients become difficult and abusive (i.e. requiring more EL) they would immediately transfer the call to their senior consultant who would then handle the call. This aspect of the CCRs support network is likely a contributing factor to the lower levels of burnout experienced in this call centre environment as the social support network available to them ensures that they engage in less emotion work.

Secondly, the company only recruits CCRs who have at least 6 months prior experience in a call centre environment, which would mean that the sample in this study already had some experience in handling clients in this environment. A full-time six-week training programme is also provided to all new employees (permanent and contract) where the first week is devoted to skills needed in the call centre environment (i.e. customer interaction skills, questioning techniques, problem solving skills, coping skills and role-playing and simulation of client calls). Employees are provided with general call guidelines (i.e. greeting the client, using their name during the conversation and being friendly and courteous), which express organisationally prescribed display rules in a positive tone. Strict “scripts” are not used in either of the call centres studied, as the company aims to equip CCRs with the appropriate skills to “read” the client and to respond in their own words. Given that research has shown that positively worded display rules are more clearly defined and that they result in increased use of deep as opposed to surface acting (Diefendorff et al., 2005) it is likely that these practices by the company (i.e. appropriate training and clear positively framed display rules) contributed

to the increase in deep acting techniques used by their CCRs. Furthermore, the limited use of scripts could have played a role in increasing their range of emotional expressivity and so reducing any emotional dissonance they might have felt if restricted to a script. Moreover, research has shown that an increase in job autonomy is positively correlated with deep acting techniques (Kim, in press). Thus it could be argued that by being given the freedom to deal with a client without referring to a script, CCRs are given greater job autonomy over the nature of the interaction with clients, which might influence their choice to engage in deep acting when dealing with clients.

Finally, another pertinent organisational context factor that likely contributed to the results found was the type of call centre work that was undertaken. The sample was drawn from inbound customer service workers who do not engage in outbound calls where they are expected to sell a product or service to potential clients. The fact that calls are purely reactive to client queries would mean that the environment would not be as stressful as in a sales call centre where staff is required to meet strict sales targets to ensure that performance targets are reached. In the current sample of CCRs, customer service performance targets are indeed set but are communicated to each CCR electronically and by way of a workshop with team leaders, every three months. Given the customer service environment, these performance targets are less objectively based (i.e. number of calls handled per minute, number of products sold) and focus more on subjectively based criteria such as customer satisfaction. Thus it may be that these factors also contributed to the lower than anticipated levels of burnout found in this study.

Whilst strong conclusive evidence was not found for the relationship between EL and burnout in the present study, it does not mean that this relationship does not exist, as previous studies have reported evidence in support thereof (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Kim, in press, Mikolajczak et al., in press; Zammuner & Galli, 2005b). Further research needs to be conducted on other samples in the call centre environment across more industries (i.e. telecommunications, banking, insurance) to determine how EL is experienced and how surface and deep acting impact on the experience of burnout over time. Cognisance must also be taken of personal and

organisational variables that may confound the results and these will need to be controlled for more carefully.

5.2.2 Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Labour

It was anticipated that strong correlations would be found between EI (total score) and both surface and deep acting. The results revealed that EI (total score) was significantly negatively related to surface acting (***r*** = -.201, ***p*** < .01) and significantly positively related to deep acting (***r*** = .427, ***p*** < .01), thereby confirming that EI was related to the type of emotion management strategy (i.e. EL) engaged in by CCRs. The relationship that emerged between EI and deep acting supported the findings of Brotheridge (2006) who found a positive correlation between the total score on the MSCEIT and deep acting (***r*** = .14, ***p*** < 05). In addition, the results revealed that EI (total score) was significantly related to both frequency and variety of emotional displays. Hence, it could be argued that as emotionally intelligent individuals are more likely to have a greater awareness of emotions (and the role they play in everyday behaviour and interactions) it is likely that they will report emotional displays at work to be more frequent and varied. It is noteworthy that when the dimensional results between EL and EI were inspected, intensity of emotional displays was found to be negatively related to emotional control. Here it could be argued that high emotional control, present in emotionally intelligent individuals, “tempers” the effects of these individual’s perceptions of the frequency and variety of emotional displays – especially as they become more intense. Hence, the ability to control strong emotions in the workplace could likely act as a barrier to the development of negative outcomes associated with EL.

Deep acting was the only dimension of EL that had the most significant (positive) correlations with all five dimensions of EI. The strongest correlation was found with emotional recognition and expression (***r*** = .317, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** < .01), followed by understanding emotions (external) (***r*** = .315, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** < .01). Surface acting, on the other hand, correlated negatively, as expected, with emotional recognition and expression (***r*** = -.222, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** < .01) and emotional management (***r*** = -.187, ***n*** = 210, ***p*** < .01). This result indicates that EI (representing the ability to understand one’s own emotions and appropriately expressing them to others and to understand the emotions

expressed by others) is related to the type of EL strategy engaged in. Thus it would seem that individuals who are higher in EI have some sort of capability or capacity to engage in deep acting strategies more frequently (i.e. use their emotions in an authentic manner) than surface acting. This tendency could "protect" them from experiencing emotional exhaustion, as they would be less likely to engage in surface acting. Furthermore, it would appear that the less emotional management possessed by an individual (i.e. the less able they are to manage positive and negative emotions both within themselves and others) the more likely they would be to report using surface acting techniques.

Regression analysis revealed that EI predicted 20% of the variance in deep acting. This result is significant, especially in the call centre industry, as it means that if EI abilities could be selected for and fostered in this environment it could likely result in the use of deep rather than surface acting, with possibly more favourable outcomes for individuals (i.e. increased sense of personal accomplishment and reduced emotional dissonance). Both emotional recognition and expression (β = .216, $\boldsymbol{p}$ < .002) and emotions direct cognition (β = .206, $\boldsymbol{p}$ < .002) (understanding emotions external did not reach significance as a unique predictor) were unique predictors of deep acting. This would mean that the appropriate expression of one's own emotions and the use of emotions in decision making played a role in predicting deep acting as an emotion management technique (i.e. being in touch with your emotions and using them to modify behaviour could facilitate authentic emotional displays, characteristic of deep acting).

Support was also found for the role of EI in the job-focused variables of EL (frequency, intensity and variety of emotional displays). EI predicted the most variance in variety (14%) followed by intensity (12%) and frequency (9%). Frequency was uniquely predicted by understanding emotions (external), whilst intensity was uniquely predicted by emotional control and variety by understanding emotions (external) and emotions direct cognition. These results indicate that the appropriate recognition, expression, understanding, management and control of emotions (i.e. EI) in the workplace contribute to the experience or perception of EL in a unique way through its impact on the job-focused variables. This result (although not tested in the same way) shows some

support for the results reported by Brotheridge (2006) where she found that EI was a predictor of the perceptions of the job-focused variables of EL which in turn impacted on the type of emotion management technique engaged in (i.e. surface or deep acting).

However, research on the unique relationships between EI and EL is at present scant and future research needs to be conducted to gain deeper insights into how the various dimensions of EL interact and impact on each other and how EI influences these relationships. It is hoped that this type of research will result in a better understanding of how EI impacts on the perception of EL and the type of emotion management strategies (i.e. surface and deep acting) adopted. The aim of such research would be to assist with the design of interventions and training strategies that foster effective management of emotions during client interactions in, for example, the call centre environment. Furthermore, it is hoped that such interventions would promote employee well-being, as it is likely to minimise the negative outcomes of EL (i.e. burnout). In a study by Diefendorff et al. (2005) it was reported that situational variables (positive display rules, frequency, duration and routineness of interactions) predicted deep acting more strongly than did person variables (i.e. personality) suggesting that job-focused variables played a stronger role in influencing whether individuals actively tried to experience the desired emotions. Partial support was found for this argument in the present study and the study conducted by Brotheridge (2006) but further research is needed to understand the intricacies of these relationships and to gain deeper insights into how the choice to engage in surface as opposed to deep acting is made. It was not within the scope of this study to explore the aforementioned relationships but it is hoped that future replication studies can focus on the intricate relationship between EI and the emotion management strategies adopted during EL. It is clear that EL does not only have negative outcomes. If individuals can be taught to engage in an emotion management strategy (such as deep acting) where they can likely increase their sense of personal accomplishment and “protect” themselves against the development of burnout, it would have far-reaching benefits for the call centre industry not only in selection criteria and performance development, but also in job profiling (Higgs, 2004).

5.2.3 Emotional Intelligence and Burnout

The results revealed that EI was related to burnout and was in some way associated with the experience of burnout. It was anticipated that EI (total score) would be negatively related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation and positively related to diminished personal accomplishment (i.e. increased personal accomplishment owing to the negative scoring on this dimension of burnout). Whilst previous research has confirmed a moderating effect of EI on the occupational stress – general health status relationship (Ogińska-Bulik, 2005) and on the general work stress - burnout relationship (Brand, 2007), a similar result did not emerge in the present study. Only one of the anticipated relationships was confirmed, with a significant positive correlation that emerged between EI (total score) and diminished personal accomplishment. This result suggests that those individuals with higher EI scores are more likely to experience an increase in their sense of personal accomplishment than their lower EI counterparts.

On the dimensional level, more support for the relationship between EI and burnout emerged. Emotional management and emotional control were both negatively correlated with emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation. Emotions direct cognition was found to positively correlate with depersonalisation. All the dimensions of EI, except for emotions direct cognition, were found to be significantly positively related to diminished personal accomplishment, meaning higher scores on these EI abilities were related to an increased sense of personal accomplishment. Given the moderate to strong relationship between EI and deep acting and the relatively strong relationship found between deep acting and personal accomplishment, it makes sense that EI would also be associated with an individual's sense of personal accomplishment. For example, it could be argued that if an individual perceives, expresses, manages and controls their emotions effectively and appropriately, it will result in better adjustment to their work role and possibly contribute to a sense of success on the job. Furthermore the relationship between EI and diminished personal accomplishment partially supported the findings in a study conducted by Chan (2006) where the relationship between a dimension of EI known as "positive utilisation of emotions" (measured using the SSRI/EIS) was found to have a path coefficient of .72 (p <0.001) with diminished personal accomplishment.

The results of the regression analyses revealed that understanding emotions (external) was a unique predictor of emotional exhaustion together with emotional control. The regression model showed that EI (all dimensions) was a relatively strong predictor of emotional exhaustion, accounting for 14% of the variance in that dimension of burnout. Similarly, EI predicted 14% of the variance in depersonalisation and diminished personal accomplishment respectively, with understanding emotions (external), emotional management and emotional control emerging as unique predictors of depersonalisation and emotional recognition and expression and emotional management emerging as unique predictors of diminished personal accomplishment. These findings again, in part, support those of Chan (2006) where he found strong causal paths between both "the perception and appraisal of emotions" and "positive regulation" (as measured with the SSRI/EIS) and emotional exhaustion (as a dimension of burnout). It would thus appear from the findings of Chan (2006) and the results that emerged in the present study, that it is not only the perception and awareness of emotions that is needed to protect one against developing emotional exhaustion but also the ability to control emotions (Chan, 2006). As the development of emotional exhaustion is viewed as the first phase of burnout (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993) it would be useful to have mechanisms in place to prevent or minimise its development. EI interventions would be one such mechanism. This study has provided some support for the findings of Chan (2006) and highlights the benefit to organisations of selecting employees that possess higher levels of EI and designing intervention/training programmes that incorporate EI skills as part of the tools needed to effectively perform on the job.

5.3 IMPACT OF SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES ON EMOTIONAL LABOUR AND BURNOUT

A series of one-way between groups analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) were conducted (with level of education as the covariate) to explore whether differences existed firstly between the different tenure groups and secondly between shift and non-shift workers on the reported mean scores of EL and burnout. Once differences were found, a series of between group comparisons, by means of Bonferroni ***post hoc*** comparisons were conducted to determine between which groups the differences could be found.

Differences between tenure (length of service) and levels of emotional exhaustion proved to be significant, which meant that as CCRs worked longer for the company, so their emotional resources were depleted and they experienced “dread” at facing another day of work. In the current sample it was found that those CCRs who had been with the company longer were also older. It is thus likely that not only would they feel exhausted by the continued job stress in their work role but that this stress could be compounded by them being older and having more responsibilities in life (i.e. marriage and children) which could increase stress level and possibly “spill over” into their work roles. This result corroborated with results reported in other studies (Holman, Chissick & Totterdell, 2002; Lewig & Dollard, 2003) and highlights the need to provide intervention strategies that will prevent the development of emotional exhaustion, such as emotional management techniques that foster deep as opposed to surface acting when engaging in EL. This suggestion is supported by the between group findings for tenure and deep acting where it was found that as length of service increases, so the frequency of engaging in deep acting decreases. This result would imply that as the level of experience increases so the need to interact in an emotionally authentic way decreased. Here it could be argued that less inexperienced workers viewed their work in more idealistic terms and perceived deep acting as providing a greater sense of control when dealing with the service demands of call centre work (Lee & Brotheridge, 2006). Unfortunately, no differences could be found between tenure and the frequency of engaging in surface acting. Despite this, the results that emerged are sufficient support for the need to foster and develop emotion management techniques throughout the careers of CCRs. It is probable, given the results in this study, that if deep acting techniques are fostered it could assist in increasing the personal accomplishment of CCRs and so “protect” them from the negative response patterns of burnout (i.e. emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation). In addition the development of EI abilities, which predict 20% variance in deep acting can be helpful mechanisms to ensure that individuals perceive and express emotions appropriately and both manage and control their emotions in adaptive ways, so making their work roles more productive and fulfilling.

The results revealed no significant differences between shift and non-shift workers for EL and burnout. It is believed that the shift policies and practices of the company involved in this research had been designed and implemented in an ergonomically sound fashion so as to ensure that it had the least amount of impact on the individual employee's well-being.

5.4 EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A MODERATOR

No evidence emerged from the data that EI played a moderating role in the relationship between EL and burnout. Perhaps further research is needed to understand the unique relationships amongst the various dimensions of EL and how they relate to EI before the moderating effect of EI in this relationship can better be explored. It is likely that the hypothesised interaction effect did not come into play in the current study because the relationship between EL and burnout was not as strong as anticipated, so placing a restriction in terms of testing this effect.

Furthermore, it is likely that other factors such as personality, organisational context and the process of passive deep acting could all have played a role in the relationship between EL and burnout. Despite the lack of evidence in this study, some support was previously found (Mikolajczak et al., in press) for the moderating effect of EI on the relationship between EL and burnout. The authors argued that those with higher levels of trait EI would use different EL strategies (i.e. surface and deep acting) and that this mediated the negative outcomes associated with EL such as burnout and somatic complaints (Mikolajczak et al., in press). Moreover, whilst strong relationships did not emerge between EL and burnout in the present study, EI was related separately to both EL and burnout. In addition, it was found that even though individuals high on EI were more likely to perceive emotional displays to be more frequent and varied, they would not perceive it as intense if they possessed emotional control. Given the predictive quality of intensity of emotional displays in the development of emotional exhaustion, it would seem that the ability to control emotions could act as some type of "buffer" in the development of burnout.

These interesting relationships need further investigation and replication to ascertain the role that EI plays in the experience of EL and in possibly protecting individuals against burnout. It is hoped that as the research base on EI, EL and burnout increases, so will the understanding of the unique relationships between these constructs. The ultimate aim of such research would be to provide insights into how burnout can be minimised and prevented in client services orientated occupations that entail "emotion work", such as the call centre environment investigated in this study.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

A number of limitations to the study can be identified. The first limitation relates to the measurement instruments used in this study. All three measures utilised: the MBI-GS (Maslach et al., 1996); the SUEIT (Palmer & Stough, 2001); and the ELS (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003) are self-report measures. Self-report measures run the risk of social desirability. That is, respondents attempt to create a more favourable impression of themselves when completing such instruments, which impact on the reported levels of the constructs investigated and influence the results. Furthermore, the question is left open as to whether the reported results pertain to individuals' actual experiences, or mainly illustrate their perceptions (Zammuner & Galli, 2005b).

A second limitation of the study is that of confounding variables. With specific reference to burnout, the researcher does not always have control over the environment in which the respondents are employed or the additional home/family stress that they could be exposed to and that could likely "spill over" into their work life. The possible influence of situational and time specific variables to which the respondent is exposed at the time of assessment should also be considered, for example, unstable home and familial relationships, job insecurity, financial insecurity, extent of social support and personality traits. It is thus crucial that these factors be built into future research projects to isolate the variables investigated, in the hope that more meaningful insights will be gained into the relationships between them. Lastly, it is likely that those individuals who experience

high stress levels at work or who perceive burnout as a sensitive issue (i.e. that their company is not properly addressing the burnout problem), may have decided not to partake in this study and declined to complete the questionnaires.

Future research should take cognisance of the role of scripts and negative versus positive display rules and their impact on the experience of EL (i.e. whether it influences the choice of deep over surface acting). Investigation into the impact of not using scripts on perceived levels of job autonomy and its relationship with both EL and burnout might be useful in understanding the value of job autonomy on the development of personal accomplishment and its possible "buffering" effect in the development of burnout. Given that social support has been shown to protect individuals against burnout (Zapf et al., 2001) it is vital that future research focus on the effect of social support (especially supervisor/team leader support) in the call centre context. Furthermore, future research should investigate the extent to which situational variables (in particular job-focused EL) impact on the choice of deep over surface acting, as support has been found for situational variables accounting for the most variance in deep acting and in fact influencing the type of EL strategy engaged in (Brotheridge, 2006; Diefendorff et al., 2005). In addition, the effect of personality variables will also need to be explored to determine its effect on EL and burnout. The current research found that EI was more strongly related to deep as opposed to surface acting and further research needs to investigate the impact of not only situational variables but also personal attributes (such as agreeableness, extraversion and neuroticism) on the choice of emotion management strategy (i.e. surface or deep acting). Lastly, research that investigates the differences between EL and burnout in inbound versus outbound call centres can be assessed in the telecommunications industry across different organisational contexts. Studies can also be undertaken in call centres in other industries (banking and insurance) to investigate whether EL and burnout is experienced in the same manner across industries.

5.6 CONCLUSION

Burnout has detrimental effects for both the individual employee and the organisation. Research that aims to understand the development of burnout and ways that it can be minimised, is of vital importance in the work context, particularly customer service work environments such as call centres. A growing body of research has focused on the effects of emotion work (i.e. EL) on the development of burnout, but little research has measured the effect of EI on the relationship between EL and burnout.

The objective of this study was to investigate the influence EI would have on both EL and burnout, with the view to determining whether emotions can play a positive role in protecting individuals against the development of burnout. The results of this study confirmed that surface acting was related to (and predicted) emotional exhaustion (i.e. increased burnout) and conversely that deep acting was related to increased personal accomplishment (i.e. decreased burnout). EI was found to be negatively correlated to surface acting and positively correlated to deep acting and emerged as a strong predictor of deep acting, so confirming that those higher in EI, were more likely to engage more frequently in deep acting techniques. Furthermore, EI was positively correlated to personal accomplishment (i.e. decreased burnout). These findings indicate the need to develop emotional management strategies, such as deep acting, that could foster positive outcomes (i.e. increased personal accomplishment and reduced burnout). The results found for tenure on emotional exhaustion and deep acting highlight the fact that intervention programmes should not only take place during the induction phase of an employee's career but throughout their working lives.

Organisations that utilise call centres to gain competitive advantage are encouraged to ensure that interpersonal interactions between their employees and clients remain positive and productive over time. Not only employee well-being is crucial but also the need to ensure client satisfaction and retention. The current study provides evidence that EI interventions that improve a CCR's ability to deep act will greatly benefit the call centre industry as it will ensure authentic interactions with clients that will improve the CCR's sense of personal accomplishment and likely improve productivity, work-role

adjustment, job satisfaction and overall customer care. Whilst much research is still needed to understand the intricacies of the relationships between burnout, EL and EI, the findings of this study provides the impetus to view EL not only as a negative antecedent of burnout, but possibly as a tool that could foster positive client interactions for the benefit of the employee, the organisation and the client.

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Appendix 1: Ethical clearance

Tel.: 808-4623
Enquiries: Maryke Hunter-Hüsselmann

7 February 2007

Ms. B Furnell
PO Box 162
Bloubergstrand
7436

Dear ms Furnell

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

With regard to your application for ethical clearance, it is with pleasure that I inform you that your project *Exploring the Relationship between Emotional Labour, Emotional Intelligence and Burnout: A study on call centre representatives* have been approved with the understanding that:

1. You stay within the procedures and protocols that you specify in your proposal;
2. You stay within the regulations of any national law, institutional guidelines and proper standards of conducting scientific research that is appropriate within your field.

Best wishes with your research activities!

MS. M. HUNTER-HüSSELMANN
Co-ordinator: Research (Human and Social Sciences)

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Appendix 2: Letter to Telecommunications Company setting out benefits of the research

April 2007

[COMPANY NAME]
Call Centre Management

RESEARCH ON EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:
Exploring the Relationship between Emotional Labour, Emotional Intelligence and Burnout: A study on Call Centre Representatives.

Recent research has shown that burnout levels of employees in the call centre industry are very high and could play a role in the high stress levels, absenteeism levels and staff turnover levels experienced in this industry.

One possible cause of burnout is the experience of emotional labour. Emotional labour is the "process where employees regulate their emotional displays in an attempt to meet organisationally based expectations specific to their roles". For example, to be friendly and courteous to customers at all times even when they are abusive. Emotional labour may at times involve a person's true feelings being incongruent with the feelings they are required to display as part of their job. For this reason it has been linked to the experience of psychological strain, stress and burnout.

The current study aims to investigate whether call centre staff engage in emotional labour and if this is linked to high levels of burnout. In addition, and more importantly, the study aims to determine if a call centre representative's level of emotional intelligence could in any way influence his/her experience of emotional labour, in such a way, as to reduce the development of its harmful effects, in particular, the development of burnout.

The study will require at least 250 call centre representatives to complete a demographic information questionnaire in addition to three psychological questionnaires, which are all scientifically validated and researched. Completion of the questionnaires will take approximately 30 - 40 minutes and will be administered in a paper and pencil format.

***[Company name]* will benefit from participating in this study** in the following ways:

- The study will **not cost the organisation** any money, save for the time it takes participants to complete the questionnaires (arrangements can be made to ensure that the completion of these tests causes minimal disruption to their work day);
- It is anticipated that the outcome of this study will provide the call centre industry with insight into some possible **predictors of the high absenteeism and staff turnover** levels experienced;
- More specifically, it is expected that this study will highlight the **importance of emotional regulation** (for example, recognising and appraising emotions,

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expressing emotions effectively; and being able to read customer's emotions) in the call centre industry and the need for selection, recruitment and training practices to focus on the significance of identifying and developing emotional intelligence as a possible protective quality in the emotional labour – burnout relationship; and

- The organisation will **receive aggregate scores based on all the responses** and **each participant in the study will receive an electronic copy of their individual Emotional Intelligence results in a psychometric report**, which will provide a detailed breakdown of strengths and developmental areas.

Ethical clearance to commence with this research study has been received and is attached hereto. All results will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and anonymity and will be protected by the use of a code for each participant in place of their name.

We thank you for your willingness to partake in this interesting and valuable study.

Yours sincerely

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Appendix 3: Presentation regarding rationale, aims and objectives of the research

Research Study:

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BURNOUT, EMOTIONAL LABOUR AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: A STUDY ON CALL CENTRE REPRESENTATIVES

Bernadette Furnell
(Master's thesis – Stellenbosch University)
13th April 2007

1

INTRODUCTION

- SHIFT FROM MANUFACTURING TO SERVICE DRIVEN CULTURE
- CALL CENTRES
  - 40% growth per annum globally
  - 14-20% growth per annum in S.A.
  - High staff turnover and absenteeism

  (James, 1998; Siong, Mellor, Moore & Firth, 2006)
- NEED TO GAIN INSIGHT INTO POSSIBLE CAUSES

2

RESEARCH AIM

- INVESTIGATE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THREE CONCEPTS:
  - EMOTIONAL LABOUR
  - BURNOUT
  - EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

3

EMOTIONAL LABOUR (EL)

- "..THE PROCESS WHERE EMPLOYEES REGULATE THEIR EMOTIONAL DISPLAY TO MEET ORGANISATIONALLY-BASED EXPECTATIONS SPECIFIC TO THEIR ROLES" (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003)

4

EMOTIONAL LABOUR (EL)

- NEGATIVE OUTCOMES:
  - Work related stress (Bono & Vey, 2005)
  - Emotional exhaustion (Bono & Vey, 2005)
  - May result in Emotional dissonance - associated with decreased job satisfaction (Bono & Vey, 2005)
  - Emotional dissonance positively correlated with organisational turnover (Zerbe, 2000)

5

EMOTIONAL LABOUR (EL)

- RECENT RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT EL PLAYS A UNIQUE ROLE IN CONTRIBUTING TO BURNOUT OVER AND ABOVE OTHER JOB AND SOCIAL STRESSORS (Zapf, Seifert, Schmutte, Mertini & Holz, 2001)

6

BURNOUT

- TYPE OF JOB STRESS RESULTING IN A PATTERN OF NEGATIVE AFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO WORK DEMANDS OR STRESSORS (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993)
- MASLACH BURNOUT INVENTORY
  - Emotional exhaustion
  - Depersonalisation
  - Diminished personal accomplishment

(Maslach & Jackson, 1986)

7

BURNOUT

- NEGATIVE OUTCOMES:
  - Increased staff turnover
  - Increased intention to leave
  - Reduction in quality and quantity of job performance (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Lee & Ashforth, 1996)
- THE DEMAND TO REGULATE EMOTIONS IN MANDATED WAY CONTRIBUTES TO ROLE OVERLOAD, STRESS AND BURNOUT

(Montgomery, Panagopolou, de Wildt, 2006)

8

BURNOUT

- **EMOTIONAL CONTENT** OF THE INTERACTION WITH THE CLIENT IS CRUCIAL IN UNDERSTANDING HOW BURNOUT OCCURS.
- NEED UNDERSTANDING HOW PEOPLE REGULATE AND MANAGE EMOTIONS TO UNDERSTAND THE DEVELOPMENT OF BURNOUT (Côté, 2005).

9

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI)

IMPORTANT QUESTION:

- COULD THE LEVEL OF SOMEONE'S EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI) IN ANY WAY HAVE AN EFFECT ON WHETHER THEY DEVELOP BURNOUT OR NOT?

10

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI)

- "CAPACITY TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH ONE'S OWN AND OTHERS' EMOTIONS"
- MEANING: "EFFECTIVELY PERCEIVE, EXPRESS, UNDERSTAND AND MANAGE EMOTIONS IN A PROFESSIONAL AND EFFECTIVE MANNER AT WORK" (Palmer & Stough, 2001)

11

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI)

- EI – BURNOUT RELATIONSHIP
  - Research to date focused on EI – stress relationship:
    - EI potential moderator in the stress process (Slaski & Cartwright, 2002).
    - High levels of EI associated:
      - lower levels of perceived stress
      - dealing better with stress
      - less prone to being affected by stress (Gardner & Stough, 2003; Oginska-Bulik, 2005)

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PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

- ASSESS LEVELS OF EL AND BURNOUT
- IF THOSE THAT EXPERIENCE HIGHER LEVELS OF EL ALSO SHOW HIGHER LEVELS OF BURNOUT
- IF THOSE WITH HIGHER LEVELS OF EI HAVE LOWER LEVELS OF EL AND BURNOUT

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CONTRIBUTION OF RESEARCH

- PROVIDE CALL CENTRE INDUSTRY WITH INSIGHT INTO POSSIBLE PREDICTORS OF HIGH ABESENTEEISM & TUNROVER.
- HIGHLIGHT IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL REGULATION IN THIS INDUSTRY.
- INCREASE FOCUS ON THE NEED TO IDENTIFY & DEVELOP EI AS POSSIBLE PROTECTIVE QUALITY IN THE EL – BURNOUT RELATIONSHIP.

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Appendix 4: Cover letter to participants

June / July 2007

Dear Participant

STUDY ON ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR:
Request to complete questionnaires

In order to conduct research on emotions in the work context we need information regarding your feelings and reactions in the organisation where you work. We therefore request your help with the completion of the attached form and questionnaires.

Please note that your participation in the study is completely voluntary. You can decide for yourself whether you will participate by choosing to complete the attached questionnaires and returning it to the researcher. No one will be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing to complete or not complete the questionnaires. For the purposes of this study, all responses will be treated with anonymity and no individual personal data or results will be made available to any unauthorized person. However, for the purposes of developmental and coaching purposes only, certain designated staff at your employer organisation would have access to the results of these questionnaires but only after permission was obtained from you in this regard.

To increase the anonymity of the results and to ensure that only authorized individuals will gain access to these results, a numerical code will be linked to your name. Only the code and the results will be made available to your employer. Confidentially and anonymity is a priority and will be honoured in this manner. If you would like your employer to have access to your personal details as well as your results (in other words, your name linked to your results to allow personal interaction), please ensure that you tick the relevant box on the next page for this purpose.

Should you decide to take part in this study, please complete the attached questionnaires. There is one demographic information form and three questionnaires attached (pages 2 - 8). Please respond to **all questions** in **all of the sections** (save for the "code" option in the demographic form which we will allocate). Choose the relevant option to each item and indicate your answer in the applicable manner. The questions are intended to cover your views towards work and life from various perspectives. There are no right and wrong answers to any of the questions; we are only interested in your personal opinions. Please keep in mind that you are participating in a scientific study, frank and truthful answers are the most important contributions you can make to its success.

Different instructions will precede different sets of questions. Please follow the instructions as carefully as possible. The demographic information form and questionnaires should take you approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your time and important contribution to this study!

Yours sincerely

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Department of Industrial Psychology
Stellenbosch University
Tel: (021) 808-3596

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

CODE: *(Leave Blank -Administrative Use Only)*	ID number:
HOME LANGUAGE:	GENDER:
ETHNIC ORIGIN: (for statistical purposes only)	

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION (please tick appropriate box)

Grade 10/ Std 8 or below ☐ Grade 12/Std 10 ☐ Post Matric certificate ☐

Under Graduate Degree/ or equivalent 3 year diploma ☐ Post Graduate Qualification ☐

STATE YOUR WORK LOCATION IN YOUR ORGANISATION:.....
(State in which section you work: Call centre / E-mail contact centre / Back office)

POSITION:.....LENGTH OF SERVICE:.....(number of years)

DO YOU WORK SHIFTS? (please tick appropriate box): Yes: ☐ No: ☐

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE CALL CENTRE INDUSTRY: .....(years)

MODE OF TRANSPORT USED: OWN TRANSPORT: ☐ PUBLIC TRANSPORT: ☐
(please tick appropriate box)

MARITAL STATUS: (please tick appropriate box)

Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed ☐ Co-habiting ☐

NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS (if applicable):.....

AVERAGE **MONTHLY** INCOME FOR HOUSEHOLD (e.g. calculate all income of self, spouse, extended family, etc.) (please tick appropriate box)

R0 – R3999.00 ☐ R 4000.00 – R7999.00 ☐ R 8000.00 – R11 999 ☐

R 12 000 – R 15999 ☐ R 16 000 + ☐

Do you work on a permanent or contract basis? Permanent Contract (Flexi)
(please tick appropriate box) ☐ ☐

If you work on a contract basis, do you work for other call centres? (please tick appropriate box)
Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, how many?.....(number).

Type of feedback you would prefer:
(please tick appropriate box) No Feedback ☐ Written report(individual) ☐ Verbal Feedback(group) ☐

E-mail address: .....

CONSENT FORM (please fill in your name, sign below & tick the relevant box)

I, _____, (Name & Surname) agree to take part in this study and agree that my employer will have access to a summary of the results of all the questionnaires. I agree that they may only gain access to my personal information and individual results if I have ticked the appropriate box below.

YES, I provide consent that my personal details and individual results may be made available to my employer for developmental and coaching purposes. ☐ **OR**

NO, I do not want my personal details and individual results to be made available to my employer. ☐

Signed at _____ on the _____ of _____ 2007.

_____
(Signature)

5th July 2007

[Company Name]
Call Centre
Cape Town

Dear Team Leader

STUDY ON ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR AND EMOTIONS IN *[COMPANY NAME]* CALL CENTRES (WESTERN CAPE):

Thank you for your participation in our study.

Please find enclosed **5 (five)** questionnaire packs, which we request you distribute randomly to **5 (five)** of your team agents. Please ensure that the persons who are allocated these questionnaires are made aware of the following issues prior to completing the questionnaires:

- Assure them that **confidentiality** will be maintained at all times and that the results will be returned to the researcher after completion. Please do not peruse the results yourself once they are returned to you.
- Participants are to complete **all** sections of the demographic form
  - Stress that this is for statistical purposes only;
  - If they require written feedback they must please provide their personal e-mail address at the bottom of the demographic information form (where indicated);
  - They must complete the consent form below the demographic questions.
- Participants are to complete **all** questions in **all 3 (three)** questionnaires.
- Please note that these questionnaires are considered to be psychological tests and need at all times to **remain in the possession of whoever is completing them.** This is to ensure the integrity of the questionnaires and to adhere to the copyright laws pertaining to these questionnaires, to which we are bound as researchers.
- Please request the participants to complete the questionnaires and to return them to you by no later than **10h00 on Monday, 9th July 2007**. Please then hand the 5 (five) completed questionnaires **in the plastic covers provided to *[Company representative].***

Yours sincerely

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