

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**THE PREVALENCE AND MAGNITUDE OF SOCIAL
LOAFING IN AN ORGANISATIONAL SETTING**

By

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DECLARATION

I Dhashendra Naicker declare that

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ABSTRACT

Organising people into groups or teams should theoretically result in synergistic effects and optimal performance. People should be more productive, further motivated and exert additional effort and input when working collectively rather than individually. However, research conducted in parts of America, Europe and Asia has found that when people work collaboratively in groups or teams they actually exert less effort than they ought to, or “loaf”, resulting in process losses for teams or groups and reduced productivity gains for organisations. "Social loafing" describes the phenomenon where individuals exert less effort when working collectively than when working independently. This calls into question the wisdom of using groups and teams to enhance productivity.

South Africa is facing embattled economic times, which require improved efficiencies and increased productivity. It is in this context that this study reviews established literature on groups, teams and social loafing; investigates the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing in an organisational setting; identifies those dimensions (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of tasks, visibility of contribution, size of the group, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) that impact upon and moderate the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing; determines the extent to which these dimensions are a factor in influencing social loafing; and reveals significant intercorrelations amongst the dimensions of perceived social loafing. The study also evaluates whether there are significant differences in the perceptions of social loafing amongst employees according to biographical factors (gender, age, marital status, length of service, status in group, and status of post). Finally, the analysis, interpretation and discussion of the study results generates a framework that indicates the influence of key dimensions on the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing and advocates practical interventions to reduce social loafing.

The findings of the study show that individuals tend to engage in social loafing when working in groups or teams. Social loafing appears to be moderate in magnitude and generalizable across tasks.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The chronicles of human existence are punctuated by people functioning together in teams and groups to accomplish, overcome, and discover. The attainment of common goals by individuals operating together has been fundamental to mankind's survival ever since our earliest ancestors first grouped together to satisfy their basic needs (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). In the contemporary organisational setting, there seems to be added impetus and recognition of the value of this primitive principle in the accomplishment of work. Organisations rely more on teams and groups to accomplish an assortment of activities, from designing commodities to developing services. Teams and groups are everywhere and are ever-present, and influence practically all aspects of our daily lives (Marks, 2006). A great deal of the world's work is carried out collectively, where people pool together their individual inputs to develop a single group product (Karau & Williams, 1995). The apparent benefit is the synergistic outcomes and optimal performance that team and group effectiveness delivers (Karau & Williams, 2001; Robbins, Judge, Odendaal, Roodt, 2009).

Nevertheless, there is increasing evidence that the challenges of teamwork have the propensity to produce disappointments and even catastrophic problems. Poor group or team effectiveness in the key areas of leadership, coordination, communication, procedures, roles and responsibilities, and positive relationships lends itself to team dysfunction (Goldenberg, 2010; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Marks, 2006). An ever-increasing number of people, who work on collaborative projects, have begun to manifest negative perceptions regarding the benefits of group work (Hurley & Allen, 2007). Recent group process research contends that working collectively can affect people's motivation and effort, resulting in process losses for teams and reduced productivity gains for organisations (Chidambaram & Tung, 2005). In addition social psychologists are discovering that group participation may actually result in decreased effort being exerted by individuals (Brooks & Ammons, 2003). These findings are crucial to organisational performance and take on special significance during embattled economic times when organisations are striving to improve efficiencies and increase

productivity (Dennis, Wixom & Vandenberg, 2001). This has moved group behaviour researchers to examine the effect of individual contributions combined with those of other people (Karau & Williams, 2001). It is in this context that the study of social loafing, a phenomenon that has been shown to threaten and disrupt the effectiveness of teams, has emerged (McFarlin & Sweeney, 2001). Social loafing occurs when individuals exert less effort when working as a group than when working independently (Latané, Williams & Harkins, 1979).

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENTS AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

Organising people into teams should theoretically result in synergistic effects and optimal performance (Karau & Williams, 2001; Robbins, 1995). However, when many team members are available, people also exert less effort than they ought to (Latané *et al.*, 1979), resulting in process losses for teams and reduced productivity gains for organisations (Chidambaram & Tung, 2005). This calls into question the wisdom of using groups and teams to enhance productivity (Ratzburg, 2008). The social loafing phenomenon describes this occurrence, where individuals exert less effort when working as a group than when working independently.

There is therefore a need to examine the effects of individual contributions combined with those of other people (Karau & Williams, 2001). During embattled economic times when South Africa is striving to improve efficiencies and increase productivity, there is a distinct necessity to investigate the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing, to identify those dimensions that impact on its prevalence and magnitude, and to determine the extent of the influence of these dimensions.

1.3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary aim and objective of the present study was to ascertain the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing in an organisational setting as perceived by employees belonging to either a group or a team.

Secondary objectives of the study:

- To assess the prevalence of social loafing in an organisational setting.
- To determine the magnitude of social loafing in an organisational setting.
- To investigate the extent to which the dimensions (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of tasks, visibility of contribution, size of the group, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) influence the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing.
- To evaluate whether there is a significant difference in the perceptions of social loafing amongst employees according to biographical factors (gender, age, marital status, length of service, status in group, and status of post).
- To develop a framework that indicates the influence of perceived co-worker loafing, nature of tasks, visibility of contribution, size of the group, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness on the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing.

In order to achieve these objectives, several hypotheses will be generated to address the research question.

1.4. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

According to Melville and Goddard (1996), the objective of a hypothesis is to forecast an association between variables that can be verified through tests. Sekaran and Bougie (2010) describe a hypothesis as a rational, speculated connection between two or more variables articulated in the form of testable statements.

The following hypotheses were generated to investigate the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing in an organisational setting.

Hypothesis 1

There exist significant intercorrelations amongst the dimensions of perceived social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) respectively.

Hypotheses 2

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in age regarding the dimensions of perceived social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) respectively.

Hypotheses 3

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in marital status regarding the dimensions of perceived social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) respectively.

Hypotheses 4

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in length of service regarding the dimensions of perceived social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) respectively.

Hypotheses 5

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying on status in group regarding the dimensions of perceived social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) respectively.

Hypotheses 6

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in type of post regarding the dimensions of perceived social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) respectively.

1.5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of the study identify areas that are open to improvement, in order to enhance the scientific quality of social loafing research. This study focused on one group in one setting. Future research could take a number of directions. A particularly pressing need is to validate social loafing in other real life settings such as small businesses, multinational corporations, agencies, committees, panels, juries, partnerships, and interpersonal associations. This would enable the generalizability of social loafing in terms of dispositional and situational factors.

1.6. SUMMARY OUTLINE PER CHAPTER

Chapter two provides insights into the nature of teams and groups, their formation, development, behaviour, processes, and performance outcomes and analyses team dysfunction, and team effectiveness. The practice of social loafing, which threatens and disrupts the effectiveness of teams will also be examined.

Chapter three provides an understanding of the concept social loafing, offers insight into its discovery, highlights the generality and magnitude of this phenomenon through a literature survey, exposes the causes of social loafing in the core areas of perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness; and isolates ways of guiding and controlling social forces so that groups and teams can serve as a means of intensifying individual responsibility rather than diffusing it (Karau & Williams, 2001; Latané *et al.*, 1979).

Chapter four presents the research methodology of the study, including the objectives of the research, the research sample and relevant sample characteristics. The method to be adhered to in performing the research, the research instrument and the quantitative statistical analyses applied are explained and described. The research methodology will assist in clarifying the research design concerns, the primary objectives of the research, and descriptions of the most salient sample characteristics.

Chapter five sets out the empirical analyses undertaken to test the hypotheses generated for the research. The results of the statistical analyses are reported and discussed. The results provide an analysis of the findings on employee perceptions regarding the

prevalence and magnitude of social loafing pertaining to the key dimensions of preconceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively. The results also examine variations in perceptions according to biographical factors (age, marital status, length of service, status in group, and status of post respectively). Inferential statistics are computed on the key dimensions of the study to enable the researcher to determine the existence of significant intercorrelations amongst these dimensions. The influences of the biographical variables on the key dimensions of the study are evaluated, using t-tests. The psychometric properties of the questionnaire are evaluated statistically. The validity of the self-developed questionnaire is evaluated using Factor Analysis. The reliability of the self-developed measuring instrument is evaluated using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha.

A discussion of the results and findings substantiated or refuted by previous research identified in the literature review is presented in Chapter six. This chapter examines the significant findings of the study within the context of the research objectives. Comparisons and contrasts are made with the available literature with the intention of establishing possible theoretical connections between the literature and the current research results.

Chapter seven discusses important conclusions and lessons, which can be drawn from the current research and offers suggested interventions for the organisation under study and recommendations for future research.

1.7. CONCLUSION

This chapter has highlighted the primary objectives of the research, the motivation for the current study, as well as the hypotheses generated for the purpose of answering the research question being investigated.

CHAPTER TWO

TEAMS AND WORK GROUPS

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Mankind's history is essentially a narrative of people working together in teams and groups to accomplish, overcome, and discover. The achievement of mutual goals by a collection of individuals functioning together has been central to human civilization and development since our earliest ancestors first grouped together to hunt for food, nurture families, and protect their communities (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006).

In modern times, there has been a resurgence and acknowledgment of the value of this primitive principle in the accomplishment of work. From daily activities like air travel, refuse removal, and operating national toll roads to astonishing accomplishments of human excellence like sailing solo around the world, teams and groups are at the core of everyday living. Organisations are relying more on teams and groups to achieve an extensive assortment of activities, from designing commodities to developing services. Teams and groups are everywhere, are ever-present, and affect almost all aspects of our daily lives (Marks, 2006). The modern notion of work has prompted organisations to reorganise work from a collection of individual jobs to working collectively in teams and groups. Businesses have turned to teamwork and work groups to accomplish their central business objectives (Karau & Williams, 2001) in response to global economic forces (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). The evidence suggests that a large amount of the world's work is now undertaken collectively (Karau & Williams, 1995).

Theoretically, the benefit of working collectively is the synergistic results and optimal performance that team and group effectiveness delivers (Karau & Williams, 2001; Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Nevertheless, the challenges teamwork presents have the propensity to lead to disappointments and even catastrophic problems. The failure of American intelligence and law enforcement agencies to prevent the 9/11 attacks in 2001, the sluggish response to hurricane Katrina in 2005, and more recently BP's oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010 have one commonly cited cause: poor teamwork. Poor group or team effectiveness in the key areas of leadership, coordination,

communication, procedures, roles and responsibilities, and positive relationships lends itself to team dysfunction (Goldenberg, 2010; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Marks, 2006).

In view of the foregoing this chapter not only to provide insights into the nature of teams and groups, their formation, development, behaviour, processes, and performance outcomes but also offers a perspective on team dysfunction, and team effectiveness.

2.2. CLARIFICATION OF THE TERMS TEAMS AND GROUPS

Groups and teams are not identical; yet, it is difficult to make a clear distinction between a group and a team (Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson, 2008; Robbins *et al.*, 2009). The terms tend to be used interchangeably. Within the work setting the term teams has habitually been used for any group, whose purpose is to get individuals to work together and to motivate them (Luthans, 2005). In recent times there has been a tendency to refer to teams rather than groups in both organisational literature and within the organisational environment (Martin, 2005). Mullins (2007) and Belbin (2000) note that the term ‘teams’ has become increasingly popular. Belbin (2000) has raised concerns that the term “teams” has replaced the more familiar concept of “groups”. He draws attention to the need for the correct and appropriate usage of these terms. In order to differentiate between high-quality work groups and teamwork, the following two sections focus on their similarities and differences (Mullins, 2007).

2.2.1. COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF TEAMS AND GROUPS

Teams and groups share many common characteristics. It has been suggested that teams start out as groups. Both teams and groups are formed when two or more individuals relate to one another. Both formations provide the framework for interaction amongst members. The purpose of both teams and groups is to provide a collective forum where for the performance of specific technical, leadership, problem-solving, and emotional roles. In addition, members of teams and groups share a common goal. They take cognizance of one another and this awareness influences group and team processes (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008; Martin, 2005). Essentially, teams are mature groups with a degree of member interdependence and motivation to achieve a common goal. A

review of the literature suggests that groups serve as the background and foundation for teams (Luthans, 2005). Notwithstanding these similarities, groups and teams are not the same and are also distinct (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008).

2.2.2. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN TEAMS AND GROUPS

Numerous features distinguish groups from teams. The most distinguishing feature is size: groups can embrace any number of individuals but teams are smaller, and are normally made up of four to six members. A typical characteristic of a small, perfectly poised team is that headship is allocated on a rotational basis whereas large groups classically utilise a solo leader (Mullins, 2007). Belbin (2000) and Martin (2005) cite the nature of leadership as a key dissimilarity between teams and groups. Group members are held responsible to a manager while the members of a team are internally answerable to one another in addition to a rotational leader, thereby influencing the depth of commitment, which is another dissimilarity between groups and teams (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008; Mullins, 2007).

Belbin (2000) notes that the manner in which members are selected for teams and groups adds to the variation between the two. Teams are purpose-formed; resulting in the selection of members whose skills complement one another while groups are often randomly formed, resulting in a varied mix of non-complementary and sometimes inessential skills (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). This has the potential to make teams more effective than groups (Martin, 2005).

A further difference is based on group development and maturity. In terms of Tuckman's representation of group development, which is discussed later in this chapter, a group may become a team only after it advances from the phases of forming, norming and storming and effectively reaches the performing phase (Mullins, 2007). Some researchers have suggested that the distinction between a work group and a team has to do with performance outcomes. In broader terms a group's performance is a computation of what its individual members do, whereas a team's performance consists of both individual outcomes and what two or more members accomplish collaboratively (Luthans, 2005; Yukl, Gordon & Taber, 2002). Katzenbach and Smith (1993) concur that the difference between groups and teams lies in the relative performance achieved.

Work groups have no necessity or prospect to engage in collaborative work that requires joint endeavour. The performance of work groups is purely the inventory of each group member's specific input. There is no positive, special energy that would generate a total level of performance that is larger than the aggregate of the individual contributions (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Teams go further than conventional official work groups by having a collaborative, synergistic outcome. Synergy refers to the whole being greater than the sum of its parts. It is the result of merging the efforts and behaviours of team members. Synergistic team performance is superior to the work and performance of individuals working alone in groups and is clearly one of the most crucial differences between groups and teams (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008; Luthans, 2005).

2.2.3. UTILISATION OF THE TERMS TEAMS AND GROUPS

Based on the similarities between groups and teams it is the view of this study that an understanding of teams builds on common theories, research findings, and applications of groups. Reference will be made to group theory and applied to teams since all teams are, by definition, groups. However, it does not necessarily follow that all groups are teams (Mullins, 2007). An evaluation of the differences between teams and groups reveals that teams and groups are also notably distinct and that not all groups become mature and interdependent teams. In these instances the terms must be used separately (Martin, 2005). This study will refer to both groups and teams according to the particular focus of attention (Mullins, 2007; Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

The next section formally defines the terms “teams” and “groups”.

2.3. DEFINITION OF TEAMS AND WORK GROUPS

One of the earliest credible references to teams in the modern era dates back to 1954 when quality expert Joseph Juran first took his “Team Approach to Problem Solving” to industries in Japan (Luthans, 2005). Today, there are numerous and varying definitions of teams and work groups.

Teams are by definition a special type of group, and are considered to be groups within specific contexts (Martin, 2005). Thus, the definition of a group would also embrace the

notion of a team and it would, therefore, be appropriate to generalize the definition of a group onto teams. However, this should be done with circumspection because it does not necessarily follow that the definition of a team would embrace the notion of a group (Hackman, 2002; Martin, 2005).

2.3.1. DEFINING A WORK GROUP

Kinlaw (1991) describes a work group as a collection of two or more employees who make up an exclusive or special organisational unit that is considered to be an enduring and stable part of the larger organisation. Schein (1988) advises that a group consists of several individuals who relate to one another, are expressively mindful of each other and think of themselves as a group. Robbins (2001, p. 217) describes a group as “two or more individuals, interacting and interdependent, who have come together to achieve particular objectives”. Martin (2005, p. 210) defines a group as a “collective of two or more people with purpose, who interact, are psychologically aware and are influenced by the others”. Shaw (1981) proposes that a group is two or more individuals who interrelate with one another in a way that each impacts and is impacted on by the others.

2.3.2. DEFINING A TEAM

Martin (2005, p. 210) describes a team as “a small cohesive group focused on a common task and working as a single unit”. Robbins (2001, p. 258) defines a team as “a group whose individual efforts result in a performance that is greater than the sum of the individual inputs”. For Katzenbach and Smith (2005, p.162), a team is a “small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, set of performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable”. Mullins (2007) depicts a team as several individuals with a shared goal who acknowledge that their individual success is reliant on the success of others, who are dependent on one another, and contribute diverse and unique skills in the achievement of goals. Ivancevich *et al.* (2008, p. 273) view a team as “a mature group comprising of people with interdependence, motivation and a shared commitment to accomplish agreed-upon goals”.

While numerous other definitions have been put forward over the decades (Guzzo & Dickson, 1996), a more comprehensive and popular definition that has been used recently is that proposed by Kozlowski and Ilgen (2006). Drawing on the work of Alderfer (1977); Argote and McGrath (1993); Hackman (1992); Hollenbeck *et al.* (1995); Kozlowski and Bell (2003); Kozlowski, Gully, McHugh, Salas, and Cannon-Bowers (1996); and Salas, Dickinson, Converse, and Tannenbaum (1992), Kozlowski and Ilgen (2006, p. 79) define a team “as two or more individuals who socially interact; possess one or more common goals; are brought together to perform organizationally relevant tasks; exhibit interdependencies with respect to workflow, goals, and outcomes; have different roles and responsibilities; and are together embedded in an encompassing organizational system, with boundaries and linkages to the broader system context and task environment”. Although this definition is more encompassing than others, it is worth noting that, in common with its predecessors, it does not shed light on the synergistic nature of teams or the necessity of complementary skills amongst members as can be noted in Robbins’ (2001) and, Katzenbach and Smith’s (2005) definitions, respectively.

2.3.3. COMMON FEATURES IN THE DEFINITIONS OF WORK GROUPS AND TEAMS

An analysis of the definitions of teams and groups reveals that the terms, though different, have a number of features in common (Martin, 2005), including:

- more than one person is involved,
- interaction must take place,
- there is purpose or intention behind the collectivisation,
- individuals are aware of one another.

This substantiates the earlier assertion that the definition of a group embraces the notion of a team, and as such can be generalised to teams within specific contexts (Hackman, 2002; Martin, 2006). The next section examines various types of teams and groups.

2.4. CLASSIFYING WORK GROUPS AND TEAMS

Work groups are broadly classified into two categories, namely, formal and informal groups (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008; Martin, 2005; Mullins, 2007; Robbins *et al.*, 2009). It is also practical to further sub-classify groups into command, task, interest, and friendship groups (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Command and task groups are sub-categories of formal groups since their existence is determined by the formal organisation. In contrast, interest and friendship groups are sub-categories of informal groups given that their occurrence is shaped by informal alliances (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.4.1. FORMAL WORK GROUPS AND TEAMS

Formal groups are consciously planned and fashioned by management to fit in with the official activities of the organisation (Martin, 2005; Mullins, 2007). Every organisation has formal activities that evolve from its affirmed goals. The achievement of these goals necessitates that specific tasks be executed and that employees be allocated to complete these tasks. The majority of employees assigned to execute specific tasks will belong to a group based on their station or position in the organisation (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). “Formal groups are established by the organization to do its work” (Moorhead & Griffin, 2004, p. 286). These groups are instituted by management and operate in agreement with the organisation’s regulations and criteria (Martin, 2005).

Robbins *et al.*, (2009) propose that process teams within the people management structure are comparable to management instituted, and organisationally established groups; and are therefore perceived as formal teams. They are commissioned with specific goals and objectives for their particular function, that is, recruitment, industrial relations, organisational development, and the like. Formal groups and teams are defined by the organisation’s framework and construction, with allocated work assignments determining tasks (Moorhead & Griffin, 2004; Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Accordingly, they are created as a result of the pattern of the organisational structure and configuration for the allocation of work. This is achieved through the grouping together of similar and common activities into sections (Mullins, 2007).

Formal groups are not a spontaneously occurring social structure. They are planned and people are deliberately brought together on the basis of defined roles within the framework of the organisation. Management establishes certain rules, relationships and norms of behaviour for the accomplishment of tasks in specific groups. These are imposed on the workforce as a means of attaining the preferred organisational objectives in a controlled fashion (Martin, 2005; Mullins, 2007). Therefore, the behaviours that individuals exhibit within formal groups are predetermined by and aimed at achieving organisational goals (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). They also embody an effort to impose social authority on the workforce by promoting specific behaviours and opposing others by means of approved or compulsory norms, with no need for considerable numbers of organisational ‘imposers’ (Martin, 2005).

One of the most significant perspectives that emerge is that formal groups are organisationally determined and formally structured to do the organisation’s work (Moorhead & Griffin, 2004; Robbins *et al.*, 2009). The following section offers insights on the two sub-categories of formal groups, namely, command and task groups.

2.4.1.1. COMMAND GROUPS

A command group is a sub-type of the formal group. The organisational hierarchy or the organisational chart establishes this type of group. It is made up of individuals who are directly accountable to a specific manager. A command group is comparatively permanent and is represented by efficient reporting and accountability relationships between a manager and those who report to the manager (Moorhead & Griffin, 2004). A command group can, therefore be typified by a manager and his or her direct subordinates (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.4.1.2. TASK GROUPS

A task group is also a sub-type of the formal group and is, therefore, organisationally determined. Task groups are formed to carry out a precise task, such as resolving a specific quality problem, and are comparatively temporary. This kind of group refers to individuals who work together to conclude a job task (Moorhead & Griffin, 2004). The

borders of a task group are not restricted to its direct hierarchical superior. Its operations can cut across command relationships. It should be pointed out that all command groups are also task groups, but not all command groups can slice across organisational boundaries (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.4.2. INFORMAL WORK GROUPS AND TEAMS

In contrast to formal work groups, an informal group is a naturally arising social formation (Martin, 2005). Informal groups are not intentionally formed and they develop naturally (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). They are spontaneous formations in the scheme of work that materialize in reaction to the call for social contact (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). In addition to satisfying social contact needs, they also satisfy psychological needs, some of which are not essentially connected to the tasks to be carried out. Attachment to an informal group is voluntary and membership often slices across the formal organisational structure and may consist of individuals from separate parts and levels of the organisation (Mullins, 2007). Informal groups occur in all organisations and fulfil several purposes, both negative and positive. The significance and value of their existence is regularly played down. The impact of the informal group can be exemplified by examining Hofstede's (1984) investigation of the concept 'marketplace bureaucracy' in his study of organisational culture and structure. The fundamental tenet of 'marketplace bureaucracy' is that people rely more on informal, personal associations than official, formalised reporting relationships to accomplish work. In this type of bureaucracy, simplicity and ease is attained through the bartering of support for shared benefit. It is established on the presumption of, 'you help me this time and I will help you in future'; hence, the expression "marketplace" (Martin, 2005).

Cooper and Davidson (1982) highlight that informal groups often exclude women from positions in management. In reaction to this kind of discrimination, women-only groups have been formed. The rationale is to develop the ability of women to advance in the male-dominated professions, including management (Martin, 2005). Further negative and positive aspects of the informal group will be addressed when examining their sub-categories, namely, friendship and interest groups, respectively.

Lysons (1997) suggests four main functions of informal groups.

- **The maintenance of the informal group ‘culture’.** Culture in this perspective signifies a collection of values, norms and beliefs, which provide a guideline to group acceptance and group behaviour. Generally, if one does not approximate to the group culture, one will not fit in and one will be an ‘outsider’ or ‘isolate’.
- **The preservation of a communication system.** Groups would like to be aware of all information that influences their wellbeing and interests, negatively or positively. If groups are not made aware of policies and reasons behind actions, they will begin to draw on informal communication channels and distribute information among group members.
- **The imposition of social control.** Conformity to group culture is imposed by such methods as ridicule, ostracism and violence. This is exemplified by the imposition of group norms.
- **Supplying fun and excitement in work life.** Many jobs are repetitive and boring and do not capture workers’ attention. Work may also present few opportunities and hardly any prospects. Workers may try to counterbalance this with the interpersonal relations offered by the group and in such time wasting activities as talking, gambling, practical joking and drinking.

The following section analyses the two sub-categories of informal groups, namely, interest and friendship groups respectively.

2.4.2.1. INTEREST GROUPS

The formation of an interest group occurs when individuals who are not members of a common command or task group join together to attain a particular mutual objective. It is a cohesive body to further common group interests that are not necessarily related to those of the organisation, but are group specific. The objectives of an interest group could include presenting a united front to management, for more benefits, seeking better working conditions, or supporting a colleague who has been dismissed (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008; Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Interest groups could also be created in reaction to a perceived danger. For instance, remarks by senior managers that a reduction of levels is

being considered might prompt junior managers to group together in order to safeguard their jobs by seeking to manipulate or disturb management's objectives (Martin, 2005).

2.4.2.2. FRIENDSHIP GROUPS

When groups arise as a result of individuals having one or more common characteristics such as age, political beliefs, or ethnic background they are called "friendship groups" (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008; Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Friendship groups come into existence on the foundation of relationships within an organisation. They are not limited to level or functional area within the organisation and frequently act as information conduits. If friendship groups become too robust, they may endeavour to intentionally influence events in their favour, perhaps through clandestine methods. In this instance, there is a threat of friendship groups working in opposition to the objectives of management. It is also likely that friendship groups will form the basis of resistance to change. The existence of friendship groups is of concern to managers. Some researchers refer to them as 'shadow organisations' (Stacey, 2000), the obvious insinuation being that they are sinister and potentially harmful to the broader organisation. However, as already implied they can be of value to management. To illustrate, the grapevine *via* friendship groups can be a functional channel to communicate with individuals in the organisation (Dalton, 1959).

Having provided an understanding of the classification of work groups, it is also useful to generate an understanding of the categorization of teams.

2.4.3. TYPES OF TEAMS

There is no typical categorisation technique to describe the distinctive types of teams. Differences amongst teams, however, can be perceived on the basis of size, composition, organisational level, length of existence, objectives, and probable contribution to organisational performance, to cite but a few.

The five major types of teams in an organisation are problem-solving teams, self-managed teams, cross-functional teams, research and development teams, and virtual teams (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008; Robbins *et al.*, 2009):

2.4.3.1. PROBLEM-SOLVING TEAMS

Problem-solving teams are made up of 5 to 12 employees from the same unit or division who convene for a few hours a week to talk about ways of boosting quality, enhancing efficiency, and improving the work system (Shonk, 1992). These are temporary teams established to help combat explicit problems in the workplace. Team members impart ideas or tender proposals on how work procedures and practices can be improved. These teams are seldom given the power to unilaterally put into practice any of their recommended actions. Rather, they formulate suggestions and recommendations for others to decide upon and execute (Moorhead & Griffin, 2004). Problem-solving teams can best be typified by the use of quality circles of the 1980s which were composed of 8 to 10 employees and supervisors who had joint sections of accountability. They met frequently, conversed about quality problems, scrutinized the reasons for the problems, suggested solutions, and sometimes took counteractive measures (Adams, 1991; Miller, 1989; Moorhead & Griffin, 2004; Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.4.3.2. SELF-MANAGED TEAMS

Self-managed work teams are autonomous teams that solve problems, execute corrective actions and take total responsibility for outcomes (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). They are sanctioned to carry out specific activities established by procedures and decisions made within the team, with minimum or no external guidance or control (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). Rather than merely act as an auxiliary committee that investigates a specific problem, evaluates alternatives, and recommends a solution or change, a self-managed work team actually does the daily work of the unit and has the authority to decide how the work is done (Moorhead and Griffin, 2004). Classically, this incorporates forecasting and scheduling of work, assigning tasks to individuals, joint control over the speed of work, taking operating decisions, and adopting actions on problems. Effective and totally complete self-managed work teams also select their own members and have the members appraise one another's performance. As a result, supervisory ranks diminish in significance and may be abolished altogether (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). In response to global competition, multinational companies like AT&T, Coca-Cola, Federal Express, General Electric, Procter & Gamble, Motorola, and Xerox

are increasingly utilising self-managed teams in both their domestic and foreign offices (Randolf & Sashkin, 2002).

2.4.3.3. CROSS-FUNCTIONAL TEAMS

Cross-functional teams are composed of individuals from approximately similar hierarchical levels, but from dissimilar work areas or functional specialities, who collectively complete a task (Luthans, 2005; Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Team members come from different departments and different but roughly similar levels within the organisation. These groups are comparable to horizontal, boundary-spanning groups (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). A task force is nothing more than a short-term, cross-functional team. Committees made up of individuals from across departmental lines are an example of cross-functional teams. Cross-functional teams are an efficient way of letting individuals from various areas within the organisation trade information, cultivate novel ideas, resolve problems, and coordinate multifaceted projects (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Utilising the expertise, proficiency, and competence of members from various areas within the organisation can enhance comradeship, trust and performance (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). However, building trust and teamwork, particularly amongst people from diverse backgrounds, with distinctive experiences and outlooks can sometimes be protracted and drawn-out. The initial phases of cross-functional team development are frequently time consuming as individuals work out how to cope with diversity and complexity (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.4.3.4. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT TEAMS

Research and development teams are utilised to conceptualise and build innovative products. These teams are generally made up of members from the spectrum of the different but relevant departments or functions in the organisation, and are therefore, cross-functional in nature. When an organisation wants to develop an innovative product it can use a cross-functional research and development team composed of representatives from marketing, sales, engineering, purchasing, and finance to develop ideas and strategies for the new product (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). A team that draws on expertise from all the pertinent sections of the organisation can drastically reduce the

amount of time needed to bring a novel product to the marketplace. The fundamental objective of a research and development team is to be swift, and efficient in innovation and original new product design. Lockheed, Hewlett-Packard and 3M are examples of high-tech companies with finely-established and deep-rooted research and development teams (Carvell, 2000; Karp, 2006; Kirkman & Shapiro, 1997).

2.4.3.5. VIRTUAL TEAMS

In the past decade the introduction of virtual teams has become increasingly prevalent in reaction to escalating competition, the call for speedier decisions, and hi-tech expansion. These teams are characterised by several individuals physically separated, whether they only a room away or continents apart, that are brought together by means of communication links such as wide area networks, videoconferencing, teleconferencing, real-time desktop conferencing, and email to accomplish specific goals (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). Virtual teams permit individuals who may never meet face-to-face, to collaborate on all the things that other teams do, such as sharing information, making decisions, and completing tasks on-line (Moorhead & Griffin, 2004; Robbins *et al.*, 2009). They can comprise of individuals from one organisation or connect an organisation's members with individuals from another organisation such as partners, contractors and suppliers (Kiser, 1999).

In addition to classifying and sub-classifying groups and teams it is essential to also understand their maturation and development.

2.5. GROUP AND TEAM FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Much of the organisational literature on teams begins with discussions focusing on the differences and similarities between teams and groups and then simply gravitates to types of teams without offering any explanation on team formation and development (Fincham & Rhodes, 2005; Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008; Luthans, 2005; Martin, 2005; Moorhead & Griffin, 2004; Mullins, 2007; Robbins *et al.*, 2009). A possible reason is the earlier assertion, which suggests that groups serve as the background and foundation for teams and that an understanding of teams is founded on group literature and theories

(Luthans, 2005). This means that it would be superfluous for organisational literature to deal separately with team formation and development. It is therefore, both comprehensible and acceptable that an understanding of team formation and development is founded on group formation and development theories, research findings, and applications (Mullins, 2007). Against this background, reference will be made to group formation and development theory and applied to teams since all teams are, by definition, groups. However, it should be pointed out again that although teams are mature groups, it does not automatically follow that all groups are teams (Luthans, 2005).

2.5.1. GROUP AND TEAM FORMATION

Groups do not simply come into existence automatically but are formed for various reasons (Martin, 2005; Nash, 2000). These include the satisfaction of needs, proximity, attraction, goals, and economics (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008):

2.5.1.1. NEED SATISFACTION AND GROUP AND TEAM FORMATION

Individuals believe that membership of a specific group will assist in satisfying one or more significant needs.

- Consequently, groups serve as a medium for members to interact with one another, thereby, providing a platform upon which *social needs* can be satisfied (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). Individuals take pleasure in the recurrent interactions that arise from group membership. For most individuals, these interactions are their principal resource for satisfying their need for affiliation (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).
- *Security needs* may also to some extent be satisfied by membership of a group that operates as a cushion between individuals and the organisational system. In the absence of attachment to such a group, an employee may feel that he or she is isolated in confronting the demands of the organisation. This insecurity can be counterbalanced by prudent group membership. Moreover, by joining a group, employees can lessen the insecurity of aloneness. When individuals are part of a

group they feel stronger, have less self-doubt, and are more resilient to pressures and threats (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008).

- Being part of an esteemed or high-status group in which membership is not easily obtained, may to a degree fulfil *esteem needs*. Belonging to a group that is considered impressive by others affords respect and status to members (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008; Robbins *et al.*, 2009).
- Membership of a group can also give an improved sense of self-worth to group members themselves. Accordingly, groups can satisfy *self-esteem* needs by providing individuals with feelings of self-worth.
- Furthermore, individuals may at some point have a need for the *collective power* found in numbers. People are quick to acknowledge that what cannot be achieved individually often becomes possible through the power of group action.
- Finally, management's need for *goal achievement* may be satisfied by means of the formal group which makes available several individuals with the talents, knowledge, and power to accomplish a specific task in order to complete a job (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.5.1.2. PROPINQUITY AND GROUP AND TEAM FORMATION

In addition to need satisfaction, propinquity also explains group formation. This expression denotes that individuals with similar characteristics are attracted to one another and, consequently, form a group due to spatial or geographic proximity (Luthans, 2005). Proximity and attraction are two interconnected grounds for group formation. *Proximity* is the material space between employees working on a job and is a forecaster of the total interaction that will transpire. *Attraction* specifies the level of attraction amongst individuals based on perceptual, attitudinal, performance, or motivational likeness. Proximity makes it easier to ascertain areas of mutual attraction. Hence, proximity and attraction function together to promote group formation (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). In an organisation, individuals who function in the same physical area and have comparable working characteristics would be more likely to

create a group than persons who are not located together with vastly dissimilar working characteristics (Luthans, 2005).

2.5.1.3. GOAL SIGNIFICANCE AND GROUP AND TEAM FORMATION

People are also moved to join a group when they fully appreciate the significance and importance of one or more specific group goals. For instance, an employee will possibly become a member of a group that convenes after work to become conversant with a new technology that will be utilised in the workplace in the forthcoming year. The individual who willingly joins the after-hours group accepts that gaining knowledge of the new technology is an essential and crucial goal for workers (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008).

Besides these explanations for group formation, there are also commonly recognisable distinct and identifiable stages of group development that add to the body of understanding on team and group maturation.

2.5.2. GROUP AND TEAM DEVELOPMENT

When groups form they do not necessarily become effective in meeting their objectives. Just as individuals develop and mature, groups also go through phases of development and maturing. The performance of a group depends both on individual development and on how members mature towards working with one another. Consequently, groups evolve through a sequential development process. There are two main approaches that offer insight into the manner in which groups progress through the various stages of development and maturity (Luthans, 2005; Martin, 2005; Mullins, 2007).

2.5.2.1. BASS AND RYTERBAND'S FOUR-STAGE MODEL OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Bass and Ryterband (1979) set out a four-stage model of group development (Martin, 2005; Moorhead & Griffin, 2004):

- *Mutual acceptance, trust-development, and membership.* The initial coming together of individuals is characterised as a period of learning to trust one another and feeling confident enough to contribute to the activities within the group.
- *Initiation of communication and decision-making.* As soon as trust starts to develop and the individuals are able to communicate without difficulty, mutual dependence materializes. This facilitates decision-making and problem-solving.
- *Motivation, productivity, and performance improvement.* Conflicts that may have arisen between individuals in the previous stage when group norms were being agreed upon and developed are now largely overcome and the effectiveness of the group improves. Individuals concentrate on the work of the group and become collectively motivated to achieve the objectives.
- *Maintenance, control, and organisation.* At this stage individuals have become familiar with working collectively on regular group activities. Accordingly, there is a level of independence between members and plasticity in adjusting to different situations.

This model has a number of similarities to the better-known work of Tuckman and Jensen (1977).

2.5.2.2. TUCKMAN AND JENSEN'S FIVE-STAGE MODEL OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Tuckman and Jensen (1977) describe a five-stage model of group development. The five stages are as follows:

- *Forming:* This stage is typified by uncertainty and ambiguity about the objectives, configuration, and leadership of the group (Luthans, 2005). Actions and behaviours have a tendency to centre on group members' efforts to comprehend and define their purpose, roles, and obligations within the group (Mullins, 2007). Patterns of interaction amongst members are tested and either abandoned or accepted, at least provisionally. The more varied the group, the more time-consuming and complicated it is to navigate through this stage. This is an exceptionally sensitive stage in the formation of multicultural groups (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). This stage

is complete when individuals begin to regard themselves as part of a group (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

- *Storming*: This emotionally powerful stage is predisposed to intragroup conflict and altercations relating to disputes among members for preferred assignments. It is also characterised by differences of opinion over suitable task-related behaviours and responsibilities (Fincham & Rhodes, 2005). An especially significant element of storming can include the redefinition of the group's precise tasks and complete goals. Group members are likely to independently make up their minds as to the degree to which they like the group tasks and their level of dedication to them. Although members may accept the group at one level, at an additional level there may be opposition to the power the group enforces on them (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). Moreover, there is disagreement and controversy over who should be in command of the group. When this phase is complete, there will be a reasonably obvious chain of command within the group. Finally, it should be noted that some group members may begin to withdraw from the group during the intense storming period, making this stage an exceptionally crucial one for group survival and effectiveness (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).
- *Norming*: Conflicts and disputes start to subside during this stage as collaboration, mutual support, and group cohesion advance and expand appreciably. There is an inclination toward the amicable exchange of information, tolerance of divergent opinions, and vigorous endeavours to attain mutually accepted goals and objectives. There is an intense level of mutual magnetism and dedication and a heightened sense of group identity and solidarity. Behavioural norms are determined and agreed upon by the end of this stage, as are leadership and other roles in the group (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). The stage is complete when the group's operating framework coagulates and the group has incorporated a mutual collection of expectations of what delineates appropriate member behaviour (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).
- *Performing*: Only after successfully completing the previous three stages is the group is now ready to make significant progress in its work (Martin, 2005). During this stage the operating framework of the group is both accepted and entirely functional (Luthans, 2005). Consequently, the roles, and behaviour standards of

each member as well as the procedural rules that provide the group with its structure are recognised and accepted. Energy, effort, and commitment are directed towards the achievement of group-accepted tasks. The degree of effectiveness reached at this point remains relatively stable for some groups. For others, the continuance of group effectiveness and efficiency may entail constant development and learning (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). Performing marks the final stage in the development of permanent work groups. However, for short-term teams, committees, project groups, task forces, and comparable groups that have a narrow and limited task to perform, there is one more stage (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

- *Adjourning*: This involves the termination of group activities and disbandment of temporary groups. Traditional high task activities are concluded and the group concentrates on attaining finality on any remaining lower order tasks. The reaction of members may differ at this point. Adjourning may be characterised by extremely encouraging sentiments centring on triumphant task accomplishment and achievement, or emotions of loss, disappointment, or even resentment over the demise of friendships acquired during the group's existence (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008; Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

It should be noted that although teams may go through the first three stages successfully, it is not until they proceed beyond these stages and reach full effectiveness in the performing stage that they truly become a team. Furthermore, not all groups that reach the performing stage actually become teams, unless of course they satisfy performing criteria specific to teams (Mullins, 2007). Accordingly, it is in the performing stage and specifically in performance outcomes that teams are clearly differentiated from groups. Although, the content for performing discussed in the stages of group development above is applicable to both groups and teams, effectiveness in the performing stage for teams is characterised by certain additional specifics that differentiate them from groups (Yukl, Gordon & Taber, 2002). A team's performance consists of both individual outcomes and what two or more members must accomplish collaboratively, demonstrating individual and shared contributions by team members (Luthans, 2005; Yukl *et al.*, 2002). Moreover, team performance must be indicative of collaborative work that necessitates joint endeavour and must generate a total level of performance that is larger than the aggregate of the individual contributions (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993; Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Teams go further than

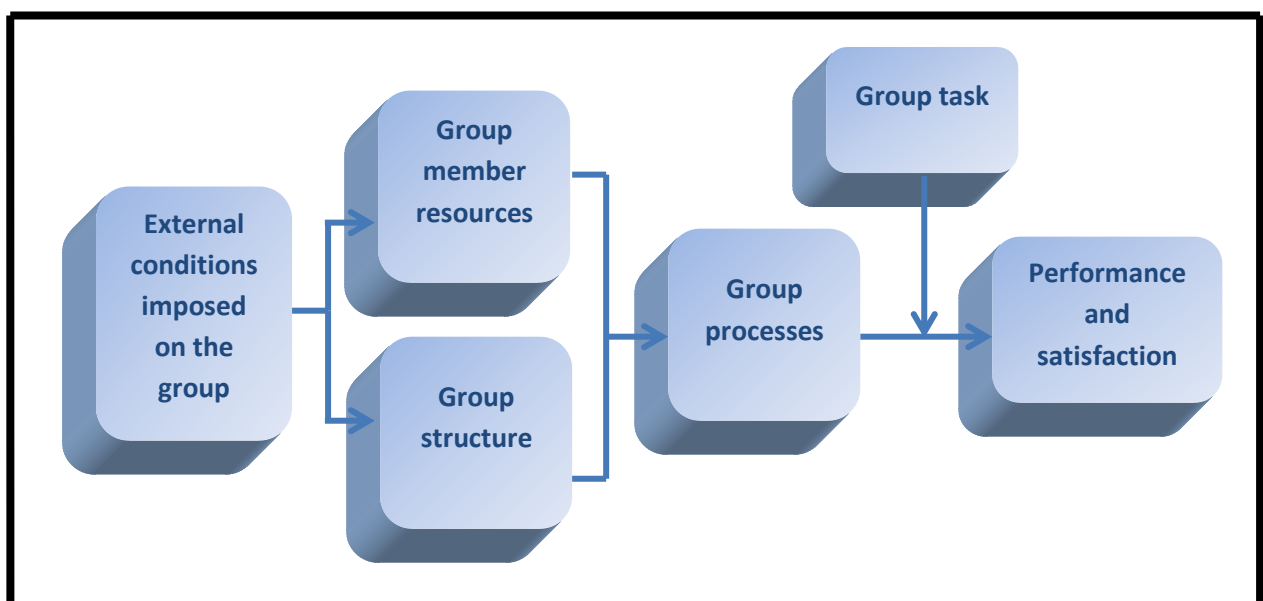
groups by having a collaborative, synergistic performance outcome. Synergy in teams refers to the whole being greater than the sum of its parts. It is the result of merging the efforts and behaviours of team members. Synergistic team performance is superior to the coordinated performance of individuals working alone in groups and is clearly one of the most crucial differences between groups and teams (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008; Luthans, 2005).

Not all groups develop easily and progress as expected through these five stages. Various factors can either deter or assist group development and behaviour.

2.6. GROUP AND TEAM BEHAVIOUR

Supplementary dynamics that may influence work group and team development and behaviour include the external conditions imposed on them, the resources of the members, team and group structure, work group and team processes, tasks, decision making, and performance and satisfaction. The discussion that follows is based on the Group Behaviour Model (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1
Group Behaviour Model



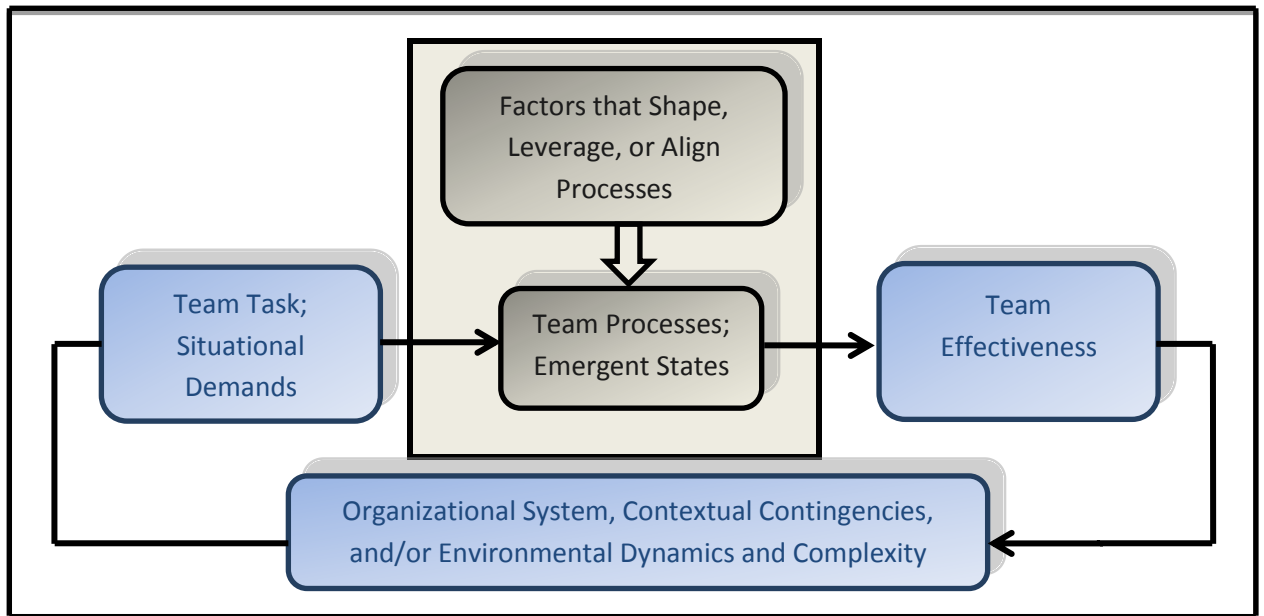
Robbins, S.P. (2001). *Organizational Behavior*. (9th Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, p. 224.

The Group Behaviour Model shows the major components that determine group performance, satisfaction, and overall group behaviour. Each of these major components is discussed hereunder.

2.6.1. EXTERNAL CONDITIONS IMPOSED ON THE TEAM OR WORK GROUP

An appreciation of work group and team behaviour requires that they be viewed as a subsystem rooted within a larger system (Sundstrom & Altman, 1989). Teams and groups are entrenched in a multilevel system that consists of the individual, team or group, and organisational-level facets (Ilgen, Hollenbeck, Johnson & Jundt, 2005). Teams and groups and their members are embedded in an expansive organisational system and task environment that drives the complexity, intricacy, and cadence of the team or group task (Figure 2.2). The exchanges between the organisational system or task environment and teams or groups are reciprocal in that performance output resolves task demands emanating from the broader system or environment and alters the condition of the system or environment in some manner. These changes can occur suddenly and the team must acclimatise to the changing demands. Thus, it is essential to view and comprehend the system context and connections across multiple levels as major sources of contingencies or demands on teams or groups that require aligned processes. This is illustrated by Kozlowski and Ilgens' (2006) Organisational System and Task Environment Model.

Figure 2.2
Organisational System and Task Environment Model



Kozlowski, S.W.J. & Ilgens, D.R. (2006). Enhancing the effectiveness of work groups and teams. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 7(3), 79.

Figure 2.2. illustrates that environmental complexities direct team task demands; team processes and emergent states coordinate team-member resources in response to task demands and generate team effectiveness; and team outputs, which are the outcome of team effectiveness, reciprocally influence the environment, in an on-going cycle (Kozlowski & Ilgens, 2006).

It should be noted that some teams or groups are more tightly connected to the dynamic task environment, which becomes their overriding rooted environment for task activities, while others are more tightly linked to the broader organisational system as their principal embedding environment. This is dependent on the nature of the team or group. For instance, for a surgical team, the operating room defines the dynamic task environment, which drives task demands and member activity. Hence, for a surgical team the dynamic task environment is the dominant embedding context for task activity. However, in the case of a cross-functional project team making recommendations to management on product development the organisational system is the primary embedding environment for task activities (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006).

Conditions in the broader organisational system that influence work group and team behaviour include overall organisational strategy, authority structures, formal regulations, resources, employee selection process, performance evaluation and reward systems, culture, and physical work setting (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.6.1.1. ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY

Organisational strategy is determined by top management and delineates the organisation's goals and methods for accomplishing them. The corporate strategy expresses an organisation's purpose, plans, and actions it intends to implement. The objective of corporate strategy may be viewed as a management control system, with the potential to guide human behaviour and actions throughout the organisation (Mullins, 2007). The strategy that an organisation is following, at any point in time, will affect the strength, and performance of its work groups or teams, which in turn, will decide the resources top management is willing to allocate to them in order to perform their tasks. This can be exemplified by an organisation with an aggressive retrenchment strategy. Such an organisational strategy will potentially result in work groups with a dwindling resource base, leading to increased member anxiety, and high intra-group conflict (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.6.1.2. AUTHORITY STRUCTURES

Authority structures demarcate who reports to whom, who takes decisions, and what decisions individuals, groups or teams are authorised to take. It decides where a particular work group is positioned within the organisation, the official leader of the group, and prescribed and recognised relationships between groups (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). In addition, when organisations utilise teams to coordinate their activities, a structural option called team structure operates. The key characteristics of the team structure are that it collapses departmental barriers and decentralizes decision-making to the level of the work team (Mohrman, Cohen & Mohrman Jr., 1995).

2.6.1.3. FORMAL REGULATIONS

Formal regulations are policies, rules, procedures, job descriptions, and other regulations that are fashioned by organisations to regiment the behaviour of employees. These have the propensity to strictly reduce the discretion of group and team members in adopting independent standards. Compulsory regulations enforced by an organisation on its employees make the behaviour of group and team members consistent and predictable (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.6.1.4. RESOURCES

What a group or team actually accomplishes is largely dependent on what it is capable of accomplishing. The capability of a team or group is dependent on the presence of resources. Some organisations have a wealth of resources while others are not so privileged. The existence or deficiency of resources such as raw materials, equipment, time, and money will consequently have a significant influence on group or team behaviour (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.6.1.5. EMPLOYEE SELECTION PROCESS

Members of any group are, initially, members of the larger organisation. The selection standards that an organisation utilises will determine the type of individuals that will be in its work groups. Groups are often randomly formed from amongst already employed individuals within the organisation, resulting in a varied mix of individuals with uncomplimentary and sometimes inessential skills that severely impact on group behaviour. Teams, however, are intentionally –formed, resulting in the selection of members whose skills complement one another (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). The rationale is that teams ought to be more effective when selection rules are utilised in their construction (Martin, 2005).

2.6.1.6. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND REWARD SYSTEM

The behaviour of individuals in groups or teams will be influenced by the manner in which the organisation evaluates and rewards performance and behaviours. The behaviour of members will be influenced by the use of challenging and specific performance objectives. Organisations need to be clear in their approach to rewarding members. They should specify whether this will take the form of rewarding the accomplishment of individual objectives and/or team or group objectives (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.6.1.7. ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Organisational culture is the accepted dominant culture that establishes the criteria for appropriate and inappropriate behaviour on the part of all the employees in the organisation. In relation to groups or teams, most organisations also have subcultures, which operate alongside the dominant organisational culture. Subcultures in teams or groups have supplementary or adapted standards often related to, amongst other things, task activity. However, members have to accept the wider organisational culture that encapsulates those values the organisation embraces the most, often giving precedence to it over some of the elements of their own unique subculture. Conflict between organisational culture and team or group subculture may have implications for team or group behaviour (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.6.1.8. PHYSICAL WORK SETTING

The physical work setting is imposed on groups and teams by outsiders such as architects, engineers, designers and the like. The size and layout of an employee's work-space, the arrangement of equipment, illumination levels, and acoustics may have a significant impact on group or team behaviour. These create both opportunities and obstacles for group and team interaction (Baron, 1994 cited in Straw & Cummings, 1994; Oldman & Fried, 1987; Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

In addition to the influence of external conditions on team and group behaviour another area that is worthy of consideration relates to the abilities and personal characteristics of members, referred to as member resources.

2.6.2. GROUP AND TEAM MEMBERS' RESOURCES

A team or group's level of performance hinges on two general resources: knowledge, skills, and abilities, and personality characteristics that its members bring into the team or group (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.6.2.1. KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

Team and group performance may be explained by evaluating the knowledge, skills, and abilities of each specific member. However, a group's performance is not simply the sum total of the abilities of each particular member. These abilities convey what members can actually do and how efficiently they can function in a group or team (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Evidence suggests that interpersonal skills such as conflict management and resolution, collaborative problem solving, and communication are crucial for maximum team and group performance (Stevens & Campion, 1994).

2.6.2.2. PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS

Sociability, initiative, openness, and flexibility are positively related with group or team productivity, morale, and cohesiveness. In stark comparison, personality characteristics such as unconventionality, dominance, and authoritarianism tend to be negatively related to the dependent variables (Kinlaw, 1991). Personality traits strongly influence how a member will interact with other members, thereby affecting group performance (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

It is also beneficial to consider the influence of the group and team structure on behaviour.

2.6.3. GROUP AND TEAM STRUCTURE

Work groups and teams are organised and have a construction that influences the behaviour of their members. The organised structure of work groups and teams makes it possible to predict individual behaviour within them as well as their overall performance (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). The structure of a formal group or team is often dictated by the organisation (Martin, 2005).

There are several ways of examining group structure. Huczynski and Buchanan (2001) have identified five dimensions on which the structure of a group or team is dependent:

- *Status*: This reflects the value placed upon particular positions within the group or team. A specific role may also reflect the worth and importance of a particular person to others.
- *Power*: Power is the ability to influence others. It can either arise from the position of a person or be a manifestation of personal influence.
- *Liking*: This is the personal affiliation among members of a group. It is expected that members will favour association with people they like at an individual level and dissociate themselves from people that they do not like. This influences communication configurations and arrangements within the group.
- *Role*: This indicates the behaviours that go hand-in-hand with a specific function or position in a group. Existent roles, or those that members identify for themselves, influence the behaviour patterns that they hold to a major degree.
- *Leadership*: The style assumed by the leader of a group or team can also have a definite impact on proceedings within the group.

Robbins *et al.*, (2009) also acknowledge that specific structural variables fashion and influence the behaviour of members. The authors identify formal leadership, roles, norms, group status, group size, composition of the group, and degree of group cohesiveness as significant structural variables that shape the behaviour of members.

2.6.3.1. FORMAL LEADERSHIP

Organisations need strong leadership for optimum group effectiveness. Virtually all groups or teams have an official leader. The leader plays a vital role in group success and team effectiveness since he/she influences individual and overall group or team performance variables.

Leadership is the capacity to influence a group with respect to the accomplishment of goals. The foundation of this influence may be formal, arising from the designated authority vested in a person of managerial rank. However, the fact that an organisation endows its managers with specific formal rights is no guarantee that they will be able to lead successfully. The ability to influence a group that evolves outside the formal structures is called “non-sanctioned leadership”. Leaders can appear from within a group as well as by formal appointment. There is a plethora of theories about the specific leadership behaviour and style that has the propensity to strongly influence group or team behaviour. These include:

- *Trait theories of leadership:* These theories postulate that specific personality, social, physical or intellectual traits of the leader influence member behaviour.
- *Behavioural theories of leadership:* These theories propose that specific behaviours differentiate leaders from non-leaders and, consequently, have a bearing on member behaviour. Important leadership behaviour noted in these theories includes the extent to which a leader is likely to define and structure his or her role and the role of subordinates in the search for goal attainment. This refers to the extent that a leader is able to initiate structure. In addition, the extent to which a leader has work relationships characterised by mutual trust, respect for subordinates and regard for their feelings is cited as another significant leadership behaviour trait that influences group and team outcomes. This refers to the extent to which the leader is able to show consideration to members. Finally, some behavioural theories of leadership have singled out employee oriented, production-oriented, and development-oriented leadership behaviours as influencing member behaviour and overall group or team performance. Behavioural theories have been extremely successful in isolating dependable relationships between leadership behaviour and group performance; however, this does not take into account situational factors that influence the success or failure of group and team performance.

- *Contingency theories of leadership:* One of the foremost contingency theories of leadership is the Fiedler Contingency Theory (1967). Fiedler's theory is based on the proposition that effective groups are dependent on a suitable fit between a leader's style of interrelating with members and the extent to which that situation gives control and influence to the leader. The Fiedler Contingency Theory (1967) has since been modified by Fiedler and Garcia (1987) and renamed the Cognitive Resource Theory. This theory focuses on the effect of stress on the leader as a form of situational unfavourableness. The leader's experience and intelligence influence his or her reaction to stress, thereby influencing resultant group and team behaviour. The Leader-Member Exchange Theory also assists in explaining the behaviour of members in groups and teams (Liden, Sparrowe & Wayne, 1997). This theory proposes that leaders may act in a different way toward different members in the same group or team by allocating a disproportionate amount of trust, attention and time, rewards, and privileges amongst members. This behaviour is responsible for creating in-groups and out-groups within teams or groups that will ultimately influence member behaviour. The evidence suggests that members in the in-groups will have elevated performance ratings, decreased turnover intentions, enhanced satisfaction with their superiors, and higher overall satisfaction when compared to those in the out-group (Gerstner & Day, 1997).
- *Neo-charismatic theories of leadership:* These are a set of leadership theories that emphasize the symbolic and emotional appeal of the leader's behaviour in influencing extraordinary member commitment. Typically, there are three main types of Neo-charismatic theories, namely: Charismatic Leadership, Transformational Leadership, and Visionary Leadership (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Charismatic Leadership Theory recognises five personal characteristics of the charismatic leader, namely: charismatic leaders have a vision, are prepared to take risks to realise that vision, are perceptive to both environmental limitations and member needs, and exhibit behaviours that are extraordinary (Conger & Kanungo, 1998). The theory states that members attribute heroic abilities or extraordinary leadership aptitude to their leaders when they detect these characteristics in them (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Studies indicate that charismatic leadership has a significant impact on member behaviour, with noteworthy correlations between charismatic leadership and high performance and satisfaction among members

(Conger, Kanungo & Menon, 1998; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996; Waldman, Bass & Yammarino, 1990). It has been postulated that members under the leadership of charismatic leaders are motivated to exert extra work effort because they respect and like their leader; hence, they experience greater satisfaction (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

Another type of Neo-charismatic leadership is found in Transformational Leadership Theory. This theory contends that in addition to possessing charisma, transformational leaders provide individualised consideration and intellectual stimulation to their team or group members (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Studies by Bass and Avolio (1990) and Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramaniam (1996) indicate that members under the leadership of a transformational leader experienced lower turnover rates, higher employee satisfaction, and higher productivity than those under the leadership of a transactional leader. Transactional leaders direct or prompt their members along the path of established goals by making role and task requirements comprehensible (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

- *Visionary Leadership Theories:* Visionary leadership goes beyond mere charisma; it is the capacity to build and express a pragmatic, conceivable, appealing vision of the future for an organisation or organisational unit, which develops out of and makes advances on the present (Snyder and Graves, 1994). The main features of a vision include stimulating and inspiring possibilities that are value focused, and reachable, with brilliant imagery and articulation. Visionary leaders who properly select, articulate, and implement their vision can energise organisational unit members to move into the future while still in the present by calling forth talent, skills, and individual resources to realize the vision (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). A properly formulated vision brings enthusiasm, energy, and commitment to the organisational unit and the workplace in general (Nutt & Backoff, 1997).

2.6.3.2. ROLES

Members of organisational units, whether in a team or a group, each have a role to play. By definition, a role is a collection of anticipated behaviour outlines or patterns ascribed to someone occupying a specified position within a social unit. The complexity of

understanding role behaviour is compounded by the fact that individuals are obligated to perform several separate roles, both on- and- off the job. On-the-job roles may include amongst other things, being an employee of the wider organisation, being a member of a particular department, being a member of a specific team or group within that department, and perhaps being the company spokesperson in the community. Off-the-job roles may include being a father/mother, husband/wife, member of a sporting club, and president of the parent-teacher association. Some of these roles may be compatible while others may create conflict. Role demands on the job may sometimes not reconcile with role demands off the job. The behaviour of individuals will vary according to the roles they have to play. All of these have implications for the behaviour of people in teams or groups and can be explained by considering specific role concepts:

- *Role identity* refers to specific attitudes and definite behaviours consistent with a particular role. When a circumstance and its demands require major changes, individuals have the propensity to swiftly shift roles.
- *Role perception* is the outlook one holds of how one is expected to behave in a known situation. Accordingly, role perception is an individual's interpretation or belief of how he or she is meant to behave and consequently leads to particular forms of behaviour. These perceptions of how to behave in a given role come from stimuli all around the individual. These include television, movies, books, friends, influential others, and the like. The principle reason that apprenticeship programmes exist in many professions is to allow newcomers the opportunity to watch an experienced and learned member of staff, so that they can learn to act as they are expected to.
- *Role expectations* are defined as how others believe one should behave in a particular situation. How one behaves is established to a great degree by the way in which the role is defined in the situation or framework in which one is acting. The role of a Supreme Court judge may be regarded as encompassing stateliness and respectability, whereas a rugby coach is perceived as forceful, uncompromising, and motivating to his players. When role expectations are condensed into oversimplified categories, role stereotypes start to emerge.

- *Role conflict* is the end result when an individual is challenged by divergent role expectations. This occurs when an individual discovers that compliance in one role requirement may make compliance in another more complicated (Peterson, 1995). Circumstances in which two or more role expectations are reciprocally opposing are an extreme exemplification of role conflict. Role conflict imposed by differing expectations within a group or team can adversely impact on member behaviour by raising internal frustration and anxiety.

2.6.3.3. NORMS

Every organisational unit has established norms. These are agreed benchmarks for behaviour within groups that are shared by its members. Norms convey to a member what should and should not be done in specific situations and conditions. They act as a means of controlling the behaviour of members with the least amount of external influence (Hackman, 1992). There are both common norms and norms that are considered to be more significant than others in controlling member behaviour in groups and teams.

- *Common Norms:* Although every group or team has its own set of distinct norms, there are some general classes of norms that occur in most organisational units that influence member behaviour. These include appearance norms, performance norms, social arrangement norms, and allocation of resources norms (Blau, 1995; Robbins *et al.*, 2009).
- *Significant Norms:* Groups do not create or impose norms for every particular circumstance faced by their members. However, they do establish and impose norms that they consider to be important (Bettenhausen & Murnighan, 1991). Groups will enforce norms to facilitate the group's survival. This means enforcing norms that will increase their chances for success and that help prevent failure. This is done in order to safeguard the group from individuals or other groups who may be inclined to interfere. Secondly, groups enforce norms that raise the predictability of group members' behaviours. This permits group members to successfully anticipate one another's actions and to prepare suitable actions. Thirdly, groups impose norms in order to address embarrassing problems for members. Norms that

prevent interpersonal member discomfort and that ensure member satisfaction are considered important enough to be imposed on the group. Finally, groups insist on norms that permit members to convey the core values of the group and elucidate what is unique about the group's identity. This helps to solidify and preserve the group (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

It is essential to understand how norms actually influence the behaviour of members. This is facilitated through the process of conformity:

- *Conformity* occurs when an individual adjusts his or her behaviour to align with the norms of the group. The desire for approval by a member of a group or team makes one conform to established norms. Groups exert concentrated pressure on individual members to forego their personal attitudes and behaviours in order to conform to group standards (Kiesler & Kiesler, 1969). It should be noted, however, that individuals do not conform to the pressures of each of the groups to which they belong. Individuals may belong to several groups whose norms differ and in some instances these groups may even have opposing norms. Thus, individuals will only conform to those groups they consider to be significant. The literature refers to these important groups as 'reference groups'. Reference groups are typified as groups in which the individual is conscious of other group members; classifies himself or herself as a member, or wants to be a member; and feels that the group members are important to him or her. All groups do not enforce equal conformity pressures on their members. Notwithstanding the foregoing, conformity to norms remains an influential force in groups (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.6.3.4. STATUS

Status is a socially defined position, class, or rank given to groups or group members by others. It is a significant issue in comprehending human behaviour because it is a crucial motivator and has key behavioural outcomes when individuals recognise a discrepancy between what they believe their status to be and what others perceive it to be (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

- *Status and Norms*: Status has been shown to have notable effects on the strength of norms and pressures to conform. High-status members, for instance, are often given

more liberty and discretion to diverge from norms than other group members (Hackman, 1992). This is the case only where the high-status individual's activities are not obviously harmful to the group's goal attainment. These individuals do not care much about the social rewards the group provides and give little consideration to conformity norms. Evidence suggests that they are also better equipped to defy conformity pressures than their lower-status colleagues (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

- *Status Equity*: It is critical for members to perceive that the status hierarchy is equitable. If inequity is apparent, it produces an imbalance that results in a variety of corrective behaviours (Greenberg, 1988). When a member believes that there is an imbalance between his or her perceived ranking of an individual and the status given to that individual by the organisation then the member experiences status incongruence. This could take the form, for example, of more desirable office furniture being allocated to a lower-ranked individual. Employees expect that the resources that an individual is allocated are congruent with his or her status. An inequitable status hierarchy and the resultant status incongruence may initiate conflict as members engage in corrective behaviours in an attempt to remedy the situation.

2.6.3.5. SIZE

Size affects the group or teams' overall behaviour but this is dependent on the variables under consideration (Shaw, 1981; Thomas & Fink, 1963).

Evidence suggests that smaller groups are quicker at concluding tasks than larger ones. However, larger groups constantly perform better than smaller ones on problem solving tasks. In addition, when diverse input is a group priority, larger groups of 12 or more members will fare extremely well. If the goal of the group or team involves fact-finding, larger groups should be more successful. Conversely, smaller groups will be better at doing something constructive with diverse input. The evidence shows that groups of approximately seven members tend to be more effective in taking action (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

Research on social loafing indicates that an increase in group size is inversely related to individual performance. The total productivity of a group of seven will be greater than

that of one or two people, but the individual productivity of each group member will decline. This may be due to perceptions that others in the group are not carrying their fair share and individuals begin to engage in the corrective behaviour of re-establishing equity by reducing their personal effort in the group (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Dispersion of responsibility has also been cited as another explanation for social loafing (Karau & Williams, 1993). This implies that since the results of the group cannot be attributed to any single person and the relationship between an individual's input and the group's output is not clear, individuals may be tempted to exert less effort in the group. The implications of this effect on group and team behaviour are significant and go against the logic that the total effort exerted in the group as a whole should at least equal the sum of individual effort exerted when working alone (Karau & Williams, 2001).

According to Robbins (2009), research on group size has led to two interesting and additional findings. Firstly, groups with an odd number of members have a tendency to be favoured over groups with an even number. This may be because having an odd number of members eradicates the possibility of a tie when voting takes place. Secondly, groups comprising five or seven members are able to effectively exercise the best elements of both small and large groups. Groups made up of five or seven members are considered to be the optimum size for a group with varied goals, since they are sufficiently large to form a majority and allow for diverse input, yet sufficiently small to avoid the negative effects often associated with large groups, such as dominance by a few members, creation of in-groups, restrained involvement by some members, and a disproportionate amount of time taken to reach a decision and execute tasks (Yetton & Bottger, 1983).

2.6.3.6. COMPOSITION

Almost all group activities necessitate an assortment of skills and knowledge. It would, therefore, be sensible to conclude that heterogeneous groups or groups made up of dissimilar members would be more likely to have diverse abilities and information and should be more efficient. This deduction is largely corroborated by research findings, especially on cognitive tasks (Guzzo & Shea, 1992; Jackson, May & Whitney, 1995; Williams & O'Reilly III cited in Staw & Cummings, 1998). Heterogeneous groups that are diverse in terms of personality, demographics, abilities and skill, or work experience

have an increased prospect of possessing the required characteristics to complete group tasks effectively (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Consequently, heterogeneous groups have the propensity to perform better than their homogeneous counterparts in certain circumstances since they have a wealthier mix of experience and knowledge to rely on (Chatman & Flynn, 2001). Conversely, homogenous groups or groups composed of members that share a number of similar attributes are likely to be more cohesive than heterogeneous ones (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). Notwithstanding the foregoing, as the broader organisation diversifies in composition, at least with respect to demographic attributes, groups and teams in turn will become more heterogeneous in composition. Accordingly, they will become burdened with increased conflict, making their efficient management more challenging. In addition, culturally heterogeneous groups have more complexities and inconveniences in learning to work with each other and in solving problems. However, the evidence supports the deduction that on the whole heterogeneous groups perform more effectively than homogeneous ones and offer numerous opportunities for improving group performance. In essence, diversity will promote conflict, which in turn will encourage creativity and ultimately lead to better decision-making (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.6.3.7. COHESIVENESS

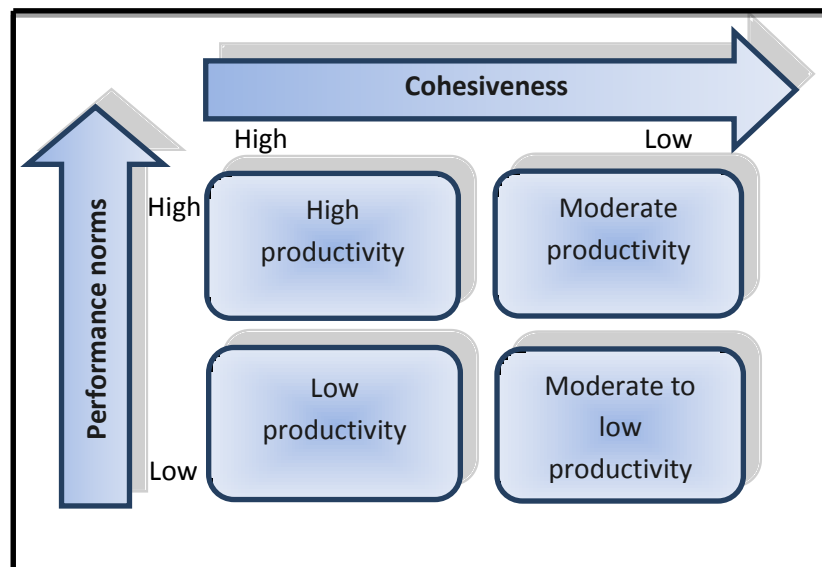
Cohesiveness is the extent to which members are attracted to one another and are encouraged to remain in the group (Keyton & Springston, 1990). It may be described as a function of the closeness or commonness of attitude, behaviour, and performance amongst members (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). The significance of cohesiveness in groups and teams is accentuated by its relatedness to group and team productivity (Podsakoff, MacKenzie & Ahearne, 1997).

Cohesiveness, Performance Norms, and Productivity: Research studies reveal that the relationship between cohesiveness and productivity is reliant on the performance-related norms established within the group or team. High performance-related norms are those that encourage amongst other aspects, work excellence, high output, and cooperation with individuals outside of the group (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Four possible productivity outcomes emanate from the cohesiveness and performance-related norms interface:

- When performance-related norms are high, a cohesive group will be more productive than a less cohesive group.
- When cohesiveness is high and performance norms are low, productivity will be low.
- When cohesiveness is low and performance norms are high, productivity will tend to increase but at a slower rate than in the cohesiveness-high norms scenario.
- When cohesiveness and performance-related norms are both low, productivity will likely fall into the low to moderate range.

These inferences are set out in Robbins' (2001) Group Cohesiveness, Performance Norms, and Productivity Grid (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3
Group Cohesiveness, Performance Norms, and Productivity Grid



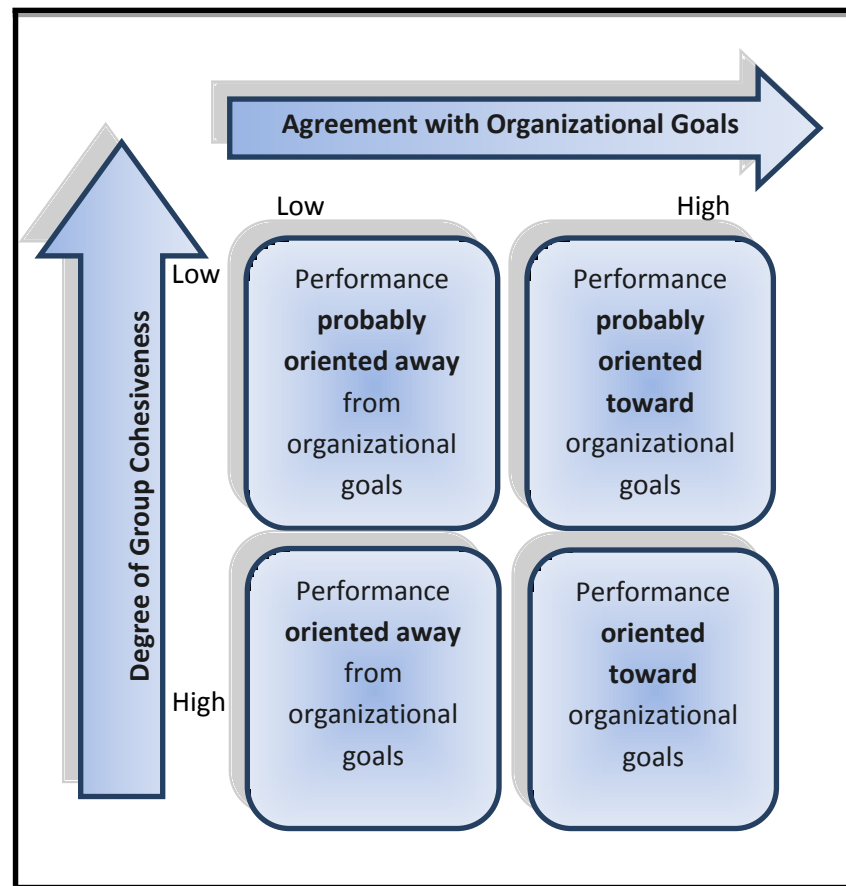
Robbins, S.P. (2001). *Organizational behaviour*. (9th Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, p. 238.

Cohesiveness, Organisational Goals, and Performance: The significance of cohesiveness in comprehending a group's performance within the broader organisational context cannot be ignored (Beranek & Martz, 2005). The extent to which a group is cohesive can have positive or negative performance outcomes, depending on the degree of agreement between the group's goals and those of the organisation (Langfred, 2000). Four distinct performance outcomes arise from the cohesiveness and organisational goals interface:

- When cohesiveness is high and group goals are in agreement with official organisational goals, group performance will be positive from a formal organisational perspective.
- When a group is highly cohesive but its goals are incongruent with those of the organisation, group performance will be negative from the standpoint of the organisation.
- When a group is low on cohesiveness and group goals are not aligned with those of the organisation, performance will be negative from an organisational standpoint.
- When a group that is low on cohesiveness has goals that are in agreement with the formal organisation, performance will probably be positive, although more on an individual basis than on a group one.

These deductions are illustrated in Ivancevich, Konopaske, and Matteson's (2008) Group Cohesiveness, Organisational Goals, and Performance Grid (Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4
Group Cohesiveness, Organisational Goals, and Performance Grid



Ivancevich, J.M., Konopaske, R., & Matteson, M.T. (2008). *Organizational behavior and management*. (8th Ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill/Irwin, p. 271.

Procedures for interaction within a group or team also significantly influence the behaviour of the group or team.

2.6.4. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GROUP AND TEAM PROCESSES

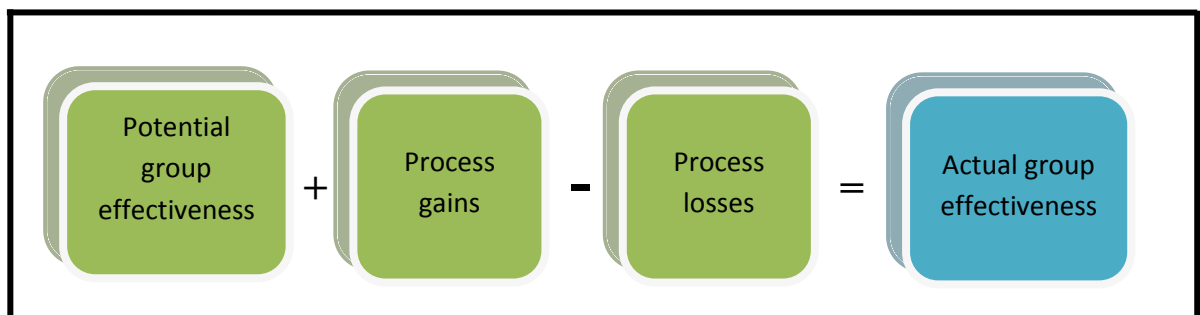
Group and team processes refer to the procedures of interaction within the group or team, which indicate the manner in which group action is constructed on a continuing basis. Some process variables are related to the structural variables discussed earlier, but unlike structure, process emphasizes what goes on in the flow of activities that cause group interaction and result in the continuous construction of group action (Fincham & Rhodes, 2005). Important processes or process variables include amongst

others, stages of group development, cohesiveness, group communication patterns, group decision processes, leadership behaviour, power dynamics, and conflict interactions. These variables will not be discussed here since some have already been explored and others will be examined in subsequent discussions. This section seeks not to examine the actual processes as much as to enquire whether processes are significant to comprehend work group behaviour. The nature and impact of process losses and gains on group behaviour will also be emphasized (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

Group and team processes are important to understanding group and team behaviour. In the unfolding of any of the processes, the group or team may experience a process loss or gain. A process loss can be illustrated by returning to the topic of social loafing. In group tasks in which each member's input is not clearly observable, there is an inclination for members to decrease their effort. This is an example of a specific process loss but they can occur during any stage in the existence of a group and in any group process. Conversely, group processes can also produce process gains. A process gain can be illustrated by examining synergy. Synergy is an action of two or more people that results in an effect that is greater than the individual summation of the people concerned. Teams, for instance, may generate outputs greater than the sum of their inputs. The development of creative alternatives by a diverse group would be a process gain (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). From the foregoing, it is clear that group processes have the propensity to significantly influence group effectiveness by generating both process gains and losses (Steiner, 1972). This can be comprehended by examining Robbins' (2001) Effects of Group Processes Model (Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5

Effects of Group Processes Model



Robbins, S.P. (2001). *Organizational behaviour*. (9th Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, p. 238.

Another approach that aids our understanding of group processes is the social facilitation effect (Zajonc, 1965). This describes the tendency for performance to improve or decline in reaction to the presence of others. Social facilitation research reveals that simple, familiar tasks are inclined to be executed more quickly and accurately in the presence of others, resulting in process gains. Conversely, the performance of complex, unfamiliar tasks is negatively impacted on by the presence of others, resulting in process losses. Research also indicates that people tend to perform better in the presence of others if the task is well learned (Karau & Williams, 2001). This implies that process gains can be maximized and process losses avoided by training people for their respective tasks (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

This section has offered insight into the significance of team processes in terms of member behaviour; however, the importance of group and team tasks is also fundamental to performance.

2.6.5. GROUP AND TEAM TASKS

The significance of a task is pivotal to group and team performance. Essentially, the size-performance relationship of a group or team is regulated by the task requirement it has to accomplish (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Group effectiveness research suggests that when the task requirement involves making an important decision by pooling comprehensive information on an issue that may affect people in many areas of the organisation, a larger group representative of individuals in each of the affected areas within the company will better facilitate the task requirement. A diverse assessment by an information gathering team or by a problem-solving committee characteristically results in process gains. Conversely, when a group's task requirement is coordinating and implementing a specific and precise decision, a process loss is produced by each additional member's presence and this is likely to be greater than the process gain produced by the individual (Nieva, Fleishman & Rieck, 1978; Saavendra, Earley & Van Dyne, 1993). Consequently, the size-performance relationship of a group or team is regulated by the group's task requirement (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

These research studies also contend that the effect of group processes on group performance and member satisfaction is also moderated by group tasks. These studies indicate that the complexity and interdependence of the task impacts on group effectiveness (Nieva, Fleishman & Rieck, 1978; Saavedra, Earley & Van Dyne, 1993).

Tasks can be categorized into simple, novel, non-routine tasks; or complex, routine, standardized tasks. Robbins *et al.*, (2009) contend that complex tasks profit the group by promoting discussions around unconventional work techniques that can be successfully utilised. They add that when it comes to simple tasks, members do not need to discuss such alternatives and merely rely on regular operating procedures to do the job. Likewise, if there is a high degree of interdependence among the tasks that members must perform, they will be required to interact more. Efficient communication and negligible amounts of conflict, will therefore affect group performance when tasks are interdependent.

Tasks that have higher levels of uncertainty, complexity, and interdependence will require more information processing. Task uncertainty can be moderated by the information processing capacity within group processes (Galbraith, 1977). A group characterised by ineffective communication, feeble leadership, and elevated levels of conflict, will not necessarily be low performing since the presence of effective information processing and good group decision-making can moderate these group processes and result in high performance (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.6.6. GROUP DECISION-MAKING

Most of the decisions in organisations are made by committees of teams or groups based on the supposition that “two heads are better than one”. The extensive use of group decision-making in organisations implies that group decisions are more highly valued than decisions made by individuals alone. This section explores the merits and demerits of this viewpoint.

- *Strengths of group decision-making compared to individual decision-making.* By pooling the resources of a number of individuals, groups make more input into the decision-making process and, consequently, engender more complete information and knowledge. Groups also provide the opportunity for more approaches and

alternatives to be taken into account by bringing heterogeneity to the process and thereby increasing the diversity of views. Group research suggests that a group will consistently perform better than even the best individual and hence, generate higher quality decisions (Schwartz & Levin, 1990). Finally, groups promote the increased acceptance of a solution by passionately supporting the final choice and persuading others to accept it.

- *Weaknesses of group decision-making compared to individual decision-making.* Groups naturally take more time to reach a solution compared to individual decision-making. Moreover, the need by members to feel accepted and valued in the group may result in self-censorship being imposed on any explicit disagreements they may experience, resulting in conformity pressures in the group. The group's overall effectiveness will be also compromised if one or a few members dominate discussions especially if these are members of low or mediocre ability. Finally, unlike individual decision-making, group decisions are spread across several members. The answerability and accountability for group decision-making is diluted amongst the individual members. Group decisions therefore suffer from ambiguous responsibility.
- *Effectiveness and efficiency of group decision-making compared to individual decision-making.* This is largely dependent on the criteria used for establishing effectiveness. With regard to accuracy, the evidence indicates that group decisions are inclined to be more accurate and of better quality than individual decisions (Michaelsen, Watson & Black, 1989). On the other hand, when decision effectiveness is described in terms of speed, individuals are characteristically superior. If creativity distinguishes effectiveness then groups are inclined to be superior to individuals. Furthermore, when effectiveness describes the level of acceptance the final decision achieves; then groups positively outstrip individuals (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

However, in terms of efficiency, groups consistently rank second compared to the individual decision-maker. Group decision-making expends more work hours than if an individual were to deal with the identical problem alone. The decision as to whether to use a group or not should take into account if increases in effectiveness

are sufficiently abundant to make up for the losses in efficiency through lost time (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

It is clear that groups are an exceptional intermediary for performing many of the steps in the decision-making process. They are a source of extensive input for information gathering. Groups made up of individuals with diverse experiences engender alternatives that are more extensive and analyses that are more exhaustive. When the final decision is agreed upon, there are more people to encourage and execute it. However, these advantages can be easily offset by the time devoted to group decisions, the internal conflicts they create, and the pressures they create with regard to conformity. Conformity can be explored more closely by examining groupthink and group shift.

- *Groupthink*. This phenomenon is related to group norms and describes situations in which group pressures for conformity affect the group's ability to appraise unusual, minority, or unpopular alternatives objectively and arrive at quality decisions. Consequently, groupthink hinders group performance (Neck & Moorhead, 1995). It occurs when members become overly concerned with seeking harmony within the group so that the norm for agreement supersedes the sensibility of appraising alternative courses of action and comprehensive introspection on deviant, minority, or unpopular views (Choi & Kim, 1995). Groupthink is the uncritical acceptance of an unwise course of action by members of a close-knit group in order to preserve unanimity (Janis, 1982). According to Janis (1982), the main symptoms of groupthink are as follows:
 - Members rationalize any resistance to the assumptions they hold. They reinforce those assumptions consistently even when confronted with strong evidence that may weaken their basic beliefs.
 - Direct pressure is exerted on those who even briefly convey doubts about any of the group's shared views or who have reservations about the soundness of the arguments behind the majority view.
 - Members who hold doubts or have differing perspectives try to avoid deviating from what seems to be group consensus by remaining silent and even downplaying to themselves the substance of their doubts.

- There seems to be a false sense of unanimity. The silence of a member is erroneously assumed to indicate that he or she is in complete agreement with the majority.

Consequently, members who hold a stance that is dissimilar from that of the domineering majority are pressured to repress, hold back, or adjust their genuine feelings and beliefs. Individuals find it more agreeable to be in harmony than to be perceived as a disruptive force, even if disruption is needed to enhance the effectiveness of the group's decisions (Turner & Pratkanis cited in De Dreu & Van de Vliert, 1997).

- *Groupshift*. Research findings indicate that there are differences in the decisions of individuals within a group as compared to the group's decisions (Paese, Bieser & Tubbs, 1993). This is manifested either by group decisions that shift towards a more conservative and cautious position than individual decisions, or alternatively, group decisions that shift towards a more aggressive and risky stance than individual ones. More frequently, the shift is in the direction of increased risk (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

Accordingly, discussions in a group will result in a notable shift in the position of members toward a more intense position that is based on the direction in which members were already leaning before the discussion. Conservative types become more cautious, and aggressive types take on more risk. The group discussions are inclined to amplify the initial position of the group, either towards increased caution or towards more risk, respectively. The decision of the group will reflect a dominant decision-making norm that develops during the group's discussion and the shift in the group's decision toward greater caution or more risk depends on a dominant pre-discussion norm.

Groupshift recognises that group decisions overstate or amplify the initial position of the individual members, that the shift is more often towards greater risk, and that whether or not a group will shift toward increased risk or caution is a function of the members' pre-discussion inclinations (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

In addition to the influence of group decision-making on member behaviour, the manner in which performance and satisfaction are contextualized and viewed by the organisation can also affect members.

2.6.7. PERFORMANCE AND SATISFACTION

Forecasts about a group's performance must acknowledge that work groups are part of a bigger organisational framework and factors such as organisational strategy, the authority structure, selection procedures, and the reward system can provide either a constructive or destructive atmosphere for the group to function within (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Robbins *et al.*, 2009). It is, therefore, imperative that groups are not assessed in isolation. The quantity of support that external conditions provide for the group should also be assessed. Groups perform better when they have top management's support, abundant resources, and when the overall organisation which they are part of is developing. Additionally, a group is more productive when its members have the appropriate skills to execute group tasks and personality characteristics that facilitate working harmoniously (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

Structural factors such as role perceptions, norms, status inequities, and the size of the group, its demographic composition, the group's tasks, and cohesiveness are directly related to performance (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

There is a direct and positive relationship between an employee's performance evaluation and role perception. The extent to which a manager evaluates an employee as an effective performer depends on the degree of congruence that exists between an employee and his or her manager in the perception of the employee's job. The degree to which the employee will receive a higher performance evaluation hinges upon the extent to which the employee's role perceptions fulfil the manager's role expectations. High congruence between an employee and his or her manager in the perception of the employee's job is significantly related to high employee satisfaction (Verney cited in Vredenburgh & Schuler, 1983). Likewise, role conflict is associated with job-induced tension and job dissatisfaction (Bedeian & Armenakis, 1981).

Norms can help explain the behaviour and performance levels of group members since norms influence group members' behaviour by establishing standards of what is

acceptable and unacceptable. For instance, when norms promote high output, managers can anticipate individual performance to be noticeably higher than when group norms aim to discourage output. Likewise, tolerable levels of absenteeism will be determined by the group norms (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

Inequities in status can create dissatisfaction and may negatively influence performance. Status incongruence amongst equity sensitive individuals will lead to decreased motivation and corrective action behaviours in order to establish fairness, impacting on performance. Most people prefer to communicate with individuals at their own status level or higher, rather than with individuals below them. Satisfaction should therefore be greater among employees whose job minimizes interaction with individuals who are lower in status than themselves (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

The influence of size on a group's performance is dependent on the type of tasks with which the group is occupied. Larger groups are more effective at fact-finding activities and smaller groups at action-taking tasks (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). If management is using larger groups, efforts should be made to measure individual performance within the group in order to avoid the negative effects that social loafing has on performance (Karau & Williams, 2001). Moreover, with regard to satisfaction, as size increases, opportunities for participation and social interaction decrease, as does the ability of members to identify with the group's accomplishments. Increased group membership also prompts dissension, conflict, and the formation of sub-groups, all of which contribute to the lower satisfaction levels associated with larger groups (Mullen, Symons, Hu & Salas, 1989).

The demographic composition of a group has been shown to be a crucial determinant of individual turnover and as such influences productivity and performance respectively (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Cohesiveness plays a significant role in influencing a group's level of productivity but this is dependent on the group's performance-related norms (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Group tasks moderate the relationship between group processes and performance. The more complex and interdependent the tasks, the more an inefficient process will lead to reduced group performance (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.7. DYSFUNCTIONS IN GROUPS AND TEAMS

The discussion on group and team structure has revealed a number of team and group dysfunctional areas (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008). Group and team dysfunction may be viewed from a broad dysfunctional area perspective and from a behaviour and contingency specific perspective (Lencioni, 2005; Nickol, 2000).

2.7.1. GROUP AND TEAM DYSFUNCTIONAL AREAS

These include amongst other areas, norms, roles, groupthink, groupshift, and social loafing (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008).

2.7.1.1. NORM VIOLATION

Group norms that are dishonoured can generate antisocial behaviours. At the extreme, these may include sexual harassment, theft, and the like. Other less radical behaviours include lying, spreading rumours, withholding effort, and absenteeism (Luthans, 2005). Evidence indicates that members who are persistently exposed to antisocial behaviours are more inclined to engage in them, and discontentment with co-workers may also surface, especially when those co-workers show evidence of more antisocial behaviours than the person in question (Robinson and O’Leary-Kelly, 1998). It is clear that the violation of norms can be a source of team and group dysfunction (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008).

2.7.1.2. ROLE AMBIGUITY

Role ambiguity may occur when fissures are present between a prescribed role as dictated by norms and the individual’s response to the role. Role ambiguity also arises when the individual is uncertain about the governing principles of a given situation and does not know what he or she is supposed to be doing (Luthans, 2005). Role ambiguity may be compounded by unclear job descriptions, incomplete instructions issued by a manager, and inexperience on the part of the individual concerned since each of these

actively contributes to role ambiguity. Role ambiguity affects a person's ability to function effectively in a group or team (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008).

2.7.1.3. ROLE CONFLICT

When a member is asked to carry out conflicting tasks or is forced to perform tasks that conflict with his or her own individual values, role conflict will arise. Role conflict intensifies when the group engages in unethical or antisocial behaviours and when the members of the group emphasize one set of norms while the leader and the formal organisation emphasize others (Luthans, 2005).

2.7.1.4. GROUPTHINK AND CONFORMITY

Groupthink is a dysfunction of highly cohesive groups and teams. As noted earlier, it results from the pressures on individual members to conform and reach consensus. Essentially, groupthink may be viewed as a distinct type of conformity. Janis (1972, p. 9) defines groupthink as “a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgment that results from in-group pressures”. As a dysfunction, groupthink can adversely affect group decision-making since teams and groups that are suffering from it are so preoccupied with attaining consensus that there is no rational evaluation of alternative courses of action (Luthans, 2005).

2.7.1.5. GROUPSHIFT

As discussed earlier, research indicates that groups may take more risky decisions than individual members would on their own (Stoner, 1961 cited in Brown, 1965, p. 785). This deduction, however, must be moderated by the values affixed to the outcomes. Notwithstanding this, the evidence suggests that group discussion enhances the preliminary leaning of individual members in a chosen direction. This is referred to as group-induced attitude polarization (Isenberg, 1986). For example, a member has a pro-downsizing attitude before group discussion and the group discussion results in an even more extreme attitude in the same direction (Luthans, 2005).

2.7.1.6. SOCIAL LOAFING

A specific dysfunction that has been shown to threaten and disrupt the effectiveness of teams is social loafing (McFarlin & Sweeney, 2001). Social loafing describes the situation when individuals exert less effort when working as a group than when working independently (Latané, Williams & Harkins, 1979). Formally, social loafing is a reduction in motivation and effort when individuals work collectively compared to when working coactively or individually (Karau & Williams, 2001). The principal reasons for this occurrence include tasks that are not intrinsically motivating, deficiencies in performance feedback within the group, situations in which the performance of others will conceal the reduced effort exerted by a given member, and not wanting to exert oneself more than the perceived effort exerted by others (Luthans, 2005). Research findings indicate that cultures dominated by individual and self-interest values are more inclined to have groups that experience social loafing (Erez & Somech, 1996). Conversely, collectivist cultures have a stronger focus on the collective good of the group and may, therefore experience less social loafing by group members (Erez & Somech, 1996).

Social loafing is expected to appear more in large teams, where individual inputs are difficult to identify. To reduce the impact of members exerting less effort and to ensure that they are fully contributing members of the team, it has been recommended that teams be kept small in size, task specialisation be increased so that the contributions of individual members are identifiable, individual performance be measured, and highly motivated employees be selected when creating teams (Judge & Chandler, 1996).

In addition to these dysfunctional areas, behaviour and contingency specific reasons for team and group dysfunction have been identified (Lencioni, 2005; Nickol, 2000).

2.7.2. BEHAVIOUR SPECIFIC TEAM AND GROUP DYSFUNCTION

Lencioni (2005) proposes that even though effective team-work is not easy to achieve, it should not be complicated. He (2005, p. 7) asserts, “that the true measure of a team is that it accomplishes the results that it sets out to achieve and to do that consistently”. Lencioni’s (2005) five-stage pyramid model of team dysfunction is presented in Figure 2.6.

Figure 2.6
The Five Dysfunctions of a Team



Lencioni, P. (2005). *Overcoming the five dysfunctions of a team: A field guide for leaders, managers, and facilitators*. (1st Ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, p. 6.

The pyramid design illustrates that a dysfunctional team is built on an unstable foundation characterised by a lack of trust which in turn results in and supports other unstable behaviours that eventually expose the team as dysfunctional through its inattention to results. Each of the behaviours in the model act as building blocks for the subsequent behaviours, which support and give rise to the next unstable behaviour (Lencioni, 2005).

2.7.2.1. ABSENCE OF TRUST

Members of effective teams have faith in one another on a supportive, emotive level, and are relaxed about being exposed to one another with regard to their behaviours, weaknesses, mistakes, and fears. Members reach the stage where they can be entirely open with one another, without filters. However, when there is an absence of trust,

members are reluctant to show their vulnerability and will not admit their mistakes, weaknesses, or need for help. This makes it impossible to build a foundation for trust. An absence of trust undermines the team's ability to engage in constructive conflict, which results in talented decision-making (Lencioni, 2005).

2.7.2.2. FEAR OF CONFLICT

Team members that believe in one another are not afraid to conduct ardent dialogue on matters and decisions that are crucial to the organisation's success. They are not unwilling to disagree with, confront, and question one another, in the quest to reach the best answers, unearth the truth, and make remarkable decisions. The fear of conflict in teams is a result of the failure to build trust. Teams that are deficient in trust are unqualified to engage in unfiltered fiery debates about vital issues, resulting in obscure discussions and guarded comments, and ultimately in inferior decision-making. Without wholesome conflict, teams cannot make concrete commitments to plans and decisions (Lencioni, 2005).

2.7.2.3. LACK OF COMMITMENT

Teams that embrace unfiltered conflict are capable of attaining complete acceptance on important decisions, even when several members may initially disagree. These teams ensure that all opinions and ideas are presented and considered as potential options, making members confident that all possibilities have an equal chance of acceptance. Without unfiltered conflict, it is difficult for team members to commit to decisions, creating an atmosphere where ambiguity pervades. Deficiencies in direction and commitment can make members discontented. Where there is ambiguous commitment, there will also be unclear accountability (Lencioni, 2005).

2.7.2.4. AVOIDANCE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Teams that commit to decisions and standards of excellence do not show reluctance to hold one another accountable for those decisions and standards. They do not rely exclusively on the team leader as the fundamental source of accountability, and may go directly to their peers. However, when teams do not commit to a clear plan of action, members are unwilling to hold their peers accountable for their counterproductive actions and behaviours. The lack of accountability leads to poor outcomes (Lencioni, 2005).

2.7.2.5. INATTENTION TO RESULTS

Team members that trust one another, connect in unfiltered conflict, commit to decisions, and hold one another accountable are inclined to dismiss individual needs and agendas and focus on what is best for the team. These members resist the temptation to put personal career aspirations, departments, or ego-driven status ahead of the collective results that define success. However, when there is a deficiency in accountability members are tempted to put their own needs, egos, career development, and personal recognition ahead of the collective goals of the team. Ultimately, when teams lose sight of the need for results, the entire organisation suffers (Lencioni, 2005).

The model illustrates that the absence of trust weakens the team's ability to engage in constructive conflict. Without wholesome conflict, teams cannot make a sound commitment to plans and decisions. In the presence of vague commitment, there will also be unclear accountability. Deficient accountability leads to inattention to results. Consequently, an effective team is constructed on the commitment to deliver results and each member is integral to a system of accountability for those results. Since accountability will be unavoidable, members make sure they are committed to the decisions that are made by the team. This commitment is an outcome of healthy, vigorous debate and unfiltered conflict. Healthy conflict is the outcome of a refined atmosphere for trust (Lencioni, 2005).

2.7.3. CONTINGENCY SPECIFIC GROUP AND TEAM DYSFUNCTION

Nickol (2000) suggests ten contingency or situational reasons for team dysfunction:

- *Lack of education about teams.* Teams are not only a different way of doing work but also signify an exclusively different way of thinking about doing work. For teams to be successful, executive management must support this change in philosophy and educate the workforce about teams.
- *Lack of commitment by top management.* Teamwork signifies a change in the way work is conducted. This change process is almost always painful for members and is often met with resistance. It therefore requires committed leadership. Top management must make it clear that there is no turning back and that teams are here to stay. This will prompt those who are apprehensive to learn how to be a good team player or resign. Leadership must ensure that destructive team behaviours are not tolerated.
- *Lack of time.* Production, excellence, quality, efficiency, drive, and timelines often suffer before they improve since the design, implementation, and maturation of teams are time consuming. Many organisations are incapable of enduring these delays especially during economic downturns. Teams should, therefore, not be implemented when an organisation is facing financial difficulties.
- *Lack of money.* The maintenance, implementation, and design of teams are costly. Often select employees are taken away from their jobs to assist in the designing of teams and in the planning of team configurations within the organisation. Team members and coaches will also require extensive training to acquire team specific knowledge and skills. Training time and down time may prove to be expensive.
- *Lack of an implementation or restructuring plan.* According to Nickol (2000, p. 19), the successful implementation of teams requires that the “vision, mission, values, titles, processes, systems, rewards, compensation, performance appraisals, and hiring strategies” all align with the concept of teams. For instance, it is incongruent to ask employees to be part of a team when the rewards and compensation are based on independent production. Teams also require that barriers be removed to facilitate open communication. Systems and processes also

need to change. This calls for lines of communication, reporting structures, and work-flow processes to be modified; and the alignment of performance appraisal and hiring criteria with team philosophies. If these are not attended to, they will be a barrier to team success.

- *Lack of communication.* Resistance will follow when communication is avoided or is dealt with defensively or insensitively. For instance, if the decision to implement teams within the organisation is communicated after the fact then members will feel devalued and victimized. Conversely, if benefits are not stressed, members may perceive that teamwork means more work, longer hours, more responsibility, and inequitable pay. When managers are informed that decision-making power will be conferred to teams, they may become fearful and demoralised.
- *Lack of empowerment.* Very often managers try not to relinquish decision-making power to the teams. They give members all the responsibilities that go with teams without the authority to make decisions and take actions. “Servant leadership” is a concept that describes the position of a manager who has relinquished decision-making power to the team. Managers resist servant leadership and may sabotage the team to maintain authority.
- *Lack of purpose.* Teams should not be implemented simply because they are a popular concept. The unilateral abolishment of departments to make way for teams simply for the sake of having teams is an unwise practice. Teams must have a clear and specific purpose. In the absence of a well-defined team purpose, members will not know what is expected of them. They might continue being responsible for their work very much the way they did in their old departments; but they are now required to waste time by attending team meetings and trying to figure out how to act like team players.
- *Lack of training.* Team success requires training. This should entail the following: 1) explaining the concept of teams, the required changes, the maturation stages, and the benefits to members, coaches, and the organisation; 2) teaching skills in interpersonal communication, decision-making, problem solving, assertion, negotiation, conflict management, and change management; 3) training members in technical and administrative skills, since most teams take on duties previously

performed by management; and 4) teaching members to perform one another's functions to maintain high performance in view of changes in the team and work place.

- *Leadership fails teams.* The difficulties teams encounter can often be traced back to, and emanate from, upper management. Teams rarely fail; leadership usually fails teams. Teams can improve productivity, efficiency, quality, communication, timelines, employee morale, customer service, and innovation. They also reduce absenteeism, operating costs, turnover, and even theft. Most often than not, teams succeed or become dysfunctional because of their leadership (Nickol, 2000).

Team dysfunction cannot be understood without understanding team effectiveness.

2.8. TEAM EFFECTIVENESS

Descriptions of team effectiveness are plentiful and have been an area of debate for many researchers (Driskell, Salas & Hogan, 1987; Salas, Dickinson, Converse & Tannenbaum, 1992; Tannenbaum, Beard & Salas, 1992; Cannon-Bowers, Tannenbaum, Salas & Volpe, 1995; Klimoski & Jones, 1995 cited in Guzzo & Salas, 1995, p. 307; Shanahan, 2001; Rasker, van Vliet, van der Broek & Essens, 2001; Blendell, Henderson, Molly & Pascual, 2001; Hackman, 2002). Team effectiveness has often been evaluated in terms of team performance, but there is little explanation as to what is meant by "effectiveness" or "performance" (Hyatt & Ruddy, 1997). Performance is a helpful term that indicates the capability of a team for either a comparative or isolated evaluation. However, the concept of performance can be misleading as to how effective the team truly is in terms of its contribution to the organisation's vision and mission. For example, a study may show that a team is effective in a specific situation but this does not signify team effectiveness and does not necessarily mean that the team will consistently be effective under the various conditions under which it may be required to function. Therefore, team effectiveness must be considered in terms of both performance and effectiveness (Henderson & Walkinshaw, 2002). Henderson and Walkinshaw (2002) propose that effectiveness relates specifically to the accomplishment of the goals, milestones, and objectives as established in the requirements of the stakeholders. Conversely, performance denotes how well the task

work and teamwork is carried out. Accordingly, team effectiveness should embrace both performance and effectiveness.

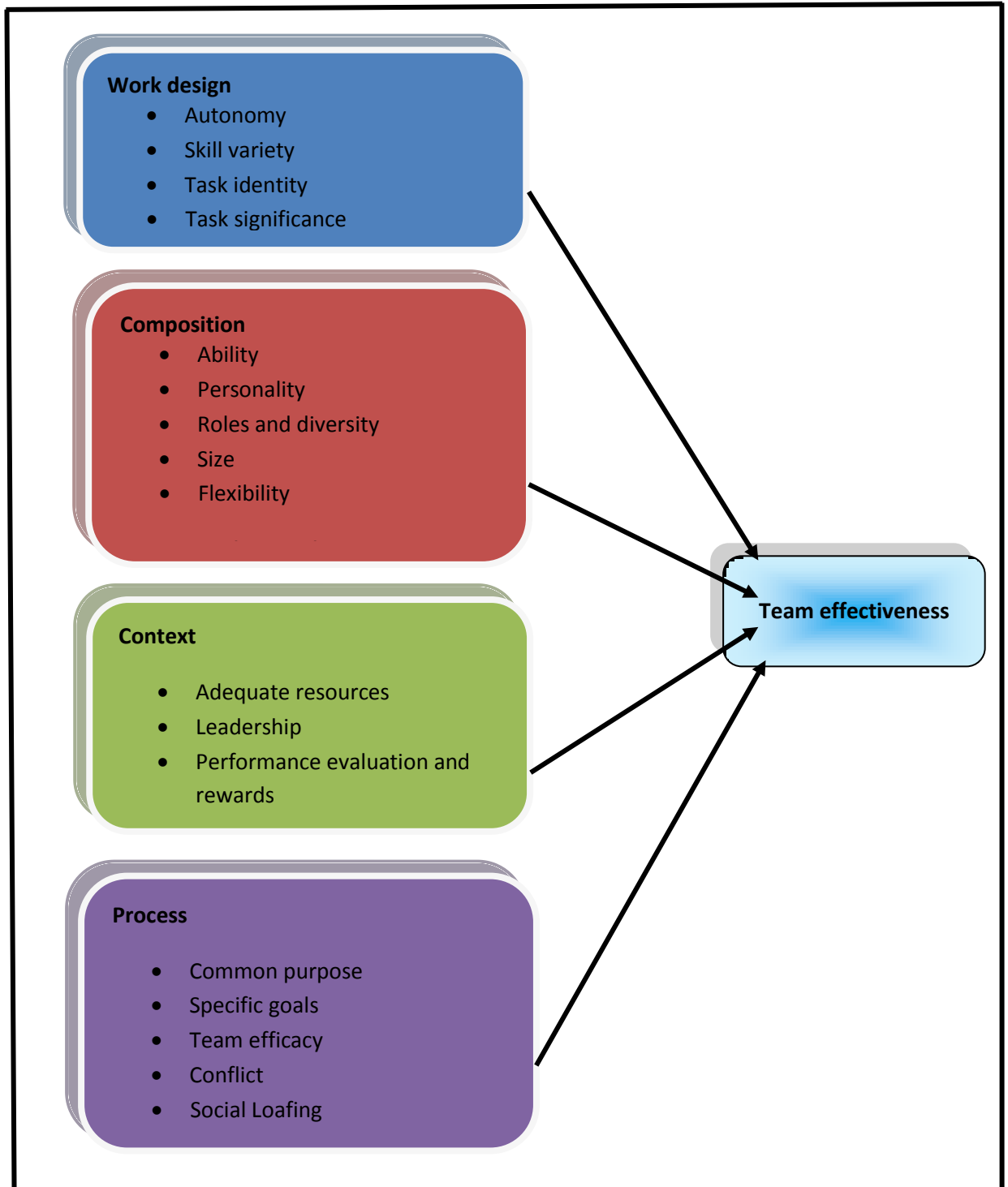
As noted earlier, teams represent one form or type of group and as such, factors influencing the effectiveness of any group are equally significant in determining team effectiveness. Group characteristics that promote group functionality and effectiveness include amongst others composition, norms, leadership, and cohesion. There are, however, a host of other factors that are significant to developing effective teams. These include training, communication, empowerment, and rewards (Ivancevich *et al.*, 2008).

The overabundance of available theory on team effectiveness may create difficulty in determining an efficient approach to establishing an effective team. It may, therefore, be more useful to utilise a focused model.

2.8.1. A TEAM EFFECTIVENESS MODEL

Over the past five decades behavioural scientists, human factor engineers, and specialists from a host of other disciplines have identified a plethora of models related to team effectiveness, yet there is no universally accepted model (Henderson & Walkinshaw, 2002). Contributions in this regard have been made by Driskell, Salas, and Hogan (1987); Salas, Dickinson, Converse, and Tannenbaum (1992); Tannenbaum, Beard, and Salas (1992); Cannon-Bowers, Tannenbaum, Salas, and Volpe (1995); Klimoski and Jones (1995) as cited in Guzzo and Salas (1995); Shanahan (2001); Rasker, van Vliet, van der Broek, and Essens (2001); Blendell, Henderson, Molly, and Pascual (2001); and Hackman (2002) amongst others. However, Robbins (2001) has presented a relatively simple and focused model by combining a list of significant factors related to team effectiveness (Figure 2.7).

Figure 2.7
A Team Effectiveness Model



Robbins, S.P. (2001). *Organizational behaviour*. (9th Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, p. 264.

The vital components making up effective teams can be considered in terms of four general categories as depicted in Figure 2.7. These are: work design; the team's composition; the contextual influences and resources that create effective teams; and process variables that represent the issues that go on in the team that influence effectiveness (Robbins *et al.*, 2009):

2.8.1.1. WORK DESIGN

An effective team is one that works collectively and takes combined responsibility to conclude important tasks. Variables that are significant to work design include freedom and autonomy, the prospect of utilising distinct skills and talent, the ability to finish a complete and identifiable task or product, and working on a task or project that has a considerable influence on others (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). These characteristics have been shown to increase member motivation and consequently enhance team effectiveness. Work design characteristics motivate since they are able to increase a member's awareness of responsibility and ownership of the work and because they make the work more appealing to perform (Champion, Papper & Medsker, 1996).

2.8.1.2. COMPOSITION

This relates to how teams should be staffed and addresses the ability and personality of team members, allocating roles and diversity, the size of the team, member flexibility, and members' preference for teamwork (Robbins *et al.*, 2009):

- *Abilities of Members.* A team needs three distinct types of skills to function effectively. First and foremost, it needs people with technical proficiency. It also needs members with problem-solving and decision-making capability to be able to recognise problems, produce alternatives, assess those alternatives, and make expert choices. Finally, teams need members with excellent listening, feedback, conflict resolution, and other interpersonal skills (Stevens & Champion, 1994).
- *Personality.* Personality can have an important influence on team behaviour. Teams that have been rated highly in mean levels of extraversion, agreeableness,

conscientiousness, and emotional stability are inclined to receive higher managerial ratings for team performance (Barrick, Stewart, Neubert & Mount, 1998).

- *Allocating Roles and Diversity.* Teams have distinct requirements and needs; therefore, members should be selected appropriately so as to ensure that there is diversity and that all the essential team roles are filled. Effective work teams will ensure that they have members in what Margerison and McCann (1990) term the “nine potential team roles”. These essential roles include creator, promoter, assessor, organiser, producer, controller, maintainer, adviser, and linker. Successful teams have members to fill all these roles. Members are selected for each specific role based on their skills and preferences. Managers must be alert to the individual strengths that potential members can bring to a team, select members in view of their strengths, and allocate assignments that fit with the potential members’ profile. The matching of individual preferences with team role demands increases the tendency for team members to work well together (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).
- *Size of teams.* The most successful teams are neither very small nor very large. A very small team is composed of less than four or five members and a very large team is typically composed of more than 12 members. Small teams lack the value of diversity and in large teams it is difficult to accomplish much. In addition, in larger teams members have difficulty interacting constructively and agreeing. Moreover, they may lack cohesiveness, commitment, and the mutual accountability required to achieve high performance. Effective teams should be kept in the range of five to 12 members (Nieva, Fleishman & Reick, 1985). In the case of a natural working unit that is larger than 12 members it is conceivable to obtain team efforts from such a unit if it is broken down into sub-teams (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).
- *Member Flexibility.* Teams composed of flexible members have the ability to complete one another’s tasks. This enhances the teams’ level of adaptability and makes them less dependent on any one member (Sundstrom, Meuse & Futrell, 1990). The cross-training of members in the present to do one another’s jobs in the future should lead to higher team performance over time (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).
- *Member Preferences.* Not all employees prefer working in teams. When a team has an individual member who prefers working alone, it represents a direct threat to the

team's morale (Hyatt & Ruddy, 1997). The selection of team members should take into consideration the individual preferences of potential members. Selection procedures should also take into account the abilities, personalities and skills of prospective members. When the team is composed of people who have a preference for working collectively, it increases the team's probability of higher performance levels (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.8.1.3. CONTEXT

Adequate resources, effective leadership, and a performance evaluation and reward system that reflect team contributions are three important contextual factors that are related to team performance (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

- *Adequate Resources.* Work groups and teams are part of a larger organisational system and as such depend on resources outside of themselves for their effective functioning. A lack of resources severely reduces the team's ability to function effectively. After examining 13 factors potentially related to group performance Hyatt and Ruddy (1997) concluded that the most significant characteristic of an effective work group is the support the group receives from the organisation. This support may take the form of timely information, technology, adequate staffing, encouragement, and administrative assistance. Teams must receive the required support and resources from the broader organisation if they are going to be effective in achieving their goals (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).
- *Leadership and Structure.* The specifics of work include, amongst other things, determining who does what, ensuring that there is an equitable division of work and that members contribute equally in sharing the workload, establishing how schedules will be set, determining what skills need to be developed, ascertaining how the group will settle conflicts, and how the group will formulate and revise decisions. Team leadership and structure ultimately determine the specifics of work and how these fit together to integrate individual skills. The importance of good leadership and structure in teams cannot be overemphasized (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). In some instances leadership might not be required. Research suggests that self-managed work teams consistently outperform teams with officially appointed

leaders (Beekun, 1989). Leaders may hinder high levels of performance when they meddle with self-managing teams (Cohen, Ledford & Spreitzer, 1996). The evidence indicates that in self-managed teams, members take on many of the functions normally assumed by managers (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

- *Performance Evaluation and Reward Systems.* Team members need to be both individually and collectively accountable. This requires that the conventional, individually oriented evaluation and reward system be adapted to reflect team performance (Wageman, 1995). Individual performance appraisals, fixed hourly wages, individual incentives, and the like are beneficial for evaluating and rewarding members for their individual contributions but are not consistent with the development of high-performance teams. Management must, therefore, consider evaluation and reward system adaptations that will strengthen team effort and commitment. These system changes may include group-based appraisals, profit sharing, gain-sharing and small-group incentives (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

2.8.1.4. PROCESS

Member commitment to a common purpose, establishment of specific team goals, team efficacy, a managed level of conflict, and the reduction of social loafing are significant components that are considered to be process variables, which is the final category associated with team effectiveness (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

- *A Common Purpose.* Scott and Townsend (1994) suggest that in addition to and before specific goals are even agreed upon, every effective team must have a broad, collective, and meaningful purpose so as to provide direction, impetus, and commitment for members.
- *Specific Goals.* Just as goals direct individuals to higher levels of performance, they also empower teams. Effective teams convert their collective purpose into precise, quantifiable, and rational performance goals. This expedites well-defined communication and helps a team to uphold its focus on achieving results (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). Challenging goals, such as those related to quantity, speed, and accuracy have been observed to raise team performance. Team goals should therefore be challenging (Weldon & Weingart, 1993).

- *Team Efficacy.* Successful teams have confidence and truly believe that they can be effective. Team confidence and the team's belief in future success is termed "team efficacy" (Feltz & Lirgg, 1998). Teams that have already experienced a degree of success have more faith in their probable future success, which in turn inspires them to work more effectively. Incremental successes build team confidence and create a strong performance portfolio, which enhances the team's belief that future efforts will result in more success. Critical to team efficacy is the training of members to improve their technical and interpersonal skills. The more superior the abilities of team members, the greater the probability that the team will cultivate confidence and the competence to deliver on that confidence (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).
- *Conflict Levels.* Teams that are entirely empty of conflict are prone to become lethargic, apathetic and inactive. Conflict is not essentially unhealthy and can actually improve team effectiveness (Jehn, 1995). However, relationship conflicts founded on interpersonal inconsistencies, tension, and hostility toward others are virtually constantly dysfunctional. Notwithstanding the foregoing, conflicts about task content amongst members in teams performing non-routine activities are not altogether disadvantageous. Conflict can actually be beneficial in that it lessens the possibility of groupthink. Task conflicts also incite discussion, encourage vital evaluation of problems and alternatives, and can promote improved team decisions. Successful teams may therefore be exemplified by a suitable degree of conflict (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).
- *Social Loafing.* In previous sections, namely, Group and Team Behaviour, and Dysfunctions in Groups and Teams it was asserted that individuals can potentially hide in a group and go unnoticed through the practice of social loafing. This allows them to freewheel on the group's effort since their individual inputs cannot be identified. Successful teams challenge this tendency by making themselves accountable at both the individual and team levels. Effective teams make members individually and jointly accountable for team outcomes (Hess, 1987). Members are sure of what they are individually and jointly responsible for.

2.9. CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided insight into the nature of teams and groups, their formation, development, behaviour, processes, and performance outcomes and has also offered perspectives on team dysfunction, and team effectiveness. The practice of social loafing, which threatens and disrupts the effectiveness of teams has surfaced in three separate areas in the literature. This overlap is indicative of the importance that researchers attach to this phenomenon and its detrimental effect on groups and teams (McFarlin & Sweeney, 2001).

CHAPTER THREE

SOCIAL LOAFING

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In the modern business setting, organisations depend more and more on teams to perform a wide range of activities, from designing products to developing services (Griffith, Sawyer & Neale, 2003). Moreover, businesses are increasingly relying on teamwork to accomplish their core business objectives (Karau & Williams, 2001). The intricacies and turbulence associated with the global business landscape have resulted in a shift toward team-based organisations (Tata, 2002). The evidence indicates that much of the world's work is accomplished collectively, where people combine their individual inputs to produce a single group product (Karau & Williams, 1995).

The apparent benefit of working collectively or in teams is that people can fulfill their individual goals more easily, and group goals more efficiently. This is based on the rationale that organising people into teams results in synergistic effects and optimal performance (Karau & Williams, 2001; Robbins, 1995). When many team members are available, people do not have to work as hard as when only a few are present. However, when many team members are available, people also exert less effort than they ought to (Latané, Williams & Harkins, 1979). This calls into question the wisdom of using groups and teams to enhance productivity (Ratzburg, 2008).

An increasing number of people who work on collaborative projects have begun to express negative perceptions about the benefits of group work (Hurley & Allen, 2007). Recent group process research contends that working collectively can affect people's motivation and effort, resulting in process losses for teams and reduced productivity gains for organisations (Chidambaram & Tung, 2005). In addition, social psychologists are discovering that group participation may actually result in individuals exerting less effort (Brooks & Ammons, 2003). These and like findings are crucial to organisational performance and take on special significance during embattled economic times when organisations are striving to improve efficiencies and increase productivity (Dennis, Wixom & Vandenberg, 2001). This has moved group behaviour researchers to examine the effect of individual contributions combined with those of other people (Karau &

Williams, 2001). This has led to the investigation of the phenomenon of Social Loafing that has been shown to threaten and disrupt the effectiveness of teams (McFarlin & Sweeney, 2001).

3.2. SOCIAL LOAFING DEFINED

Social loafing describes the scenario when individuals exert less effort when working as a group than when working independently (Latané *et al.*, 1979). In formal terms, social loafing is a reduction in motivation and effort when individuals work collectively compared to when they work coactively or individually (Karau & Williams, 2001). North, Linley and Hargreaves (2000) refer to social loafing as the tendency for individuals to progressively reduce their personal input to a collaborative task as group size increases. Psychologists Bibb Latané, Kipling Williams, and Stephen Harkins coined the term “social loafing” in 1979. Latané and his colleagues refer to social loafing as a sizable decrease in individual effort when performing in groups, as compared to when performing alone (Colman, 2001).

3.3. SOCIAL LOAFING AND THE RINGELMANN EFFECT

Latané, Williams and Harkins are credited with conceptualizing social loafing, although almost 100 years ago a German psychologist named Ringelmann (1913) investigated and identified this then nameless phenomenon in a series of experiments (Piezon & Donaldson, 2005).

Ringelmann (1913) got workers to pull as hard as they could on a rope, alone or with two, three, or eight other people, and then used a strain gauge or dynamometer to measure how hard they pulled in kilograms of pressure. It could be expected that two people pulling together on a rope with perfect efficiency would be able to exert two times as much force as one person can, and eight individuals pulling collectively would exert eight times as much force.

Contrary to this expectation, Ringelmann (1913) noted that when pulling one at a time individuals averaged 63 kg of pressure while two people exerted a combined force of

117 kg, groups of three people were only able to exert a force of 160 kg and groups of eight pulled at 248 kg. Ringelmann (1913) observed that when two individuals pulled on a rope they exerted 93% of the sum of their individual efforts while a group of three individuals exerted 85% and groups of eight exerted 49% of their combined solo rate. Thus the collective group output, though increasing with group size, was significantly less than the combined output of the individual efforts. It was observed that as more individuals pulled on the rope each individual exerted themselves less. Ringelmann (1913) thus determined that individuals perform below their potential when working in a group (LaFasto & Larson, 2001).

The Ringelmann Effect describes the inverse relationship between the size of the team and the effort expended (Piezon & Donaldson, 2005). For many years the results of Ringelmann's (1913) experiment were largely ignored, or interpreted as a sheer consequence of faulty synchronization or lack of coordination among team members rather than reductions in individual effort and motivation loss (Karau & Williams, 2001). Ringelmann's (1913) unpublished work has nonetheless been cited by Dashiell (1935), Davis (1969), Köhler (1927), Zajonc (1965) and extensively analyzed by Steiner (1972).

In 1974 Ingham, Levinger, Graves and Peckham meticulously replicated Ringelmann's experiment. They found remarkably similar and consistent results to those of Ringelmann (1913). Ingham *et al.* (1974) wanted to ascertain whether the process losses found in rope pulling resulted from reductions in individual effort and motivation loss (that is, social loafing) or were simply a consequence of faulty synchronization or lack of coordination among team members and the physics of the task. To accomplish this, Ingham *et al.* (1974) designed an inventive second experiment, whereby they ingeniously arranged things so that only the individual's perception of group size was varied. Individuals were blindfolded and made to believe that others were pulling with them, but in fact they always pulled alone. These conditions meant that there was absolutely no possibility of loss due to faulty synchronization. The results were noticeably similar to Ringelmann's (1913) original experiment and indicated a substantial drop in output with an increase in perceived group size. Through this experiment Ingham *et al.* (1974) determined that virtually all of the performance decrease in the rope pulling exercise could be attributed to reduced individual effort and motivation loss (that is, social loafing).

Five years later in 1979, Latané, Williams, and Harkins used the less cumbersome and more efficient experimental tasks of cheering by voices and clapping with hands to replicate the Ringelmann (1913) findings conceptually to provide the basis for extended empirical and theoretical analysis. The results showed a strong resemblance to Ringelmann's (1913) original findings. The voices raised together did not seem to be raised as much as voices raised alone, and the sound of 12 hands clapping was not even three times as intense as the sound of two (Latané *et al.*, 1979). Through these experiments the motivational component of the Ringelmann Effect was validated and understood as an important and reliable phenomenon unto itself and was given the label "social loafing" (Karau & Williams, 2001).

3.4. GENERALITY AND MAGNITUDE OF SOCIAL LOAFING

Since the late 1970s the generality of social loafing has been found for an extensive range of tasks. These include physical tasks, such as rope pulling and swimming; cognitive tasks, such as problem solving, decision making, and idea generation; creative tasks, such as thought listing and song writing; evaluative tasks, such as rating the quality of poems, editorials, and clinical therapists; and work-related tasks, such as typing and evaluating job candidates (Karau & Williams, 2001; Robbins, 1995). Moreover, social loafing generalizes not only across tasks, but amongst most subject populations. A number of studies have revealed significant social loafing regardless of participants' gender, nationality, or age (Gabrenya & Biddle, 1982; Guerin, 2003; Harley, 2001; Kugihara, 1999; Okuda & Inoue, 2002).

A meta-analytic synthesis by Karau and Williams (1993, 1995, and 2001) of 78 studies on social loafing reveals the strength or magnitude of social loafing. Social loafing was found consistently across all the studies and the evidence suggested that it was moderate in magnitude, indicating that individuals tended to engage in the phenomenon when working collectively. The analysis also suggests that the magnitude of social loafing is similar to that of a number of other prominent social psychological effects.

Given its generality and magnitude, social loafing has important implications for organisations today. The occurrence is at odds with the belief that organising people into teams results in synergistic effects (Karau & Williams, 2001; Robbins, 1995).

Notwithstanding social loafing being generalised across various tasks and populations, very little research has been carried out on social loafing in work teams; most of the work has been conducted through laboratory experiments (Tata, 2002).

3.5. CAUSES OF SOCIAL LOAFING

Researchers have noted that groups can inhibit the productivity and efforts of individuals when it comes to collaborative tasks (Liden, Wayne, Jaworski & Bennett, 2004). Suggested explanations for this occurrence have to do with:

- attribution and equity
- submaximal goal setting, and
- lessened contingency between input and outcome.

3.5.1. ATTRIBUTION AND EQUITY

Team members may have notions that people often do not carry their own weight in groups and may thus conclude that others are not putting in as much effort as themselves (Latané *et al.*, 1979). This form of faulty attribution may lead individuals to believe that others are less motivated or less skilled than themselves. Preconceptions of co-worker loafing and authentic loafing may not always covary. At times, team members and team leaders may perceive co-worker loafing to exist even when none actually transpires, possibly because of the fundamental attribution error (Heider, 1958), that is, the inclination to attribute others' behaviour to dispositional rather than situational factors. The perceiver may often neglect to take into consideration moderating information about the causes of others' behaviour, such as whether the behaviour originated as a result of organisational factors (Tata, 2002). Faulty attribution and erroneous preconceptions may direct individuals to produce less effort in groups in an attempt to maintain an equitable division of labour because there is no reason to work hard in aid of 'shirkers' or 'incompetents' (Schnake, 1991). This is commonly referred to as the 'sucker effect', where individual members naturally believe that others are likely to withhold effort on group performance and are stirred to withhold effort themselves to avoid being played for a 'sucker' (Robbins, 1995). Equity theory is a legitimate explanation for social loafing and contends that people

attempt to exert the same effort and receive the same output as others. The underlying principle is that individuals feel uncomfortable if they are not treated equitably and exert a level of effort in proportion to their perception of the effort of others (Chidambaram & Tung, 2005).

3.5.2. SUBMAXIMAL GOAL SETTING

Members may be tempted to redefine a maximising task to an optimising task and consequently adopt a goal, not of exerting maximum effort, but merely exerting adequate effort to some more or less well-defined standard. For maximising tasks success is a function of how much or how rapidly something is accomplished. In an optimising task, however, success is a function of how closely the individual or group approximates a predetermined outcome (Latané *et al.*, 1979). If individuals perceive their task as an optimising rather than a maximising one, they may feel the optimal level of effort could be reached more easily in groups than alone, thereby allowing them to exert less effort. In submaximal goal setting, the task becomes an optimising rather than a maximising one and, team members may perceive that with a well-defined goal and with several people working towards it, they can work less for it (Piezon & Donaldson, 2005).

3.5.3. LESSENERED CONTINGENCY BETWEEN INPUT AND OUTCOME

Another reason for social loafing is that individual input or contributions are often perceived to be unidentifiable when working in groups (George, 1995). Working collectively makes individual inputs difficult to identify and evaluate; hence, the contingency between individual inputs and outcomes are lessened. If there is no information available about one's effort in the group setting, one is likely to 'hide in the crowd' where it is easy to slacken off and avoid taking blame for poor group performance (Hurley & Allen, 2007). Alternatively, one may feel 'lost in the crowd' and not receive one's fair share of credit for good group performance (Tata, 2002). This depiction is typical of people driven by their own feelings of uniqueness and individuality. In a group, individuality and the recognition that comes with contributions are lost; therefore, group members high on individuality and uniqueness

lose motivation to exert their full effort since it will not be acknowledged (Charbonnier, Huguet, Brauer & Monteil, 1998). When individual contributions are unidentifiable, the perceived linkage between individual input and rewards and punishments is low, resulting in decreased future motivation and effort (Jones, 1984).

These three explanations and others can also be described in terms of prevailing social loafing theories, namely, social impact theory; arousal reduction theory; evaluation and accountability approaches; and dispensability of effort theory.

3.6. SOCIAL LOAFING AND SOCIAL IMPACT THEORY

Through his articulation of social impact theory, Latané (1981) provides a theoretical explanation for social loafing in specific group settings.

According to Latané (1981), social impact theory considers the extent to which people can be viewed as either sources or targets of social influence. The basic premise of the theory is: the greater the number of sources and targets, the lower an individual's effort and input to group tasks. If an individual is the object of social influence, increasing the number of other people in the target group should diminish the pressures on each individual because the impact is defused among the group members. When individuals work collectively and individual outputs are not identifiable, the demands of an outside source of social influence such as one's boss are divided among all group members or multiple targets, leading to decreased levels of motivation and effort (Chidambaram & Tung, 2005). Larger groups intrinsically have more sources and targets of social impact than smaller groups, and are thus more prone to social loafing. Members are less motivated to perform because they either perceive their contributions as being marginal, or they perceive their rewards as being unbalanced in relation to their inputs (Kidwell & Bennett, 1993). This suggests that the social impact an individual can have in a large group is reduced because of a perceived "dilution" effect. Thus, whether the individual is dividing up the amount of work he thinks should be performed or whether he is dividing up the amount of reward he expects to earn with his work, he would work less hard in groups (Weisband, 2002). Individuals view their effort as being too small to make a difference given the large number of "others" who can contribute; thus, they withdraw effort from the group. When members' contributions to the group cannot be

identified readily, they respond by identifying less with, and contributing less, to the group. The most visible aspect of such behaviour is reduced individual participation in group activities (Chidambaram & Tung, 2005).

3.7. AROUSAL REDUCTION THEORY AND SOCIAL LOAFING

Arousal reduction offers a drive explanation to supplement the social impact approach to social loafing. Arousal boosts effort and drive in a way that aids dominant responses, or those behaviours that the individual is expected to follow in a given situation. In the execution of uncomplicated or well-learned tasks, the dominant response is likely to be helpful or correct. When complicated, novel, or unfamiliar tasks are undertaken, the dominant response is likely to be in error. Hence, arousal boosts the performance of uncomplicated, simple tasks and reduces the performance of complicated, complex tasks. Arousal reduction theory contends that the presence of other co-workers in fact reduces arousal when these others serve as co-targets of an outside source of social impact. Working collectively reduces arousal, thereby reducing performance of simple tasks but enhancing performance of complex tasks (Karau & Williams, 2001).

3.8. EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY APPROACHES

This approach postulates that social loafing occurs when individual effort cannot be observed, measured or evaluated. Moreover, it suggests that an individual's attention is engrossed with the prospect of external evaluation such that the threat of unfavourable evaluation, or the fixation with a positive evaluation from an external assessor is expected to affect effort and contribution. Individual specific information, accountability, or evaluation in a group setting informs the quality of a person's work and reduces social loafing (Hurley & Allen, 2007). In fact social loafing is said to disappear when participants believe that their individual effort can be observed, measured or evaluated, resulting in them being held accountable for their contribution (Thompson & Thornton, 2007). The potential evaluation of individual contributions to team-work has a particularly powerful impact in ensuring that each team member does a fair share of collaborative tasks (Brooks & Ammons, 2003).

3.9. DISPENSABILITY OF EFFORT THEORY

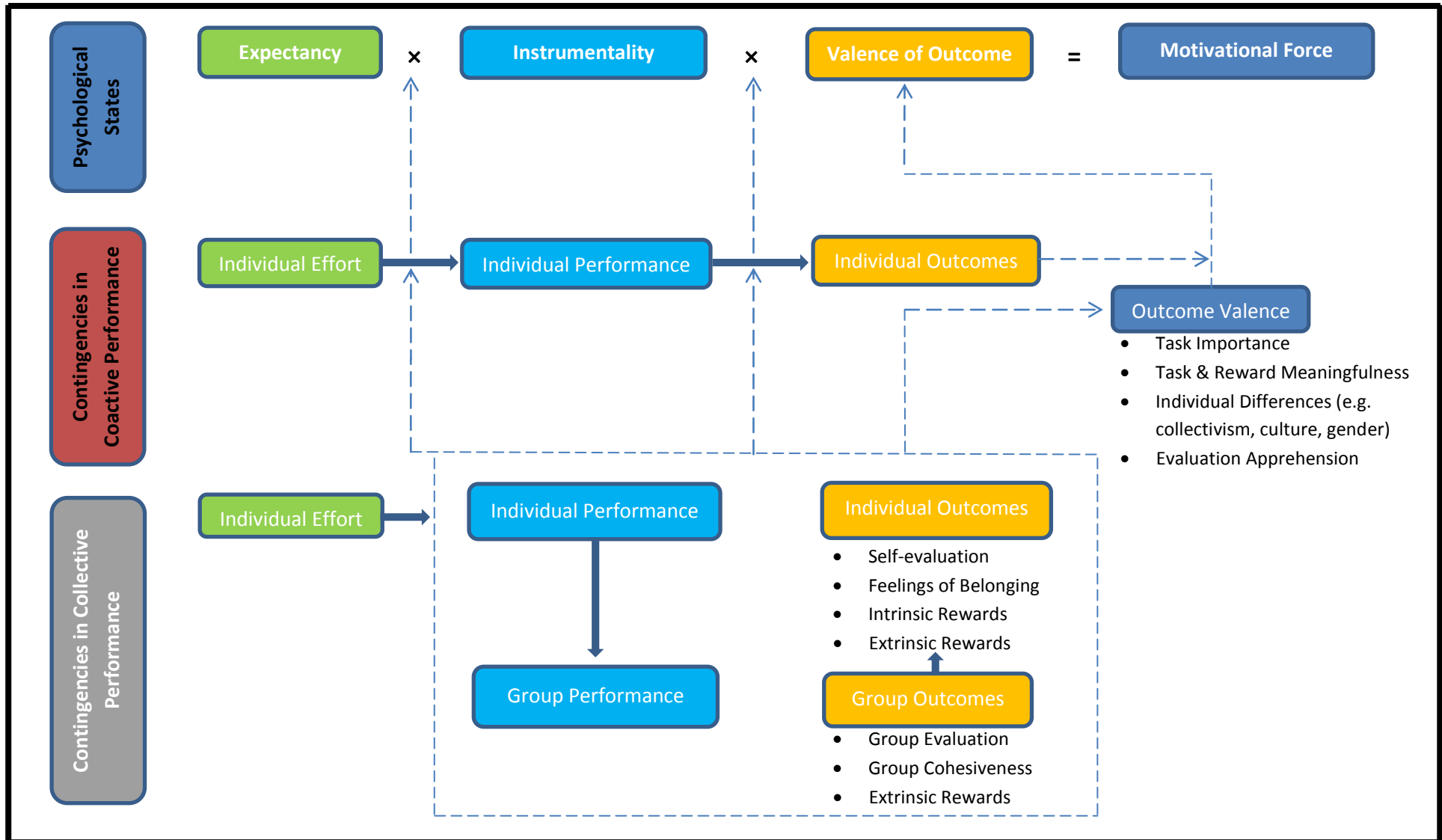
The dispensability of effort theory conceptualizes social loafing as a function of perceived contingencies, that is, the degree to which individual members believe their efforts are unneeded or ineffectual (Thompson & Thornton, 2007). It suggests that individuals put in less effort when working collectively since they suspect that their contributions are not vital or indispensable to a high-quality group product. What is more, such a decline in individual effort may take place even when group members' contributions can be openly identified and evaluated. Consequently, during certain tasks, members might be reluctant to exert effort if they have an idea that their contributions are redundant or unneeded compared with those of other group members, or are immaterial to group performance (Hart, Karau, Stasson & Kerr, 2004).

The four theories discussed above offer explanations and make predictions about social loafing within a restricted sphere of influence. Evaluation and dispensability approaches, for example, provide analyses of the roles that these specific variables play in social loafing, but neither explains nor attempt to explain, the dynamics of the entire range of variables that have been found to influence social loafing. An integrative theory approach that encapsulates most if not all of the findings in prevailing social loafing studies would be more useful for an awareness of the phenomenon and its future management (Karau & Williams, 2001).

3.10. SOCIAL LOAFING AND THE COLLECTIVE EFFORT MODEL

Karau and Williams' (2001) Collective Effort Model integrates essential elements of conventional expectancy-value models of effort with a theory of self-evaluation processes in group contexts (Figure 3.1). Expectancy-value models of effort help ascertain the most probable pressures for individual motivation while self-evaluation theories help specify outcomes that are likely to be prized by individuals when working collectively (Vroom, 1964; Goethals & Darley, 1987).

Figure. 3.1: The Collective Effort Model



Karau and Williams, (2001). Understanding Individual Motivation in Groups: The Collective Effort Model. M.E. Turner (Ed.),

Groups at work: Theory and Research. Mahwah, New Jersey: Erlbaum, p. 136.

From Figure 3.1 it is evident that the Collective Effort Model features distinct variables that moderate social loafing.

3.10.1. BASIC ATTRIBUTES OF THE COLLECTIVE EFFORT MODEL

The model proposes that individuals will exert effort on collaborative tasks to the extent that they perceive their efforts to be influential in obtaining outcomes that they personally value. When those outcomes linked to the group's performance are not meaningful, important, or intrinsically satisfying, individuals are less likely to exert effort (Karau & Williams, 2001; George, 1992). In addition, even when the pertinent outcomes are highly valued, individuals are unlikely to work intensely if their effort is not expected to advance performance that will be influential in obtaining those prized outcomes.

Individuals must believe that various factors are at hand prior to them being willing to work intensely on a collaborative task. Individual endeavour must relate to individual performance, which in turn must relate to the group's performance. Group performance needs to advance favourable group outcomes, which ought to be linked to favourable individual outcomes (Karau & Williams, 2001). Ultimately, the individual must affix some personal value to this outcome. If individuals feel that the task performance setting significantly disturbs any of these linkages, they will probably not view their efforts as useful and will exert less effort on the task. Likewise, individuals will not work intensely when available outcomes are not valued, even if outcomes are directly linked to individual effort. Pertinent group outcomes include factors such as extrinsic rewards, evaluation of the group, and cohesiveness of the group. Appropriate group outcomes include factors such as intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, feelings of belonging or attraction to the group, and information relevant to self-evaluation (Karau & Williams, 2001).

The outcomes that individuals are most likely to value or have a preference for depend on a range of factors, including:

- the perceived meaningfulness of the task and any accompanying rewards;
- the significance of the task to the individual and the group;

- the extent to which individuals are inclined to perceive collective outcomes as important, based on personality, culture, gender, and other demographic factors; and
- the extent to which the individual is interested in his/her own evaluation (Karau & Williams, 2001).

Hence, the value placed on specific outcomes may be influenced both by whether the outcomes are objective and extrinsic, or subjective and intrinsic in character, such as enjoyment, satisfaction, and feelings of connectedness with the group. However, in the case of objective outcomes, it is the individual's evaluation of the outcome rather than the outcome itself that establishes its value. On the other hand, in the case of subjective outcomes, because people are social creatures and are normally motivated to sustain a positive self-evaluation, collective situations that have distinct significance for one's self-evaluation should usually be more motivating than situations that do not offer much information relevant to one's self-evaluation (Karau & Williams, 2001). Studies on social identity theory and group-level versions of social comparison theory advocate that an individual's self-identity is strongly influenced by the accomplishments and activities of the groups to which he/she belongs (Abrams & Hogg, 1990).

3.10.2. IMPLICATIONS OF THE COLLECTIVE EFFORT MODEL

The model proposes that collaborative work settings are extremely vulnerable to social loafing since an individual's outcomes repeatedly depend less on his/her efforts when the person is working collectively than when he/she is working alone. The second implication of the collective effort model is that people will exert more effort on a collective task when they anticipate their effort to be influential in achieving valued outcomes.

Consequently, social loafing should be curtailed when individuals:

- perceive that their collaborative performance can be evaluated;
- work in smaller instead of larger groups;
- believe their input to the collective product is unique, rather than redundant in comparison with the contributions of other group members;

- are supplied with a benchmark to compare their group's performance;
- work on tasks that are either inherently interesting, meaningful to them, significant to their reference groups or to other esteemed people, or high in personal involvement;
- work with valued people or in a situation that triggers a salient group identity;
- anticipate that their co-workers will perform inadequately; and
- have a dispositional inclination to see favourable collective outcomes as useful and significant (Karau & Williams, 2001).

As discussed earlier, a number of studies have found similar and, in some instances, common variables that moderate social loafing. An interrogation of these variables suggests initiatives to reduce social loafing.

3.11. INITIATIVES TO REDUCE SOCIAL LOAFING

Various models and theories pertaining to the causes of social loafing have been suggested and developed over time (Chidambaram & Tung, 2005; Hart, Karau, Stasson & Kerr, 2004; Hurley & Allen, 2007; Karau & Williams, 2001; Latané *et al.*, 1979; Thompson & Thornton, 2007). There appears to be a regular list of variables that are connected with social loafing. A discussion of the most common variables and suggestions as to how to reduce and prevent the overall occurrence of social loafing in work teams follows.

3.11.1. CREATING POSITIVE TASK INTERDEPENDENCE

Generating a high level of task interdependence among group members is crucial to the success of groups (Piezon & Donaldson, 2005). Regrettably, as an individual's work becomes more inter-reliant with another individual or group of individuals, members may find it increasingly difficult to establish a sense of personal accomplishment. Charbonnier (1998) notes that individuals will be reluctant to apply exceptional effort unless they consider their individual task as being meaningful and unique. Studies demonstrate a sizeable correlation between goal difficulty, group goal commitment, and

group performance (Mulvey & Klein, 1998). Individuals will hold back effort, attain rewards, and estimate larger benefits as long as they feel that doing so will not affect their outcomes (Liden *et al.*, 2004). It can therefore be deduced that individual performance and group efficiency will rise when members work on tasks that are mutually essential to the group; each member believes that he/she is contributing to the end goal and all group members are collaborating.

Clarifying roles, responsibilities, and closely monitoring individual contributions to team efforts will allow group members to gain a feeling of personal achievement. Group members must also share the awareness that teamwork is a precondition for achieving the end goals of the team. Team leaders must ensure that all group members understand that their individual tasks are critical to the success of the overall group goal (Piezon & Donaldson, 2005).

3.11.2. INCREASING TASK VISIBILITY

Simply put, task visibility is an individual's conviction that his or her effort is being observed (Kidwell & Bennett, 1993). Mullen (1983) proposes that working on a collaborative task will lead to a decrease in self-awareness for individuals and result in disregard for performance standards and less self-regulation. To combat this, Black (2002) advocates assigning team leaders and clearly defined individual roles within the group and subsequently, employing methods to increase task visibility and the individual's perception that others are contributing their fair share of the workload. These methods include ensuring that group members establish performance targets, communication procedures, and methods for solving problems. Novice members may find it particularly beneficial for team leaders to provide this guidance. This can be achieved by creating timeframe milestones for large group projects or assignments, restriction of communication methods to ones that can be monitored by the team leader for participation, assigning roles with clearly defined responsibilities, and peer evaluation of group members (Piezon & Donaldson, 2005).

Peer evaluations can be useful as a method of raising self-awareness and awareness of performance standards. The large majority of peer evaluations are conducted after the conclusion of group activities. Employing this type of feedback might in reality encourage retaliatory behaviours by group members against non-performers (Brooks &

Ammons, 2003). The perception by some researchers that peer evaluations are the least effective tool for improving group performance may have limited the extent to which groups have used them (Falchikov & Goldfinch, 2000). Druskatt and Wolff (1999) reported definite benefits arising from group assessments. The success of peer evaluations is dependent upon timing. Brooks and Ammons (2003) developed recommendations for assessments that include early implementation, multiple evaluation points, and specific evaluative criteria. By including multiple evaluation points, group members are conscious that their contributions are significant and are being observed by others. In addition, group members who are performing inadequately are given a number of opportunities to improve their performance throughout the group experience. The results of Brooks and Ammons' (2003) investigation indicate that after peer evaluation, members perceived a decrease in social loafing problems and viewed group experiences in a more positive light.

Task visibility can be further addressed through the establishment of group discussion boards where members are required to post scheduled personal contributions as outlined by the leader or group. This presents the opportunity for group members to evaluate their peers' work and provide feedback. In addition, each group could maintain a log that outlines milestones, group/individual progress, and completion dates (Tata, 2002). Supplementary evaluation options include peer evaluation options that are accomplished at multiple occasions throughout the life of the project. The overall idea of multiple evaluation points is to allow all group members an opportunity to identify and improve upon individual weaknesses throughout the project rather than be surprised at the end by negative peer evaluations (Brooks & Ammons, 2003).

3.11.3. MEMBERS' PERCEPTIONS OF DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE

Distributive justice is the awareness of a just distribution of rewards and compensations among group members. A perception that the distribution of rewards is fair, has been shown to be negatively related to social loafing (Liden *et al.*, 2004). In the workforce, employees are rewarded for their task performance with a paycheck, promotion, and other non-monetary entitlements such as employee benefits. If individuals perceive an unfair distribution of any of these, they might adjust their individual work effort when considering the group size, task visibility, and perceived loss of wages if dismissed

(Kidwell & Bennett, 1993). Individuals may choose to withhold effort because they believe that the benefits of social loafing outweigh the cost of their lack of participation (Murphy, Wayne, Liden & Erdogan, 2003). George (1995) studied the effects of rewards and punishments and determined that they do not have a symmetrical effect on individual behaviours. Interestingly, her research showed that a supervisor's contingent punishment did not appear to be a deterrent. First stage deterrents such as reprimanding substandard performance are not very effective in deterring social loafing. Awareness of and reinforcing desirable behaviours was found to be much more effective (George, 1995).

3.11.4. PERCEPTIONS OF PROCEDURAL JUSTICE

Whilst distributive justice refers to the distribution of rewards, procedural justice is the perceived fairness of the procedures or policies that surround distributive justice. Social loafing in group projects is a common complaint among members who report dissatisfaction with group work procedures (Brooks & Ammons, 2003). Research has demonstrated a significant correlation between social loafing and procedural justice (Murphy *et al.*, 2003). An individual's perception of fairness in distribution procedures may influence the effort expended on task behaviours (Liden *et al.*, 2004). A possible means by which procedural justice could be addressed is through individual assessments and evaluations. These evaluations could be determined by a combination of an assessment of overall group performance, individual contribution to the final project, group meetings attendance, and the ability to meet individual submission requirements by the group. Procedural justice dictates that rewarding through distributive justice must be based on well-established and specific evaluative criteria (Brooks & Ammons, 2003).

3.11.5. SELECTING WORK GROUP SIZE

In establishing a suitable group size the group goals, purpose and function should be taken into consideration (that is, brainstorming, decision-making, problem-solving). When taking into account the group's purpose, it is crucial to consider how group size may impact on group outcomes. For instance, research on brainstorming groups has demonstrated that productivity is positively related to group size. A larger group size

produces a more productive brainstorming session (Dennis & Valacich, 1993; Valacich, Dennis & Connolly, 1994). However, other studies have suggested that increasing group size can have detrimental effects on group goal achievement (Hurley & Allen, 2007). In larger groups, individuals generally believe they make less of a difference, are less effective, and that their individual contributions are less visible (Kerr, 1989). Moreover, increased group size makes it more complicated to assess and evaluate each individual's contribution to the group (Belanger, Watson-Manheim & Jordan, 2002; Jones, 1984). An additional harmful effect of large groups is that cooperation and self-efficacy tend to decline as groups grow (Komorita, Parks & Hulbert, 1992; Kerr, 1989).

Research indicates that in smaller groups, individuals may feel their contributions are more essential to the success of the process than when they work in larger groups (Hindriks & Pancs, 2001). As the visibility of each group member's effort decreases, that group member is more likely to reduce his/her effort. A field study investigation on social loafing advocates that the propensity to hide in the crowd can be reduced by making tasks more identifiable with each group member (Liden *et al.*, 2004). Other research suggests that individuals who believe their group members are unable to perform the task to standard will increase their workload to compensate. It is important to note that group size does not work in isolation, but rather in association with other factors such as feelings of enjoyment or feeling that one is making a difference (Parks & Sanna, 1999). When determining how large groups should be, Piezon and Donaldson (2005) advise that unless the group is brainstorming, there is no significant gain in small groups larger than six. Hare (1981) proposes that an optimal small group size may be five. His research indicates that group satisfaction becomes an issue for even numbered groups due to the development of subgroups. In groups larger than five, group members may have fewer opportunities to contribute. In addition, Hare (1981) suggests that groups should be no larger than required in order to accomplish the goals of the group.

3.11.6. CREATING COHESIVE GROUPS

Group cohesiveness is the ability of the group to bond as a whole. The more cohesive the group, the more likely it is to accomplish its goals. According to the social exchange theory, when individuals perceive that they are participating in a high-quality

relationship, they will engage in reciprocal behaviour (Murphy *et al.*, 2003). If group members do not feel close-knit, they may be more inclined to engage in social loafing. However, if the group has feelings of cohesiveness, the members may interpret social loafing as letting their fellow group members down (Liden *et al.*, 2004). Black (2002) advises that team building strategies should be incorporated into team tasks and assignments. Teams need to consciously strive to create an atmosphere in which the values and contributions of all members are encouraged, respected, and appreciated. Several methods have been suggested to increase group cohesiveness:

- require high levels of individual accountability,
- encourage group discussions,
- ensure individuals receive meaningful and immediate feedback,
- provide rewards for group performance,
- provide data for comparison with other groups, and
- make provisions for social validation (Michaelsen, Fink & Knight, 1997).

Group roles can be rotated for each assignment. This gives all group members an opportunity to experience the unique requirements and contributions of each role.

3.11.7. REDUCING PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING

Perceived co-worker loafing refers to the degree to which group members believe others are engaging in social loafing (Comer, 1995). Group members will base their beliefs on the perceived actions of their fellow group members whether or not the actions are actually occurring (Mulvey & Klein, 1998). If fellow group members are not perceived to be loafing, negative influences on other group members would not be expected. On the other hand, the mere perception of another member's social loafing (whether accurate or not) may have a negative effect on a group member's motivation and could result in they, themselves loafing (Mulvey & Klein, 1998). The act of group members carrying a social loafer has been termed playing the *sucker role*. As previously stated, avoiding playing the sucker role by reducing one's individual effort has been termed the *sucker effect* (Robbins, 1995). Evidence for the sucker effect has been provided in research with participants who were led to believe that their partner, who had the ability to perform, was failing to do so (Karau & Williams, 2001). These

individuals subsequently reduced their individual efforts and performance. There are numerous references in the social psychology literature to support the notion that individuals tailor their personal behaviour in the light of their personal interactions and individual perceptions (Plaks & Higgins, 2000). Evidence suggests that, regardless of whether a task is interpersonal or individual, people seek to optimize their effort by accounting for contextual factors, whether perceived or actual (Plaks & Higgins, 2000).

3.11.8. CONTROLLING GROUP DOMINATION

Under certain conditions, one or more group members may become more vocal and assertive than other, more reserved group members. This can result in less assertive group members feeling intimidated and more likely to engage in social loafing. These members may feel that their contributions are not welcome, or that their content knowledge is insufficient to be useful to the group (Michaelsen *et al.*, 1997). Assigning various group roles to members may mitigate this by providing opportunities for defined contributions by each member.

3.12. CONCLUSION

The literature indicates that individuals tend to engage in social loafing when working collectively. Research studies propose a variety of ways in which social loafing may be reduced. Notwithstanding this, social loafing continues to have serious consequences in a variety of group settings. The agenda is not to do away with groups, because regardless of their inadequacy, groups make feasible the achievement of many goals that individuals alone could not probably achieve. Rather, the research agenda should be to eliminate social loafing by finding ways of guiding and controlling social forces so that the group can serve as a means of intensifying individual responsibility rather than diffusing it (Karau & Williams, 2001; Latané *et al.*, 1979).

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Integrated in the research methodology of this study are the objectives of the research, a depiction of the research sample and relevant sample characteristics. The method adhered to in performing the research, designing the research instrument and the quantitative statistical analyses, which were applied, are also explained. Having conducted a literature review on the dynamics involved in the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing amongst teams and groups, empirical analysis is undertaken to test the research hypotheses.

4.2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research include, *inter alia*:

- To establish the prevalence of social loafing in an organisational setting;
- To determine the magnitude of social loafing in an organisational setting;
- To investigate the extent to which the dimensions (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of tasks, visibility of contribution, size of the group, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) influence the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing;
- To evaluate whether there is a significant difference in the perceptions of social loafing amongst employees according to biographical factors (gender, age, marital status, length of service, status in group, and status of post); and
- To develop a framework that indicates the influence of perceived co-worker loafing, nature of tasks, visibility of contribution, size of the group, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness on the magnitude and prevalence of social loafing.

4.3. SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

Crucial to all research is whether the conclusions of the study can be generalised beyond the immediate setting (Judd, Smith & Kidder, 2001). To this end, the process of selecting a sample from a population can affect the validity of generalisations from the sample to the population. An explanation of the sampling technique used in this study and a description of the sample follow the definition and identification of the population and sample.

4.3.1. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

A population may be expressed as the total collection of individuals who are theoretically accessible for observation and who have characteristics in common with those to which the research hypothesis refers (Howell, 2008). Sekaran and Bougie (2010, p. 262) define a population as, “the entire group of people, events or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate”. Judd *et al.* (2001, p. 136) describe a population as “the aggregate of *all* of the cases that conform to some designated set of specifications”.

The purpose of a sample is to narrow an investigation to a small but carefully selected group of entities. This smaller group referred to as the “sample” represents a more expansive group known as the population. Sampling allows the researcher to generalise the results obtained from a sample to the entire population (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2006). The rudimentary notion of sampling is that by selecting part of the elements in a population, deductions may be made about the total population.

The population for the study comprised all employees in the organisation who are members of either a team or a group. The entire population of the study consisted of 80 employees. Sekaran and Bougie (2010) maintain that a sample size of approximately 66 is required from a population of 80 in order to ensure the representativeness of the sample.

4.3.2. SAMPLING TECHNIQUES AND TECHNIQUE UTILISED

Probability and non-probability sampling are the two main categories of sampling design utilised in research. Probability sampling represents the opportunity for elements of a population to have some known, non-zero chance or prospect of being chosen as sample subjects. In contrast, non-probability sampling does not allow for the elements of a population to have a recognised or predetermined opportunity of being chosen as subjects. Probability sampling designs are utilised in those instances where the representativeness of the sample is of critical consequence to broader and valid generalisability. Non-probability sampling is largely utilised when generalisability is less compelling and when time, finances, and other human resource factors become crucial. Both of these sampling designs have separate and distinct sampling strategies. A specific form of probability and non-probability sampling design strategy may be chosen depending on the degree of generalisability preferred, the time constraints and other resources, and the purpose of the study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010).

Respected and valued research is reliant on the careful selection of an appropriate sampling technique or strategy. For the current study it was deemed appropriate, for reasons that will unfold, to utilise a census study. In contrast to typical sampling, a census study encompasses all the entities in the population. If 5 000 elements define the population, a census would acquire intelligence from each and every element. In most instances the viability of utilising a census rather than a sample is not possible and financially impractical. Census studies also deliver far slower results than does sampling (Howell, 2008).

Notwithstanding these obvious disadvantages, the advantages of sampling over census studies are less convincing when the population is small and the variability is high. Two conditions are appropriate for a census study:

- a census is feasible when the population is small, and
- a census is necessary when the subjects are quite different from one another (Parasuraman, Grewal & Krishnan, 2006).

For the purpose of this research, a census study was considered appropriate given the small population size. The population in the current study comprised 80 employees and would have required a meagre sample size of approximately 66 subjects. In terms of

practicality and in the interests of the higher validity of generalisations, the study included the entire populace as its sample.

4.3.3. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

The biographical and demographic characteristics of the sample are set out in Table 4.1 and descriptions of the most salient sample characteristics are discussed.

TABLE 4.1
SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES		n	%
Gender	Male	37	46.3%
	Female	43	53.8%
Age	30 years and under	44	55.0%
	Over 30 years	36	45.0%
Marital Status	Unmarried	47	58.8%
	Married	33	41.3%
Length of service	0-5 years	60	75.0%
	Over five years	20	25.0%
Status in group	Supervisor/Team Leader	20	25.0%
	Individual member	60	75.0%
Status of Post	Permanent	74	92.5%
	Contract/ Temporary	6	7.5%

Table 4.1 indicates that females comprised the majority of the sample (53.8% of the sample as compared to 46.3% males). Regarding age the majority of employees in the sample fell into the 30 years and under category. Respondents in this category represented 55% of the sample (n = 44) as compared to 45% who were in the over 30 years grouping. Unmarried employees accounted for 58.8% of the sample and represented the larger portion of employees when compared to married employees, who accounted for 41.3% of the sample. The majority of the sample (75%) has been employed in their organisation between 0 and 5 years. Twenty-five percent of the employees under study (n = 20) has been employed in their organisation for more than

five years. Turning to the status of employees in their respective groups, the majority of the sample occupied individual member status. Respondents in this category represented 75% of the sample (n = 60) as compared to 25% who were supervisors or team leaders in their respective groups. Non-permanent workers comprised the minority of respondents in the study when compared to permanent workers who accounted for 92.5% of the employees under study (n = 74).

4.4. DATA COLLECTION

Data collection is the research instrument and procedure utilised to systematically collect information for the purpose of either answering questions, or testing hypotheses in a conclusive way. Information obtained through the process of data collection may also serve as the foundation for explanatory studies (Tull & Hawkins, 2009). Interviews, questionnaires, and the observation of phenomena or individuals in focus groups are some of the methods currently utilised as instruments for collecting data. Data collection is principally a technique used for acquiring reliable and valid information from respondents to enable researchers to conclusively establish deductions, conclusions, and inferences.

The data collection method utilised in the current study encompassed the development and administration of a structured questionnaire based on the literature review.

4.4.1. THE QUESTIONNAIRE AS A DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Sekaran and Bougie (2010, p. 197) define a questionnaire as a “preformulated written set of questions to which respondents record their answers, usually within rather closely defined alternatives”. A questionnaire is generally associated with survey research in order to obtain primary data by applying a group of formalised questions to respondents with the intention of eliciting information (Tull & Hawkins, 2009).

McDaniel and Gates (2006) recognise various connected and advantageous outcomes that questionnaires are intended to attain. The three most significant are:

- to maximise the relevance and accuracy of the data;

- to exploit the participation and co-operation of target respondents; and
- to simplify the collection and analysis of the data.

It should be noted, however, that as with any other research instrument, questionnaires are not problem free. Raudenbush (2004) underscores numerous drawbacks in the application of questionnaires, the principal difficulty being poor levels of response. This drawback, however, was not apparent in the current study, which yielded a 100% response rate. An additional complication with using questionnaires is that it is not possible to be completely sure of the degree to which subjects answer questions in terms of what they feel would be a suitable response rather than indicating actual practice (Martin, 2005).

A meta-analytical review of 78 studies spanning 20 years on social loafing amongst individuals working in a group or team largely constituted laboratory experiments, with some field studies (Karau & Williams, 1995). Taking into consideration that these studies only occasionally included organisational samples, it was deemed essential in the current study to reposition social loafing research from the laboratory to the workplace through the administration of an appropriately constructed questionnaire.

4.4.2. CONSTRUCTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The research instrument employed for this study (Appendix: A) involved the development of a structured, self-administered questionnaire based on recurring themes and patterns that surfaced when conducting the literature review. The questionnaire utilised an itemised rating scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. This scale is widely used because of its adaptability to many situations where variables are to be measured (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). An itemised rating scale incorporates a category of responses from which respondents choose the one most relevant to answer the question under consideration.

Section A of the questionnaire tapped six personal information items: gender, age, marital status, length of service, status in group, and status of post using a pre-coded, nominal scale. Respondents were required to make a cross (X) in each of the six categories of responses that best described their personal situation.

Section B of the questionnaire elicited information on employee perceptions of the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing within their respective groups or teams. The following dimensions based on the literature review provided the foundation for the construction of the questionnaire toward this purpose:

- Items 5-10 assessed the extent to which **perceived co-worker loafing** produced loafing amongst the respondents.
- Items 11-15 measured the degree to which the **nature of tasks** elicited loafing amongst the respondents.
- Items 16-23 rated the extent to which the **visibility of a member's contribution** caused loafing amongst the respondents.
- Items 24-29 evaluated the extent to which the **size of the group** promoted loafing amongst the respondents.
- Items 30-34 assessed the degree to which **individual outcomes and rewards** elicited loafing amongst the respondents.
- Items 35-39 measured the extent to which group **cohesiveness** caused loafing amongst the respondents.

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements derived from the above dimensions by making a cross (X) in an appropriate box. A five point scale was provided and indicated the following:

- 1 – strongly disagree
- 2 – disagree
- 3 – neither agree nor disagree (undecided)
- 4 – agree
- 5 – strongly agree.

Principles for sound questionnaire design were adhered to in terms of how the statements were worded, measured, and how the complete questionnaire was organised

in readiness for administration. The questionnaire therefore adhered to the principles of wording, measurement and general set-up.

4.4.3. IN-HOUSE PRETESTING AND PILOT TESTING OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Preceding the distribution of the questionnaire, an in-house pretesting exercise was conducted by the researcher and an academic peer to determine the clarity and comprehensiveness of the measures and dimensions utilised. Subsequently, a pilot study was undertaken in order to establish if respondents understood the questions and to ascertain that there were no complications with wording or measurement. The participants in the pilot test responded to structured, fixed alternative questions, which were incorporated to facilitate ease in completion and to aid in coding the data for analysis. The pilot test was administered to 10 respondents. This exercise was completed in late September 2010 and conducted prior to the actual survey in an attempt to determine whether adjustments were needed. To avoid the prospect of introducing any bias, the questionnaire did not directly expose the respondents to the subject under study. Limited problems were encountered with regard to the way the questions were presented, and how they were phrased. Where problems did occur, the questionnaire was amended accordingly.

Following the in-house pretesting, pilot testing, and administration of the questionnaire, the data was encoded for statistical analysis.

4.4.4. ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Eighty self-administered questionnaires, pre-tested in a pilot study, were personally distributed in conjunction with the director of the organisation to all employees who presently belonged to either a team or a group. The choice of the personal administration of the questionnaires was appropriate since the sample in the study were geographically concentrated and conveniently assembled in a single open-plan-office space. The questionnaires were distributed to employees on the 28 October 2010 approximately 30 minutes before a scheduled lunch break. The director of the

organisation instructed the participating employees to stop all work activities and devote 20 minutes to answering the questionnaire. Eighty questionnaires were collected immediately after they were completed by the respondents.

4.4.5. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE PROCESS

In the process of constructing the questionnaire six distinct sets of questions measuring the concept social loafing were assembled and totalled 39 questions in all. The six sets of questions corresponded to the six dimensions of perceived social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) that emerged as repetitive aspects and themes from the literature review. With regard to the sets of questions utilised in the study in terms of actually tapping the concept social loafing it can be said that they encompass content validity as attested to by the literature review. Content validity guarantees that the measure contains an acceptable and representative set of items that tap the concept. The more the scale items correspond to the concept being measured, the higher the content validity (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Face validity is an additional validity test and rudimentary indicator of content validity. There was agreement between the researcher, an academic peer and the director of the organisation at which the study was undertaken that the items intended to measure social loafing, did on the face of it measure the concept (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010).

In addition, it can be categorically stated that there was reliability and consistency in the administration of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were simultaneously distributed to all employees who presently belonged to either a team or a group. To ensure the regularity and evenness of the process, all participating employees were allocated 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire independently without conferring with their colleagues. Each questionnaire was collected immediately after it was completed by the respondent. This ensured consistency and uniformity in the administration process, thereby, ensuring the dependability of the responses obtained.

4.5. DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical analysis refers to the data analysis methods employed to analyse and interpret the data obtained through the use of the research instrument (Welman & Kruger, 2002). Put simply, data analyses are the statistical tools utilised to explain the data, explore relationships that exist in the data, and generally establish whether the data is consistent with proposed hypotheses and theories (Judd *et al.*, 2001). The data analysis methods utilised for this study included both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics included the use of frequencies, percentages, measures of central tendency and dispersion. The inferential statistics for this study involved the use of correlations and t-tests.

4.5.1. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics is the procedure for organising, summarising, and describing quantitative information (Howell, 2008). The rationale of descriptive analysis is to condense data so that a complete impression of distribution can be established (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Descriptive statistics has to do with “the description and/or summarisation of the data obtained for a group of individuals” (Huysamen, 1998, p. 4). Descriptive statistics incorporates measures of frequencies in addition to measures of central tendency, namely, the mean, mode and median; and measures of dispersion, which include range, variance and standard deviation.

4.5.1.1. FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES

Frequencies are the number of times a given phenomenon indicated by a score or a group of scores occurs (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Consequently, measures of frequency make it easy to calculate the percentage and cumulative percentage of the occurrence. In the current study frequencies and percentages are used to reflect the biographical data (gender, age, marital status, length of service, status in group, and status of post).

4.5.1.2. MEAN

The arithmetic average of the scores in a distribution is commonly referred to as the mean. A mean score or the arithmetic average is a measure of central tendency that offers a general picture of the data by providing an average value for the distribution of scores. In simple terms, the mean is the sum of all the values divided by the total number of measurements (Elmes, Kantowitz & Roediger, 2006). It is also applied when comparing different samples of the same population, as well as estimating a total for a population when the mean and the number of the population are known. In this study means were used to assess employee perceptions of the dimensions that specify the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of tasks, visibility of contribution, size of the group, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively).

4.5.1.3. STANDARD DEVIATION

Standard deviation is the most commonly used measure of dispersion and specifies the extent to which scores deviate from the mean (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). In this study, standard deviation provides an index of the spread of the distribution or the variability in the mean scores of the dimensions (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of tasks, visibility of contribution, size of the group, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness). In conjunction with the mean, standard deviation is an extremely convenient technique for verifying a normal distribution in terms of established statistical rules.

4.5.2. INFERENCE STATISTICS

Inferential statistics are used to make inferences about a larger group of individuals on the basis of data actually collected from a much smaller group (Howell, 2008). More precisely, inferential statistics involves formulating inferences concerning the properties of populations on the foundation of the results acquired for fittingly chosen samples from these populations (Tull & Hawkins, 2009). Bless *et al.* (2006, p. 195) state: “such

tests estimate the probability of a true difference between the parameters of two or more populations under study”.

Inferential statistical analyses are deemed essential for the study since the researcher is keen to establish differences in dimensions among different sub-groups.

4.5.2.1. PEARSON’S PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATION MATRIX

Correlation seeks to test if two variables are directly related to each other and indicates the nature, direction and significance of bivariate relationships (Judd *et al.*, 2001). The correlation is derived by assessing the variations in one variable as another variable also varies (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). In this study, Pearson’s product moment correlation matrix is used to determine how perceived loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, size of group, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness inter-correlate with each other. Pearson’s correlation coefficients of less than 0.3 are suggestive of poor correlations, whereas moderate correlations rest between 0.3 and 0.7, with good correlations being greater than 0.7. Nevertheless, inclinations of moderate correlations are conventionally accepted as an indication of variable associations (Elmes *et al.*, 2006).

4.5.2.2. T-TEST

T-tests empower the researcher to ascertain whether there are significant mean differences between two groups regarding a particular variable of interest. This statistical technique is applied to nominal data, which are split into two sub-groups (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). T-tests will be used to determine the influence of the biographical variables (age, marital status, length of service, status in group, and status of post) on the dimensions of perceived co-worker loafing, nature of tasks, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively.

4.6. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The psychometric properties of the questionnaire were analysed in terms of its validity and reliability.

4.6.1. VALIDITY

The validity of a questionnaire clarifies that the researcher can be reasonably certain that the questionnaire is measuring the concept that it set out to measure and is not measuring something else. This can be established by employing specific validity tests such as factor analysis.

The outcomes of factor analysis will verify whether or not the hypothesised dimensions actually emerge. The measures are developed by first delineating the dimensions so as to operationalize the concept. Factor analysis exposes whether the dimensions are undeniably tapped by the items in the measure, as theorised.

4.6.2. RELIABILITY

The reliability of a measure or research instrument is established by testing for both consistency and stability. Cronbach's alpha is a reliability coefficient that reflects how well the items in a set are positively correlated to one another. The closer Cronbach's alpha is to one (1), the higher the internal consistency reliability. The coefficient alphas for the subscales were as follows:

- 0.558 for perceived co-worker loafing
- 0.605 for nature of tasks
- 0.801 for visibility of contribution
- 0.811 for size of group
- 0.814 for individual outcomes and rewards
- 0.845 for group cohesiveness.

The combined coefficient for these six subscales was 0.913. Consequently, the internal consistency reliability of the measures used in this study can be considered to be reputable.

4.7. CONCLUSION

The outline of the research methodology has assisted in clarifying the research design concerns encountered, the primary objectives of the research, and descriptions of the most salient sample characteristics. The process adhered to in performing the research, designing the research instrument and the quantitative statistical analyses, which were utilised, are also described. The results and findings of the research are presented in Chapter five.

CHAPTER FIVE
PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

In this section the results of the statistical analyses are reported and interpreted. The presentation of results advances an analysis of the findings on employee perceptions regarding the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing pertaining to the key dimensions of perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively. In addition, it provides a comparison of these perceptions in terms of the biographical variables of age, marital status, length of service, status in group and status of post respectively.

To expedite the presentation of the analyses, the results of the descriptive statistics are presented first, followed by the inferential statistical analyses.

5.2. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics were utilised to assess the preference of employees for working collectively in a group as opposed to working individually independent of a group by asking respondents to respond to four questions constructed for the said purpose using a 1 to 5 point Likert scale (Table 5.1).

TABLE 5.1
EMPLOYEE PREFERENCE FOR WORKING COLLECTIVELY AS OPPOSED TO WORKING INDIVIDUALLY

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Less Productive – Working collectively versus working individually	26.25%	38.75%	11.25%	17.5%	6.25%
Less Effort – Working collectively versus working individually	26.25%	31.25%	5%	27.5%	10%
Less Motivation – Working collectively versus working individually	21.25%	45%	7.5%	17.5%	8.75%
Less Input – Working collectively versus working individually	20%	36.25%	12.5%	26.25%	5%

Table 5.1 shows that 23.75% of employees indicated that they are less productive working collectively compared with working individually. Moreover, 37.5% of the respondents revealed that they exert less effort when working in a group than when working independently. In addition, 26.25% of the participants stated that they noticed a reduction in their level of motivation when working collectively compared with working individually. Finally, 31.25% of the subjects indicated that their personal input to a collaborative task is less than that on an individual task. The foregoing is indicative that a significant segment of the respondents are less productive, less motivated and exert less effort and input when working collectively than when working individually. At face value these results may already indicate the prevalence of social loafing amongst the respondents, but more precisely the results simply signify the potential for social loafing since the existence of perceived social loafing may only be determined against established dimensions for social loafing as indicated to by the literature. The perceptions of employees regarding the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing was assessed by asking respondents to respond to established dimensions and aspects of social loafing using a 1 to 5 point Likert scale. The results were processed using descriptive statistics (Table 5.2).

TABLE 5.2

INTERPRETATION BASED ON MEAN SCORES FOR THE KEY DIMENSIONS OF PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING, NATURE OF TASK, VISIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTION, GROUP SIZE, INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES & REWARDS, AND GROUP COHESIVENESS

Dimension	Mean	95 % Confidence Interval		Variance	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound				
Perceived Co-worker loafing	2.76	2.61	2.91	0.461	0.679	1	4
Nature of task	2.55	2.38	2.72	0.616	0.785	1	5
Visibility of contribution	2.67	2.48	2.85	0.715	0.845	1	5
Group size	2.53	2.34	2.719	0.725	0.851	1	5
Individual outcomes & rewards	2.51	2.30	2.71	0.871	0.933	1	5
Group cohesiveness	2.46	2.243	2.677	0.949	0.9743	1	5

Table 5.2 indicates that employees differ in their perception of the various dimensions of social loafing, which in decreasing levels based on the mean score are:

- Perceived co-worker loafing (Mean = 2.76)
- Visibility of contribution (Mean = 2.67)
- Nature of task (Mean = 2.55)
- Group size (Mean = 2.53)
- Individual outcomes and rewards (Mean = 2.51)
- Group cohesiveness (Mean = 2.46)

It is evident that perceived co-worker loafing has the highest mean score value, thereby indicating that employees do believe that it occurs in their organisation. In order to precisely assess employee perceptions, frequency analysis were conducted. In terms of perceived co-worker loafing, Table 5.2 indicates that 42.5% of the respondents agreed and a further 22.5% strongly agreed that they considered it inequitable that each person in the group receives the same reward, when certain group members may have exerted lower levels of effort compared to the rest. Moreover, even though employees do perceive that loafing occurs in their organisation, 41.3% of the employees agreed and an additional 7.5% strongly agreed that it is possible that their personal perceptions of members not carrying their own weight may sometimes not be true. However, it is worth noting that 41.3% of the respondents disagreed and a further 25% strongly disagreed that they have preconceptions that group members withhold effort during collaborative tasks, which has resulted in them withholding effort as well. In addition, 35% of the subjects disagreed and a further 36.3% strongly disagreed that in an attempt to avoid carrying group members whom they believe are not pulling their own weight during collaborative tasks, they exert less effort themselves.

Visibility of contribution had a mean score value of 2.67, thereby indicating that employees do believe that it plays a role in influencing social loafing in their organisation. With the intention of exactly evaluating employee perceptions, frequency analyses were performed. With regards to visibility of contribution, Table 5.2 indicates that 42.5% of the employees agreed and a further 13.8% strongly agreed that when their group members are not held accountable for their contributions, the said members do not perform an equitable share of the workload. Moreover, 38.8% of the participants

agreed and an additional 10% strongly agreed that when the individual contributions of their group members could not be easily observed, measured, and evaluated, the said members worked less intensely. However, it is worth noting that 33.8% of the employees disagreed and a further 32.5% strongly disagreed that when individual roles and performance targets were not established in the group, they personally exert less effort. Additionally, 31.3% of the respondents disagreed and a further 32.5% strongly disagreed that when they believe their input is immaterial to making a difference to the group outcome, they do not utilise all their effort.

Nature of task had a mean score value of 2.55, thereby indicating that employees believe that it plays a role in influencing social loafing in their organisation. In order to precisely evaluate employee perceptions, frequency analyses were carried out. In terms of nature of task, Table 5.2 reflects that 25% of employees agreed and a further 23.8% strongly agreed that when team leaders do not acknowledge that individual tasks are critical to group success, they personally lose motivation to utilise the maximum effort. Moreover, 27.5% of the participants agreed and an additional 11.3% strongly agreed that collaborative tasks make the members in their group more inter-reliant; hence, the said members do not experience a true sense of personal accomplishment, causing a reduction in their levels of effort. However, it is worth noting that 46.3% of the employees disagreed and a further 38.8% strongly disagreed that for uncomplicated, simple, and well-learned tasks, the increased presence of co-workers reduces their personal desire to respond effectively, and as such they exert less effort. Additionally, 31.3% of the subjects disagreed and a further 42.5% strongly disagreed that when they are given complicated, complex, and unfamiliar tasks to accomplish, they are not stimulated to respond effectively and they work less intensely.

Group size had a mean score value of 2.53, thereby indicating that employees do believe that it plays a role in influencing social loafing in their organisation. In order to precisely evaluate employee perceptions, frequency analyses were performed. In terms of group size, Table 5.2 indicates that 37.5% of the respondents agreed and a further 8.8% strongly agreed that as the size of the group increases, there is a progressive reduction in group members' personal contribution to the group. Moreover, 33.8% of the subjects agreed and an additional 11.3% strongly agreed that when the number and demands of supervisors or team leaders increases, pressure is defused across all group members, and there is a progressive reduction in group members' contribution to a

collaborative task. However, it is worth noting that 43.8% of the employees disagreed and a further 30% strongly disagreed that as the size of their group increases, the assessment and evaluation of their personal contribution to collaborative tasks decreases, thereby causing them to work less intensely. Additionally, 42.5% of the participants disagreed and a further 26.3% strongly disagreed that as the size of their group increases, cooperation amongst group members decreases; causing them to personally work less intensely. Moreover, 40% of the employees disagreed and a further 28.8% strongly disagreed that in large group settings, they consider their contribution too small to make a difference; consequently, they are not motivated to apply total effort.

Individual outcomes and rewards had a mean score value of 2.51, thereby indicating that employees do believe that it plays a moderate role in influencing social loafing in their organisation. In order to precisely evaluate employee perceptions, frequency analyses were performed. In terms of individual outcomes and rewards, Table 5.2 depicts that 23.8% of the employees agreed and a further 18.8% strongly agreed that when they perceive that the policies and procedures used to establish the distribution of rewards and compensation amongst members are biased, they are personally less motivated to expend absolute effort. Moreover, 21.3% of the respondents agreed and an additional 5% strongly agreed that when the policies and procedures used to establish the distribution of rewards and compensation amongst members are not based on specific criteria, they personally apply less effort. However, it is worth noting that 43.8% of the participants disagreed and a further 26.3% strongly disagreed that they work intensely when group outcomes are not linked to favourable individual outcomes. Additionally, 37.5% of the subjects disagreed and a further 26.3% strongly disagreed that they withhold their complete effort when they perceive the distribution of rewards and compensation amongst members to be unjust.

Group cohesiveness had a mean score value of 2.46, thereby indicating that employees do believe that it plays a less than moderate role in influencing social loafing in their organisation. In order to precisely evaluate employee perceptions, frequency analyses were performed. In terms of group cohesiveness, Table 5.2 indicates that 26.3% of the employees agreed and a further 6.3% strongly agreed that they work less intensely when the presence of domineering and intimidating group members make them feel that their contributions are not welcomed. Moreover, 25% of the respondents agreed and an

additional 6.3% strongly agreed that they personally exert effort proportionate to the cohesiveness of their group. However, it is worth noting that 36.3% of the participants disagreed and a further 31.3% strongly disagreed that they work less intensely as a consequence of the presence of domineering and intimidating group members who make them feel that their knowledge is insufficient to be useful to the group. Additionally, 40% of the subjects disagreed and a further 27.5% strongly disagreed that they work less intensely when group members are not closely knit and well bonded.

5.3. INFERENCE STATISTICS

This section utilises inferential statistics primarily for the presentation and analysis of the data. Data was captured and processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 15.0.

In this study, Pearson's product moment correlation matrix is used to determine the extent to which perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, size of group, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness inter-correlate with one another. T-tests will be used to determine the influence of the biographical variables of age, marital status, length of service, status in group, and status of post on the dimensions of perceived co-worker loafing, nature of tasks, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively.

5.3.1. RELATIONSHIPS AMONGST THE DIMENSIONS OF PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING, NATURE OF TASK, VISIBILITY OF REWARDS, AND GROUP COHESIVENESS

Hypothesis 1

There exist significant intercorrelations amongst the dimensions of perceived social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) respectively (Table 5.3).

TABLE 5.3

**PEARSON r: INTERCORRELATIONS AMONGST THE KEY DIMENSIONS
OF THE STUDY**

DIMENSION	R/p	PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING	NATURE OF TASK	VISIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTION	GROUP SIZE	INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES & REWARDS	GROUP COHESIVENESS
PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING	R	1.000					
NATURE OF TASK	r P	0.497 0.000*	1.000				
VISIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTION	r P	0.334 0.002*	0.536 0.000*	1.000			
GROUP SIZE	r P	0.210 0.061	0.461 0.000*	0.577 0.000*	1.000		
INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES & REWARDS	r P	0.199 0.077	0.447 0.000*	0.737 0.000*	0.529 0.000*	1.000	
GROUP COHESIVENESS	r P	0.180 0.110	0.455 0.000*	0.504 0.000*	0.468 0.000*	0.557 0.000*	1.000

* $p < 0.01$

Table 5.3 indicates that there is a significant relationship between perceived co-worker loafing and nature of task and visibility of contribution respectively at the 1% level of significance. However, there is no significant relationship between perceived co-worker loafing and group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively.

Furthermore, Table 5.3 indicates that there is a significant relationship between nature of task and visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively at the 1% level of significance.

Moreover, Table 5.3 indicates that there is a significant relationship between visibility of contribution and group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively at the 1% level of significance.

In addition, Table 5.3 indicates that there is a significant relationship between group size and individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively at the 1% level of significance.

Likewise, Table 5.3 indicates that there is a significant relationship between individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness at the 1% level of significance.

With regard to the intercorrelations amongst the dimensions of the study, hypothesis 1 may be partially accepted since there is no significant relationship between perceived co-worker loafing and group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively; however, there are significant relationships amongst the remaining dimensions in the study.

5.3.2. IMPACT OF BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES

The influence of the biographical variables of gender, age, marital status, length of service, status in group, and status of post on the dimensions of perceived social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) were evaluated respectively, using t-tests.

Hypothesis 2

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in age regarding the dimensions of perceived social loafing, (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) respectively (Table 5.4).

TABLE 5.4**T-TEST: DIMENSIONS OF PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING, NATURE OF TASK, VISIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTION, GROUP SIZE, INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES AND REWARDS, AND GROUP COHESIVENESS AND AGE**

DIMENSION	AGE	N	MEAN	STD. DEV.	T	df	p
PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING	30 years and under	44	2.73	0.631	-0.511	78	0.611
	Over 30 years	36	2.81	0.741			
NATURE OF TASK	30 years and under	44	2.57	0.661	0.285	78	0.777
	Over 30 years	36	2.52	0.924			
VISIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTION	30 years and under	44	2.76	0.830	1.054	78	0.295
	Over 30 years	36	2.56	0.863			
GROUP SIZE	30 years and under	44	2.58	0.768	0.539	78	0.592
	Over 30 years	36	2.47	0.952			
INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES & REWARDS	30 years and under	44	2.70	0.811	2.059	78	0.043*
	Over 30 years	36	2.27	1.028			
GROUP COHESIVENESS	30 years and under	44	2.44	0.739	-0.238	78	0.812
	Over 30 years	36	2.49	1.213			

* $p < 0.05$

Table 5.4 indicates there is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in age regarding individual outcomes and rewards at the 5% level of significance. The mean score values for individual outcomes and rewards reflected in Table 5.4 indicate that employees who are 30 years and younger (Mean = 2.70) feel more strongly than employees who are over 30 years (Mean = 2.27) that individual outcomes and rewards played a significant role in influencing social loafing. However, there is no significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in age regarding perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, and group cohesiveness respectively. Consequently, hypothesis 2 may be partially accepted in terms of age.

Hypothesis 3

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in marital status regarding the dimensions of perceived social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) respectively (Table 5.5).

TABLE 5.5

T-TEST: DIMENSIONS OF PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING, NATURE OF TASK, VISIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTION, GROUP SIZE, INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES AND REWARDS, AND GROUP COHESIVENESS AND MARITAL STATUS

DIMENSION	MARITAL STATUS	N	MEAN	STD. DEV.	t	df	p
PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING	Single	47	2.79	0.673	0.442	78	0.660
	Married	33	2.72	0.696			
NATURE OF TASK	Single	47	2.60	0.711	0.620	78	0.537
	Married	33	2.48	0.887			
VISIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTION	Single	47	2.75	0.831	1.100	78	0.275
	Married	33	2.54	0.863			
GROUP SIZE	Single	47	2.52	0.800	-0.098	78	0.922
	Married	33	2.54	0.933			
INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES & REWARDS	Single	47	2.51	0.896	0.112	78	0.911
	Married	33	2.49	0.998			
GROUP COHESIVENESS	Single	47	2.40	0.915	-0.702	78	0.485
	Married	33	2.55	1.061			

Table 5.5 indicates there is no significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in marital status regarding all the dimensions of the study. Hence, hypothesis 3 may not be accepted in terms of marital status.

Hypothesis 4

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in length of service regarding the dimensions of perceived social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) respectively (Table 5.6).

TABLE 5.6

**T-TEST: THE DIMENSIONS OF PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING,
NATURE OF TASK, VISIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTION, GROUP SIZE,
INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES AND REWARDS, AND GROUP COHESIVENESS
AND LENGTH OF SERVICE**

DIMENSION	LENGTH OF SERVICE	N	MEAN	STD. DEV.	t	df	p
PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING	0-5 years	60	2.76	0.649	0.031	78	0.975
	6 years and more	20	2.76	0.781			
NATURE OF TASK	0-5 years	60	2.60	0.792	0.987	78	0.327
	6 years and more	20	2.40	0.762			
VISIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTION	0-5 years	60	2.69	0.817	0.475	78	0.636
	6 years and more	20	2.59	0.943			
GROUP SIZE	0-5 years	60	2.51	0.779	-0.276	78	0.783
	6 years and more	20	2.58	1.060			
INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES & REWARDS	0-5 years	60	2.52	0.840	0.248	78	0.805
	6 years and more	20	2.46	1.195			
GROUP COHESIVENESS	0-5 years	60	2.47	0.934	0.158	78	0.875
	6 years and more	20	2.43	1.111			

Table 5.6 indicates there is no significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in length of service regarding all the dimensions of the study; hence, hypothesis 4 may not be accepted in terms of length of service.

Hypothesis 5

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in status in group (team leaders, individual members) regarding the dimensions of perceived social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) respectively (Table 5.7).

TABLE 5.7**T-TEST: DIMENSIONS OF PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING, NATURE OF TASK, VISIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTION, GROUP SIZE, INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES AND REWARDS, AND GROUP COHESIVENESS AND STATUS IN GROUP**

DIMENSION	STATUS IN GROUP	N	MEAN	STD. DEV.	t	df	p
PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING	Team leader	20	2.83	0.621	0.536	78	0.593
	Individual member	60	2.74	0.701			
NATURE OF TASK	Team leader	20	2.44	0.739	-0.721	78	0.473
	Individual member	60	2.59	0.802			
VISIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTION	Team leader	20	2.56	0.866	-0.666	78	0.508
	Individual member	60	2.70	0.842			
GROUP SIZE	Team leader	20	2.49	0.891	-0.226	78	0.822
	Individual member	60	2.54	0.845			
INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES & REWARDS	Team leader	20	2.32	0.867	-1.024	78	0.309
	Individual member	60	2.57	0.953			
GROUP COHESIVENESS	Team leader	20	2.37	1.079	-0.475	78	0.636
	Individual member	60	2.49	0.945			

Table 5.7 indicates there is no significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in status in group regarding all the dimensions of the study; hence, hypothesis 5 may not be accepted in terms of status in group.

Hypothesis 6

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in type of post (permanent, temporary) regarding the dimensions of perceived social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) respectively (Table 5.8).

TABLE 5.8

**T-TEST: FOR THE DIMENSIONS OF PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING,
NATURE OF TASK, VISIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTION, GROUP SIZE,
INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES AND REWARDS, AND GROUP COHESIVENESS
AND TYPE OF POST**

DIMENSION	STATUS OF POST	N	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	t	df	p
PERCEIVED CO-WORKER LOAFING	Permanent	74	2.73	0.690	-1.529	78	0.130
	Temporary	6	3.17	0.350			
NATURE OF TASK	Permanent	74	2.52	0.790	-1.359	78	0.178
	Temporary	6	2.97	0.638			
VISIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTION	Permanent	74	2.65	0.848	-0.566	78	0.573
	Temporary	6	2.85	0.860			
GROUP SIZE	Permanent	74	2.49	0.864	-1.590	78	0.116
	Temporary	6	3.06	0.430			
INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES & REWARDS	Permanent	74	2.47	0.941	-1.172	78	0.245
	Temporary	6	2.93	0.776			
GROUP COHESIVENESS	Permanent	74	2.41	0.977	-1.511	78	0.135
	Temporary	6	3.03	0.794			

Table 5.8 indicates there is no significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in status of post regarding all the dimensions of the study; hence, hypothesis 6 may not be accepted in terms of status of post.

5.4. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The psychometric properties of the questionnaire were evaluated statistically to establish its validity and reliability.

5.4.1. VALIDITY

The validity of the self-developed questionnaire was assessed using Factor Analysis (Table 5.9).

TABLE 5.9**VALIDITY OF THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT: FACTOR ANALYSIS**

ITEMS	FACTORS					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
B28	0.778					
B30	0.740					
B29	0.693					
B31	0.678					
B27	0.660					
B23	0.603					
B24	0.594					
B22	0.348					
B39		0.855				
B38		0.815				
B37		0.617				
B36		0.577				
B13		0.565				
B35		0.539				
B34		0.485				
B18		0.376				
B17			0.674			
B33			0.656			
B32			0.638			
B16			0.608			
B21			0.533			
B20			0.500			
B12				0.680		
B8				0.646		
B9				0.576		
B10				0.573		
B25					0.837	
B26					0.650	
B14					0.612	
B19					0.394	
B5						0.696
B6						0.677
B11						0.573
B7						0.514
B15						0.479
Eigenvalue	4.427	3.921	3.670	2.924	2.667	2.510
% of total variance	12.93	11.20	10.49	8.35	7.62	7.17

Table 5.9 indicates that seven items load significantly on Factor 1 and account for 12.93% of the total variance. Four items relate to group size, two items relate to individual outcomes and rewards, and one item relates to visibility of contribution. Since the majority of the items relate to group size, Factor 1 may be labelled likewise.

Six items load significantly on Factor 2 and account for 11.20% of the total variance. Five items relate to group cohesiveness and one item relates to nature of task. Since the greater part of the items relate to group cohesiveness, Factor 2 may be identified the same.

In terms of Factor 3, six items loaded significantly and account for 10.49% of the total variance. Four items relate to visibility of contribution and two items relate to individual outcomes and rewards. Since the majority of the items relate to visibility of contribution, Factor 3 may be labelled likewise.

Table 5.9 indicates that four items load significantly on Factor 4 and account for 8.35% of the total variance. Three items relate to perceived co-worker loafing and one item relates to nature of task. Since the greater part of the items relates to perceived co-worker loafing, Factor 4 may be categorised the same.

Three items load significantly on Factor 5 and account for 7.62% of the total variance. Two items relate to group size and one item relates to nature of task. Since the majority of the items relate to group size, Factor 5 may be labelled likewise.

As regards Factor 6, four items loaded significantly and account for 7.17% of the total variance. Three items relate to perceived co-worker loafing and one item relates to nature of task. Since the greater number of the items relate to perceived co-worker loafing, Factor 6 may be labelled likewise.

Evidently, two factors generated as group size (factors 1 and 5) and two factors generated as perceived co-worker loafing (factors 4 and 6). However, no factors generated separately as nature of task and individual outcomes and rewards. On closer examination it is evident that respondents might have found group size and perceived co-worker loafing items to resemble nature of task. In addition, fluidity was noticed between individual outcomes and rewards items and visibility of contribution items.

5.4.2. RELIABILITY

The reliability of the self-developed measuring instrument was assessed using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha.

TABLE 5.10

**RELIABILITY OF THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT: CRONBACH'S
COEFFICIENT ALPHA**

Cronbach's Alpha	0.913
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Table 5.10 indicates that the overall reliability of questions measuring social loafing generates a coefficient alpha of 0.913, thereby, indicating a high level of inter-item consistency. Reliability coefficients were also generated for each of the dimensions of the study and generated coefficient alphas ranging from 0.558 to 0.845 as reflected in Table 5.11.

TABLE 5.11

**RELIABILITY OF THE DIMENSIONS OF THE STUDY: CRONBACH'S
COEFFICIENT ALPHA**

DIMENSIONS	CRONBACH'S ALPHA
Perceived co-worker loafing	0.558
Nature of task	0.605
Visibility of contribution	0.801
Group size	0.811
Individual outcomes and rewards	0.814
Group cohesiveness	0.845

5.5. CONCLUSION

In this chapter the differences and similarities in the perception of employees regarding the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing pertaining to the key dimensions of perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness were assessed respectively. A comparison of these perceptions according to the biographical variables age, marital status, length of service, status in group, and status of post was conducted respectively.

Inferential statistics were computed on the dimensions of perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively to enable the researcher to determine the existence of significant intercorrelations amongst the dimensions of the study. The influence of the biographical variables of gender, age, marital status, length of service, status in group, and status of post on the dimensions of perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness were evaluated respectively, using t-tests.

The psychometric properties of the questionnaire were statistically assessed. The validity of the self-developed questionnaire was examined using Factor Analysis. The reliability of the self-developed measuring instrument was assessed using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha.

A discussion of the results and findings, substantiated or refuted by previous research outlined in the literature review, is presented in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the significant findings of the study within the context of the research objectives. However, the meaningfulness of the current research findings will remain irrelevant unless compared and contrasted with that of comparative studies. Comparisons and contrasts with related available literature have been compiled with the intention of establishing possible theoretical connections between the aforementioned and the current research results.

6.2. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The present study can be considered to be a description of the dimensions and symptoms of social loafing amongst groups and teams in an organisational setting. The discussion of results commences with a description of the salient findings in respect of perceived co-worker loafing, visibility of contribution, nature of task, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness.

6.2.1. DIMENSIONS OF SOCIAL LOAFING

The dimensions of social loafing will be discussed firstly, in terms of the results that indicated that employees differ in their perception of the various dimensions of social loafing, which in decreasing levels based on the mean score are:

- Perceived co-worker loafing (Mean = 2.76)
- Visibility of contribution (Mean = 2.67)
- Nature of task (Mean = 2.55)
- Group size (Mean = 2.53)
- Individual outcomes and rewards (Mean = 2.51)
- Group cohesiveness (Mean = 2.46).

In addition, social loafing will be discussed in terms of relationships amongst the dimensions of perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness.

6.2.1.1. PERCEPTIONS OF THE DIMENSIONS OF SOCIAL LOAFING

Perceived co-worker loafing refers to the degree to which group members believe that others are engaging in social loafing (Comer, 1995). In the current study, perceived co-worker loafing has the highest mean score value (Mean = 2.76), thereby, indicating that employees do believe that it occurs in their organisation. According to Mulvey and Klein (1998), the mere perception of a co-worker's loafing (whether accurate or not) may have negative effects on a group member's motivation and could result in they themselves loafing. Consistent with Mulvey and Klein's assertion the frequency distribution of the current study indicates that 26.25% of the respondents revealed that they noticed a reduction in their level of motivation when working collectively compared to working individually. The resultant act of group members carrying a perceived social loafer has been termed playing the *sucker role*. As previously stated, avoiding playing the sucker role by reducing one's effort has been termed the *sucker effect* (Robbins, 1995). Evidence for the sucker effect was supported by previous research, where participants who perceived that their partner, who had the ability to perform, was failing to do so. These individuals subsequently reduced their individual effort and performance (Karau & Williams, 2001). Likewise, the frequency distribution of the current study indicates that 37.5% of the employees disclosed that they exert less effort when working in a group than when working independently. This is consistent with Schnake's (1991) contention that preconceptions of co-worker loafing may direct individuals to produce less effort in groups in an attempt to maintain an equitable division of labour because there is no reason to work hard in aid of "shirkers" or "incompetents". Similarly, Chidambaram and Tung (2005) in their empirical study of social loafing contend that people exert a level of effort proportionate to their perception of the effort of others. Plaks and Higgins (2000) in their investigation of social loafing in teams, note that there are numerous references in the social psychology literature to support the notion that individuals tailor their personal behaviour and effort in line with their individual perceptions.

Put simply, task visibility is an individual's conviction that his or her effort is being observed (Kidwell & Bennett, 1993). Visibility of contribution had a mean score value of 2.67, thereby indicating that employees do believe it plays a role in influencing social loafing in their organisation. This is consistent with George's (1995) claim that social loafing occurs when individual input or contributions are perceived to be unidentifiable. Likewise, Hurley and Allen (2007) contend that when individual inputs are difficult to identify and evaluate, one is likely to "hide in the crowd", making it easy to slacken off and avoid taking the appropriate blame for poor group performance. Similarly, Charbonnier, Huguet, Brauer and Monteil (1998) declare that when individuality and the recognition that comes with contributions are not identified in a group, members lose motivation to exert their full effort. Jones (1984) asserts that when individual contributions in a group are unidentifiable, there is a consistent decrease in motivation and effort amongst members. Hart, Karau, Stasson and Kerr (2004) conclude that members might be reluctant to exert effort if they have an idea that their contributions are redundant or unneeded in comparison with those of other group members, or else are immaterial to group performance and, consequently, not acknowledged or identified. Mullen (1983) proposes that working on a collaborative task will lead to a decrease in self-awareness for individuals and in their conviction that their effort is being observed, thus precipitating social loafing. He advises that deficiencies of self-awareness and conviction that effort is being observed will result in disregard for performance standards and less self-regulation. Conversely, Thompson and Thornton (2007) maintain that social loafing is said to disappear when participants believe their individual effort can be observed, measured or evaluated, resulting in them being held accountable for their contribution.

Nature of task has a mean score value of 2.55, indicating that employees do believe that it plays a role in influencing social loafing in their organisation. This finding is consistent with Latané, Williams and Harkins' (1979) claim that members are tempted to redefine a maximising task to an optimising task and, consequently, do not exert maximum effort towards task accomplishment, but merely exert adequate effort to some more or less well-defined standard. Likewise, Piezon and Donaldson (2005) contend that in submaximal goal setting the task becomes an optimising rather than a maximising task and team members may perceive that with a well-defined goal and

with several people working towards it, they can work less towards task accomplishment. Charbonnier (1998) proposes that individuals will be reluctant to apply exceptional effort on a task unless they consider their individual task as meaningful and unique. Karau and Williams (2001) affirm that working collectively reduces stimulation, thereby reducing performance on simple tasks but enhancing performance on complex tasks.

Group size has a mean score value of 2.53, indicating that employees do believe that it plays a role in influencing social loafing in their organisation. This finding is consistent with Latané's (1981) assertion that the greater the number of members in a group, the lower an individual's effort and input to group tasks. Similarly, Chidambaram and Tung (2005) contend that larger groups intrinsically have more sources and targets of social impact than smaller groups. An outside source of social influence such as one's boss is divided across all group members or multiple targets, leading to decreased levels of motivation and effort and therefore, members are more prone to social loafing. Kidwell and Bennett (1993) maintain that members are less motivated to perform in larger groups, thus, precipitating social loafing. Similarly, Weisband (2002) concludes that in large groups individuals view their effort as being too small to make a difference, thus withdrawing effort from the group. Chidambaram and Tung (2005) conclude that in large groups members withhold individual participation in group activities. Kerr (1989) declares that in larger groups, individuals generally believe they make less of a difference, and eventually exert less effort. Conversely, Hindriks and Pancs (2001) confirm that in smaller groups, individuals may feel their contributions are more essential to the success of the process than when they work in larger groups. A field study investigation on social loafing conducted by Liden *et al.* (2004) noted that as group size increases, the group members are more likely to reduce their effort. Contrary findings in research on brainstorming groups have demonstrated that productivity is positively correlated to group size. A larger group size produces a more productive brainstorming session (Dennis & Valacich, 1993; Valacich, Dennis & Connolly, 1994). However, most other studies have suggested that increasing group size can have detrimental effects on group goal achievement (Hurley & Allen, 2007).

Individual outcomes and rewards relate to the extent to which individuals perceive their efforts to be influential in obtaining outcomes that they personally value. Individual outcomes and rewards has a mean score value of 2.51, indicating that employees

believe that it does play a role (a moderate role in the current study) in influencing social loafing in their organisation. This finding is consistent with Karau and Williams' (2001) assertion that individuals will exert effort on collaborative tasks to the extent that they perceive their efforts to be influential in obtaining outcomes that they personally value. George (1992) confirms that when outcomes linked to the group's performance are not meaningful, important, or intrinsically satisfying, individuals are less likely to exert effort. Karau and Williams (2001) claim that individuals will not work intensely when available outcomes are not personally valued, even if outcomes are directly linked to individual effort. They add that if individuals feel that task performance settings significantly disturb the personal value affixed to outcomes and rewards, they will not view their efforts as useful and will exert less effort on the task. Liden, Wayne, Jaworski and Bennett (2004) contend that perceptions that the distribution of rewards is fair have been shown to be negatively related to social loafing. Kidwell and Bennett (1993) argue that if individuals perceive an unfair distribution in rewards and resultant outcomes, they will withhold their individual work effort for that reason. Moreover, accounts of social loafing in group projects are a common complaint among members who report dissatisfaction with the procedures surrounding the distribution of rewards (Brooks & Ammons, 2003). Murphy, Wane, Liden, and Erdogan (2003) acknowledge that social loafing is likely to occur in the presence of unfair procedural justice, which ultimately influences the distribution of rewards. Liden, Wayne, Jaworski and Bennett (2004) claim that individual's perception of fairness in distribution procedures may influence the effort expended on task behaviours.

Group cohesiveness is the ability of the group to bond as a whole. Group cohesiveness had a mean score value of 2.46, indicating that employees believe that it does play a role (less than moderate in the current study) in influencing social loafing in their organisation. Supportive of this finding, Murphy, Wayne, Liden and Erodogan (2003) claim that if group members do not feel closely-knit they may be more inclined to engage in social loafing. Michaelsen *et al.* (1997) note that fragmented groups lacking cohesiveness lead to less assertive group members feeling intimidated and more likely to engage in social loafing.

6.2.1.2. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE DIMENSIONS OF SOCIAL LOAFING

The current study indicates that there is a significant relationship between perceived loafing and nature of task and visibility of contribution respectively at the 1% level of significance. However, there is no significant relationship between perceived loafing and group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively.

Perceived loafing and task accomplishment: The current study indicates that there is a significant and direct relationship between perceived loafing and low task accomplishment ($r = 0.497$; $p < 0.01$). These findings are consistent with the prevailing literature and findings in previous studies. Latané *et al.* (1979) confirm that when team members perceive that people are not carrying their weight in groups they engage in reciprocal behaviour by loafing themselves, which includes exerting less effort on task accomplishment. Schnake (1991) asserts that faulty attribution and erroneous preconceptions direct individuals to produce less effort in groups. Robbins *et al.* (2009) concur that when individual members perceive that others are withholding effort in group performance they in turn are stimulated to exert less effort in cooperative tasks. Chidambaram and Tung (2005) assert that people exert a level of effort proportionate to their perception of the effort of others in terms of task accomplishment.

Perceived loafing and visibility of contribution: The current study indicates that there is a significant and direct positive relationship between perceived loafing and low visibility of contribution ($r = 0.334$; $p < 0.01$). Established literature and the findings of earlier studies specify an inverse relationship between perceived loafing and visibility of contribution straightforwardly (Charbonnier, Huguet, Brauer & Monteil, 1998; George, 1995; Hart, Karau, Stasson & Kerr, 2004; Hurley & Allen, 2007; Jones, 1984; Mullen, 1983; Thompson & Thornton, 2007). These findings are consistent with the current study, since the items in the questionnaire in the current study measured the magnitude of low visibility of contribution. In addition, Piezon and Ferree (2007) in their study on social loafing in online learning groups indicate a negative, although not significant correlation ($r = -0.138$; *ns*) between task visibility, straightforwardly and the perceived social loafing of others.

Perceived loafing and group size: The current study indicates a direct relationship between perceived loafing and group size ($r = 0.210$; $p < 0.01$). Although the correlation between the dimensions is not significant, the direction of the relationship of these dimensions in the current study is consistent with most of the prevailing literature and many of the findings of previous studies. Hurley and Allen (2007), contend that increasing group size can have detrimental effects on group goal achievement and therefore, precipitates social loafing. Kerr (1989) argues that in larger groups, individuals exert less effort, giving rise to increased social loafing. Conversely, research carried out by Hindriks and Pancs (2001) indicates that in smaller groups individuals exert more effort and engage less in social loafing. However, a small number of contrary findings in earlier studies specify an inverse relationship between perceived loafing and group size. For instance, research on brainstorming groups has demonstrated that group size is positively correlated to productivity, thus, deductively signifying that it would be negatively related to social loafing (Valacich *et al.*, 1994). In an earlier study, Dennis and Valacich (1993) assert that a larger group size produces a more productive brainstorming session and consequently, less social loafing. However, as already indicated most other studies have suggested a positive relationship between group size and perceived loafing in association with other factors such as visibility, accountability and cohesiveness (Belanger, Watson-Manheim, & Jordan, 2002; Komorita, Parks, & Hulbert, 1992; Liden *et al.*, 2004; Parks & Sanna, 1999).

Perceived loafing and individual outcomes and rewards: The current study indicates an insignificant direct relationship between perceived loafing and unfavourable individual outcomes and rewards ($r = 0.199$; *ns*). Although the correlation between the dimensions is not significant, the direction of the relationship of these dimensions in the current study is consistent with most of the prevailing literature and many of the findings of previous studies (Brooks & Ammons, 2003; Liden, Wayne, Jaworski & Bennett, 2004; Murphy *et al.*, 2003). Established literature and the findings of earlier studies specify an inverse relationship between perceived loafing and individual outcomes and rewards straightforwardly. These findings are consistent with the current study, since the items in the questionnaire for the current study measured the magnitude of dissatisfaction with individual outcomes and rewards. Liden *et al.* (2004) argue that perceptions that the distribution of rewards is fair have been shown to be negatively related to social loafing. Kidwell and Bennett (1993) assert that when individuals

perceive an unfair distribution of individual outcomes and rewards, they reduce their individual work effort. Similarly, Murphy *et al.* (2003) argue that where there is unjust distribution of rewards, individuals withhold effort when they believe that the benefits of social loafing outweigh the cost of their lack of participation. The perceived fairness of the policies and procedures governing distributive justice is categorised as procedural justice. Brooks and Ammons (2003) note that accounts of social loafing are high among members who report dissatisfaction with group procedural justice, which ultimately influences individual outcomes and rewards. Research has demonstrated a negative correlation between social loafing and procedural justice for outcomes and rewards (Karau & Williams, 1993; Liden *et al.*, 2004; Murphy *et al.*, 2003). Liden *et al.* (2004) contend that individual's perception of fairness in the distribution procedures of rewards influences the effort expended on task behaviours. Piezon and Ferree (2007) in their study on social loafing in groups indicate a significant and inverse correlation ($r = -0.265$; $p < 0.01$) between perceived social loafing and distributive justice, which affects individual outcomes and rewards.

Perceived loafing and group cohesiveness: The current study indicates an insignificant, direct relationship between perceived loafing and low group cohesiveness ($r = 0.180$; *ns*). Although the correlation between the dimensions is not significant, the direction of the relationship of these dimensions in the current study is in fact consistent with most of the prevailing literature and many of the findings of previous studies. Established literature and findings of earlier studies specify an inverse, negative relationship between perceived loafing and group cohesiveness straightforwardly (Høigaard, Säfvenbom & Tønnessen, 2010; Liden *et al.*, 2004; Murphy *et al.*, 2003). These findings are consistent with the current study, since the items in the questionnaire for the current study measured the magnitude of low group cohesiveness. In line with Murphy *et al.* (2003), social exchange theory asserts that when individuals perceive they are participating in a high-quality relationship, they will engage in reciprocal behaviour. Consequently, the more cohesive the group, the more likely it is to accomplish its goals and engage less in social loafing. Liden *et al.* (2004) maintain that if group members do not feel close-knit they are more inclined to participate in social loafing. Conversely, they argue that if the group has feelings of cohesiveness, the members may interpret social loafing as letting their fellow group members down and, hence, they avoid the practice. Høigaard, Säfvenbom and Tønnessen (2010) in their

study of social loafing and group cohesion indicate a significant negative correlation ($r = -0.58$; $p < 0.01$) between the sub-scale task cohesion and perceived social loafing. Moreover, they indicate a significant negative correlation ($r = -0.25$; $p < 0.01$) between the sub-scale social cohesion and perceived social loafing.

Table 5.3 indicates that there is a significant relationship between task accomplishment and visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively at the 1% level of significance.

Task accomplishment and visibility of contribution: The current study indicates that there is a significant and direct positive relationship between task accomplishment and visibility of contribution ($r = 0.536$; $p < 0.01$). These findings are consistent with the prevailing literature and the findings of previous studies (Brooks & Ammons, 2003; Karau & Williams, 2001; Piezon & Donaldson, 2005). Established literature and the findings of earlier studies specify a direct relationship between task accomplishment and visibility of contribution. In accordance with Brooks and Ammons (2003) the potential evaluation and visibility of individual contributions to teamwork has a particularly powerful impact in ensuring that each team member accomplishes a fair share on collaborative tasks. Likewise, arousal reduction theory contends that on uncomplicated or well-learned tasks, a dominant response emerges that is likely to be helpful in task accomplishment. On complicated, novel, or unfamiliar tasks, the dominant response is likely to be in error. Consequently, the increased presence of other co-workers, which ultimately has the potential to influence the observation and visibility of contribution in fact, reduces arousal. Hence, working collectively reduces arousal, thereby reducing performance and affecting accomplishment on simple tasks but theoretically enhancing performance and accomplishment on complex tasks (Karau & Williams, 2001). Piezon and Donaldson (2005) argue that task interdependence among group members is crucial to the success of groups. However, they assert that as an individual's work becomes more inter-reliant with another individuals or a group of individuals, members may find it increasingly difficult to establish a sense of personal accomplishment. This may be attributed to the visibility of their contribution being overshadowed by others, thereby, affecting future task accomplishment.

Task accomplishment and group size: The current study indicates that there is a significant and direct positive relationship between low task accomplishment and large group size ($r = 0.461$; $p < 0.01$). Established literature and the findings of earlier studies specify an inverse negative relationship between task accomplishment and group size (Latané, 1981; Robbins *et al.*, 2009). These findings are consistent with the current study, since the items in the questionnaire for the current study measured the magnitude of low task accomplishment and large group size. However, it should be noted that there is a paucity of research on the relationship between task accomplishment and group size within the social loafing context. In agreement with Latané (1981), social impact theory considers the extent to which people can be viewed as either sources or targets of social influence. The basic premise of the theory is that the greater the number of sources and targets, the lower an individual's effort and input to group tasks would be. Robbins *et al.* (2009) note that research on social loafing indicates that increases in group size are inversely related to individual performance and, consequently, task accomplishment. They add that the influence of size on a group's performance is dependent on the type of tasks with which the group is occupied. Larger groups are more effective at fact-finding activities and smaller groups at action-taking tasks.

Task accomplishment and individual outcomes and rewards: The current study indicates that there is a significant and direct relationship between low task accomplishment and unfavourable individual outcomes and rewards ($r = 0.447$; $p < 0.01$). This finding is consistent with the Collective Effort Model, which proposes that individuals will exert effort and accomplishment on collaborative tasks to the extent that they perceive their efforts to be influential in obtaining outcomes and rewards that they personally value (Karau & Williams, 2001). Karau and Williams (2001) contend that by implication the Collective Effort Model proposes that people will exert more effort on a collective task when they anticipate their effort to be influential in achieving valued outcomes and rewards. Similarly, George (1992) advocates that when outcomes and rewards linked to the group's performance are not meaningful, important, or intrinsically satisfying, individuals are less likely to exert effort and, consequently, accomplish tasks satisfactorily. He adds that when pertinent outcomes and rewards are highly valued, individuals are unlikely to work intensely and accomplish tasks. He contends that if individuals' efforts are not expected to advance performance that will

be influential in obtaining prized outcomes and rewards, less effort will be exerted on task accomplishment. In a similar vein, Karau and Williams (2001) argue that if individuals feel that the task performance setting significantly disturbs the attainment of outcomes and rewards they will probably not view their efforts as useful and will exert less effort on task accomplishment. Liden, Wayne, Jaworski and Bennett (2004) note that perceptions of fair distribution of rewards have been shown to be negatively related to social loafing and, consequently, to task accomplishment. Brooks and Ammons (2003) add that reports of social loafing in group projects and incidents of unsatisfactory task accomplishment are a common condition among members who report dissatisfaction with group work procedures, which ultimately influences intrinsic outcomes and rewards. According to Murphy, Wayne, Liden, and Erdogan (2003), research has demonstrated a significant correlation between social loafing, which incorporates exerting less effort on task accomplishment, and procedural justice, which influences the distribution of rewards. Correspondingly, Liden *et al.* (2004) propagate that an individual's perception of fairness in distribution procedures governing rewards may influence the effort expended on task behaviours.

Task accomplishment and group cohesiveness: The current study indicates that there is a significant and direct relationship between low task accomplishment and low group cohesiveness ($r = 0.455$; $p < 0.01$). In accordance with Murphy *et al.* (2003), the more cohesive the group, the more likely it is to accomplish its goals. Accordingly, group goal accomplishment is connected to task accomplishment. According to Liden *et al.* (2004), if group members are not cohesive they may be more inclined to engage in social loafing and, subsequently, there will be a decline in the effort exerted towards task accomplishment. Conversely, Liden *et al.* (2004) argue that if the group has feelings of cohesiveness, the members may interpret social loafing and the lack of effort exerted towards task accomplishment as letting their fellow group members down, and thereby refrain from this practice. According to Michaelsen, Fink and Knight (1997), when one or more group members become more vocal and assertive than other more reserved group members, they may disturb group cohesiveness. This results in less assertive group members feeling intimidated and more likely to engage in social loafing and exert less effort on task accomplishment.

Table 5.3 indicates that there is a significant relationship between visibility of contribution and group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively at the 1% level of significance.

Visibility of contribution and group size: The current study indicates that there is a significant and direct relationship between low visibility of contribution and large group size ($r = 0.577$; $p < 0.01$). Established literature and the findings of earlier studies specify an inverse relationship between visibility of contribution and group size (Belanger, Watson-Manheim & Jordan, 2002; Komorita, Parks & Hulbert, 1992; Kerr, 1989). These findings are consistent with the current study, since the items in the questionnaire for the current study measured the magnitude of low visibility of contribution and large group size. These findings are therefore, consistent with the prevailing literature and the findings of previous studies. Kerr (1989) notes that in larger groups, individual contributions are less visible and members believe they make less of a difference, and are therefore less effective and, consequently, exert less effort. Similarly, Belanger, Watson-Manheim and Jordan (2002) argue that increased group size makes it more complicated to assess and evaluate each individual's contribution to the group as a result of declining visibility of contribution. According to Komorita, Parks and Hulbert (1992), a harmful effect of large groups is that visibility and, consequently, cooperation tends to decline. Conversely, research indicates that in smaller groups, visibility is optimal and individuals feel their contributions are more essential to the success of the work process than when they work in larger groups (Hindriks & Panes, 2001). Hindriks and Panes (2001) argue that as groups grow in size the visibility of each group member declines and members' efforts are reduced. A field study investigation on social loafing advocates that the propensity to hide in the crowd in large groups can be reduced by making tasks more identifiable with each group member (Liden *et al.*, 2004). It is important to realise that group size does not work in isolation, but rather in association with other factors such as visibility of contribution (Parks & Sanna, 1999).

Visibility of contribution and individual outcomes and rewards: The current study indicates that there is a significant and direct positive relationship between low visibility of contribution and unsatisfactory individual outcomes and rewards ($r = 0.773$; $p < 0.01$). There is a paucity of research on the relationship between visibility of contribution and individual outcomes and rewards within the social loafing context.

Nevertheless, according to Kidwell and Bennett (1993), if individuals perceive an unfair distribution in rewards, they adjust their individual work effort when considering task visibility, and perceived loss of wages if dismissed.

Visibility of contribution and group cohesiveness: The current study indicates that there is a significant and direct relationship between low visibility of contribution and low group cohesiveness ($r = 0.504$; $p < 0.01$). There is a paucity of research on the relationship between visibility of contribution and group cohesiveness within the social loafing context. Nevertheless, in accordance with Nieva, Fleishman and Reick (1985), in larger teams members have difficulty interacting constructively and agreeing due to a lack of cohesiveness, commitment, and mutual accountability, which is often indicative of low visibility of contribution. Lencioni (2005) notes that when there is a deficiency in accountability, which is often symptomatic of low visibility of contribution, members are tempted to place their own needs, egos, career development, and personal recognition ahead of the collective goals of the team, thereby contributing to group fragmentation and disjointedness.

Table 5.3 indicates that there is a significant relationship between group size and individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness respectively at the 1% level of significance.

Group size and individual outcomes and rewards: The current study indicates that there is a significant and direct relationship between large group size and unfavourable individual outcomes and rewards ($r = 0.529$; $p < 0.01$). Established literature and the findings of earlier studies specify an inverse relationship between group size and individual outcomes and rewards (Belanger, Watson-Manheim & Jordan, 2002; Komorita, Parks & Hulbert, 1992; Kerr, 1989). These findings are consistent with the current study, since the items in the questionnaire for the current study measured the magnitude of large group size and unfavourable individual outcomes and rewards. These findings are therefore, consistent with the prevailing literature and the findings of previous studies. However, there is a paucity of research on the relationship between group size and individual outcomes and rewards within the social loafing context. Nevertheless, Kerr (1989) argues that in larger groups, individuals believe they make less of a difference, and feel they are less effective, deductively; this has the potential to affect their intrinsic outcomes and rewards. Similarly, Komorita, Parks and Hulbert

(1992) contend that in larger groups cooperation amongst members tends to decline and as groups grow, feelings of self-efficacy decline, empirically, both positions have the potential to affect intrinsic outcomes and rewards. Moreover, according to Belanger, Watson-Manheim, and Jordan (2002), larger groups make it more complicated to assess and evaluate individual contributions to the group, inferentially; this has the propensity to disturb the judicious and fair allocation of rewards. Conversely, research indicates that in smaller groups, individuals may feel their contributions are more essential to the success of the work process than when they work in larger groups (Hindriks & Panes, 2001), experientially; this has the capacity to promote positive feelings about intrinsic outcomes and rewards.

Group size and group cohesiveness: The current study indicates that there is a significant and direct relationship between large group size and low group cohesiveness ($r = 0.468$; $p < 0.01$). Established literature and the findings of earlier studies specify an inverse relationship between group size and group cohesiveness (Komorita, Parks, & Hulbert, 1992; Mullen, Symons, Hu, & Salas, 1989; Nieva, Fleishman & Reick, 1985). These findings are consistent with the current study, since the items in the questionnaire for the current study measured the magnitude of large group size and low group cohesiveness. These findings are therefore, consistent with the prevailing literature and the findings of previous studies. However, there is a paucity of research on the relationship between group size and group cohesiveness within the social loafing context. Nevertheless, Komorita, Parks, and Hulbert (1992) contend that in larger groups cooperation amongst members tends to decline, deductively; this has the potential to influence group cohesiveness. In addition, Nieva, Fleishman and Reick (1985) argue that in larger teams, members have difficulty interacting constructively and agreeing. Moreover, they may lack cohesiveness, commitment, and mutual accountability required to achieve high performance. Furthermore, in accordance with Mullen, Symons, Hu, and Salas (1989), increased group membership also prompts dissension, conflict, and the formation of sub-groups, all of which contribute to the lower satisfaction levels associated with larger groups.

Table 5.3 also indicates that there is a significant relationship between individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness at the 1% level of significance.

Individual outcomes and rewards and group cohesiveness: The current study indicates that there is a significant and direct relationship between unfavourable individual outcomes and rewards and low group cohesiveness ($r = 0.557$; $p < 0.01$). These findings are consistent with established literature and the conclusions of earlier studies. However, there is a paucity of research on the relationship between individual outcomes and rewards and group cohesiveness within the social loafing context. Nevertheless, Murphy, Wayne, Liden and Erodogan (2003), conclude that when individuals perceive that they are participating in a cohesive, high-quality relationship, they will engage in reciprocal behaviour; consequently, the more cohesive the group, the more likely it is to accomplish its goals. Deductively, group goal accomplishment has often been linked in established organisational behaviour literature to favourable intrinsic outcomes and reward attainment.

6.2.2. IMPACT OF BIOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES

The results indicate there was a significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in age regarding individual outcomes and rewards at the 5% level of significance. The mean score values for individual outcomes and rewards indicate that employees who are 30 years and younger (Mean = 2.70) feel more strongly than employees who are 30 years and over (Mean = 2.27) that individual outcomes and rewards play a significant role in influencing social loafing. However, there is no significant difference in the perceptions of employees varying in age regarding perceived loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, group size, and group cohesiveness respectively.

There is a paucity of research on the relationship between age and individual outcomes and rewards within the social loafing context. Nevertheless, existing research studies have tested social loafing within laboratory settings; its prevalence has been discovered within numerous work environments, within a variety of tasks, and throughout many distinct populations varying in age, gender, and cultures (Karau & Williams, 2001). A discussion on age would be counterproductive in this instance since none of the extant literature reflects a link with individual outcomes and rewards.

The results also indicate that there was no significant difference in the perceptions of employees according to marital status, length of service, status in group, and status of post regarding all the dimensions of the study.

6.3. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the association between preconceptions of co-worker loafing, task accomplishment, visibility of contribution, group size, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness were expounded on. To develop the scientific usefulness of the research, previous works were quoted which confirmed and/or refuted the findings of the current study. Chapter seven offers conclusions, which can be drawn from the current research and provides recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1. INTRODUCTION

The primary focus of this study was to ascertain the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing in an organisational setting as perceived by employees belonging to either a group or a team. This objective was realised through empirically testing several hypotheses. The results obtained indicate that social loafing is prevalent in the organisation under study; however, the magnitude of the occurrence may be described as moderate in terms of the analysis of results.

7.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The intention of this section is to provide a discussion on important conclusions and experiences, which can be drawn from the results of the current research and to offer recommendations and interventions for the organisation under study. Recommendations for future research in social loafing are also proposed.

7.2.1. RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

A notable finding of the study in terms of perceived loafing indicated that 35% of the respondents admitted having preconceptions that their co-workers were loafing, which resulted in them withholding effort themselves. However, 49% of the respondents indicated that their perceptions of co-workers not carrying their own weight might sometimes not be real. It is a matter for concern that individuals may potentially loaf as a result of preconceptions. This form of faulty attribution may lead individuals to believe that others are less motivated or less skilled than themselves. Preconceptions of co-worker loafing and authentic loafing may not always covary. At times, team members and team leaders may perceive loafing even when no actual social loafing transpires, possibly because of the *fundamental attribution error* (Heider, 1958), that is, *the inclination to attribute others' behaviour to dispositional rather than situational factors*. The perceiver may often neglect to take into consideration moderating

information about the causes of the behaviour of others, such as whether the behaviour originated as a result of organisational factors (Tata, 2002). Faulty attribution and erroneous preconceptions may direct the perceiver to produce less effort in groups with an attempt to maintain an equitable division of labour because there is no reason to work hard in aid of “shirkers” or “incompetents” (Schnake, 1991). Consequently, *individuals need to be made aware of the error of unauthentic perceptions of co-worker loafing* since if this continues unchecked it will advance a cycle of needless loafing.

With reference to task accomplishment, 39% of the employees thought that collaborative tasks make the members in their group more inter-reliant; hence, they do not experience a true sense of personal accomplishment, causing a reduction in their levels of effort. In addition, the results indicated that 49% of employees believed that team leaders did not acknowledge that individual tasks are critical to overall group success and therefore, employees lost their motivation to utilise their absolute effort. Regrettably, as an individual’s work becomes more inter-reliant with another individual or group of individuals, members may find it increasingly difficult to establish a sense of personal accomplishment. Charbonnier (1998) proposes that individuals will be reluctant to apply exceptional effort unless they consider their individual task as meaningful and unique. Individuals will hold back effort as they feel that doing so will not affect their outcomes (Liden, 2004). Clarifying individual roles and responsibilities, and *closely monitoring individual contribution* to team efforts will allow group members to gain a sense of personal achievement. In addition, group members must share awareness that *teamwork and inter-reliance is a precondition for achieving the end goals of the team*. Finally, team leaders must ensure that all group members understand that their *individual tasks are critical to the success of the overall group goal* (Piezon & Donaldson, 2005).

With reference to visibility of contribution, 49% of the respondents admitted that when the individual contributions of their group members are not easily observed, measured, and evaluated, these group members worked less intensely. In addition, 56% of employees acknowledged that when their group members are not held accountable for their contributions, these group members subsequently did not perform an equitable share of the work. To combat this, Black (2002) advocates the appointment of team leaders to groups with the expressed purpose of overseeing the contributions of individual members. Black (2002) also encourages *clearly defined individual roles and*

performance targets for members within the group. Individual- specific information, accountability, or evaluation in a group setting informs the quality of a person's work and reduces social loafing (Hurley & Allen, 2007). This can be achieved by creating timeframe milestones for large group projects or assignments, *restriction of communication methods to ones that can be monitored* by the team leader for participation, assigning roles with clearly defined responsibilities, and *peer evaluation of group members* (Piezon & Donaldson, 2005). In fact social loafing is said to disappear when participants believe their individual effort can be observed, measured or evaluated, resulting in them being held accountable for their contribution (Thompson & Thornton, 2007). Task visibility can be further addressed through the *establishment of group discussion boards* where members are required to post scheduled personal contributions as outlined by the leader or group. The potential evaluation of individual contributions to team-work has a particularly powerful impact in ensuring that each team member does a fair share on collaborative tasks (Brooks & Ammons, 2003).

With regard to group size, 46% of the respondents held the view that as the size of the group increases, there is a progressive reduction in group members' personal contribution to the group. Similarly, 45% of the employees acknowledged that when the number and demands of supervisors' increases, pressure is defused across all group members, and there is a progressive reduction in group members' contribution to a collaborative task. In establishing a suitable group size the *group goals, purpose, and function should be taken into consideration* (that is, brainstorming, decision making, problem solving). When taking into account the group's purpose, it is crucial to consider how group size may impact group outcomes. Research on brainstorming groups has demonstrated that productivity is positively correlated to group size. A larger group produces a more productive brainstorming session (Dennis & Valacich, 1993; Valacich, Dennis, & Connolly, 1994). However, most other studies have suggested that increasing group size can have detrimental effects on group goal achievement (Cox, 2007; Hurley & Allen, 2007). When determining how large a group should be, Piezon and Donaldson (2005) advise that unless the group is brainstorming, there is *no significant gain in small groups larger than six*. Hare (1981) proposes that an *optimal small group size may be five*. For groups larger than five, group members may have fewer opportunities to contribute. In addition, Hare suggests that groups should be no larger than required to accomplish the group goals. His research indicates

that group satisfaction becomes an issue for even numbered groups due to the development of subgroups.

With reference to individual outcomes and rewards, 26% of the employees held the view that when the policies and procedures used to establish the distribution of rewards and compensation amongst members are not based on a combination of individual and overall group criteria, they exerted less effort. Correspondingly, 42% of the respondents admitted that when they perceived that the policies and procedures used to establish the distribution of rewards and compensation amongst members were biased, they felt less motivated to expend absolute effort. Procedural justice is the perceived fairness of the procedures or policies that surround distributive justice. A possible means by which procedural justice could be addressed is through *individual assessments and evaluations*. These evaluations could be determined by a combination of looking at *overall group performance, individual contribution to the final project, group meetings attendance, and the ability to meet individual submission requirements* by the group. Procedural justice dictates that rewarding through distributive justice must be based on well-established and specific evaluation criteria (Brooks & Ammons, 2003).

An important finding of the study in terms of group cohesiveness was indicated by the fact that 31% of the employees admitted exerting effort proportionate to the cohesiveness of their group. Correspondingly, 33% of the respondents held the view that the presence of domineering and intimidating group members made them feel that their contributions were not welcomed, consequently they worked less intensely. Black (2002) advises that *constructive team building strategies should be incorporated into team tasks and assignments*. Teams need to consciously strive to *create an atmosphere in which the values and contributions of all members are encouraged*, respected, and appreciated. Several methods have been suggested to increase group cohesiveness, including:

- (a) press for high levels of individual accountability,
- (b) encourage group discussions,
- (c) ensure individuals receive meaningful and immediate feedback,
- (d) provide rewards for group performance,
- (e) provide data for comparison with other groups, and

(f) make provision for social validation (Michaelsen *et al.*, 1997).

In addition, group roles can be rotated for each assignment. This provides all group members with an opportunity to experience the unique requirements and contributions of each role. Finally, assigning various group roles to members by providing opportunities for defined contributions by each member may allow less assertive group members to feel less intimidated and prevent them from feeling that their contributions are not welcome, or that their content knowledge is insufficient (Michaelsen *et al.*, 1997).

The ensuing framework (Figure 7.1) indicates recommendations and interventions for the influence of perceived co-worker loafing, nature of task, visibility of contribution, size of the group, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness on the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing.

FIGURE 7.1
INTERVENTIONS FOR THE DIMENSIONS INFLUENCING SOCIAL LOAFING



7.2.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research could take a number of directions. A particularly pressing need is to validate social loafing in other real life settings such as small businesses, multinational corporations, agencies, committees, panels, juries, partnerships, and interpersonal associations. Further research could address the generalizability of social loafing in terms of dispositional and situational factors.

7.3. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study show that individuals tend to engage in social loafing when working in groups or teams. Social loafing appears to be moderate in magnitude and generalizable across tasks. The study suggests that social loafing mainly occurs because:

- individuals entertain unauthentic preconceptions of co-worker loafing,
- individuals do not experience a true sense of personal accomplishment on collaborative or inter-reliant tasks,
- team leaders do not acknowledge that individual tasks are critical to overall group success,
- individual contributions cannot be easily observed, measured, and evaluated,
- group members are not held accountable for their effort,
- large groups lead to a reduction in personal contributions to the group,
- policies and procedures used to establish the distribution of rewards and compensation are not based on a combination of individual and group criteria,
- policies and procedures used to establish the distribution of rewards and compensation are considered to be biased,
- group cohesiveness is low,

- individuals feel their contributions are not welcomed by domineering and intimidating group members.

The primary aim and objective of ascertaining the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing in an organisational setting as perceived by employees belonging to either a group or a team was achieved. In addition, the extent to which the dimensions of social loafing (perceived co-worker loafing, nature of tasks, visibility of contribution, size of the group, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness) respectively influenced the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing was also established. Moreover, the findings with regard to significant differences in the perception of social loafing amongst employees according to biographical factors (gender, age, marital status, length of service, status in group, and status of post) were also established. Finally, the analysis, interpretation and discussion of results of the study generated a framework that not only indicates the influence of perceived co-worker loafing, nature of tasks, visibility of contribution, size of the group, individual outcomes and rewards, and group cohesiveness on the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing but allows for the recommendation of practical interventions to reduce social loafing.

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Appendix: A

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
School of Management**

Dear Respondent,

M Admin. Research Project

Researcher: Dhashen Naicker
Supervisor: Prof. Sanjana Brijball Parumasur
Research Office: Ms P Ximba

The Prevalence and Magnitude of Social Loafing in an Organisational Setting

The purpose of this survey is to solicit information from you regarding Social Loafing. The information and ratings you provide us with will go a long way in helping us identify the prevalence and magnitude of social loafing in an organisational setting. The questionnaire should only take 10-15 minutes to complete. In this questionnaire, you are asked to indicate what is true for you, so there are no “right” or “wrong” answers to any question. Work as rapidly as you can. If you wish to make a comment please write it directly on the questionnaire itself. Make sure not to skip any questions.

Thank you for participating!

SECTION A – Biographical Data

Please provide one response by making a tick in the appropriate box.

1. Gender

Male	Female
1	2

2. Age

Below 21 years	21-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	51-60 years	Over 60 years
1	2	3	4	5	6

3. Marital status

Single	Married	Divorced
1	2	3

4. Length of service

0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	Above 30 years
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. Status in group

Supervisor	Team leader	Individual member
1	2	3

6. Status of post

Permanent	Contract	Temporary
1	2	3

SECTION B

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by making a cross (X) in the appropriate box. Use the scale provided.

1) SD = Strongly disagree, 2) D = Disagree, 3) NA/ND = Neither Agree nor Disagree (undecided), 4) A = Agree, 5) SA = Strongly Agree	SD	D	NA/ ND	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5
1. I am less productive working collectively compared to working individually.					
2. I exert less effort when working in a group than working independently.					
3. I have noticed a reduction in my level of motivation when working collectively compared to working individually.					
4. My personal input to a collaborative task is less than that on an individual task.					
5. When I perceive group members do not exert as much effort as myself on collaborative tasks, my motivation to do such tasks reduces.					
6. I have preconceptions that group members withhold effort on collaborative tasks, which has resulted in me withholding effort as well.					
7. I consider it inequitable that each person in the group receives the same reward, when certain group members have exerted decreased levels of effort compared to the rest.					
8. In order to maintain an equitable division of labour, I exert effort proportionate to my perception of other members' efforts.					
9. It is possible that my perceptions of members not carrying their own weight may sometimes not be actual.					
10. In an attempt to avoid carrying group members who I believe are not pulling their own weight on collaborative tasks, I exert less effort myself.					
11. Tasks that demand rapid time response have been redefined by group members to simply approximate a minimal acceptable timeline, thus enabling group members to apply less effort.					
12. When I am given complicated, complex, and unfamiliar tasks to accomplish, I am not aroused to respond effectively and I work less intensely.					
13. On uncomplicated, simple, and well-learned tasks, the increased presence of co-workers reduces my arousal to respond effectively, and as such I put forth less effort.					
14. Collaborative tasks make the members in my group more inter-reliant; hence they do not experience a true sense of personal accomplishment, causing a reduction in their levels of effort.					
15. When team leaders do not acknowledge that individual tasks are critical to group success, I lose motivation to utilize my absolute effort.					

1) SD = Strongly disagree, 2) D = Disagree, 3) NA/ND = Neither Agree nor Disagree (undecided), 4) A = Agree, 5) SA = Strongly Agree	SD	D	NA/ ND	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5
16. When my contributions to the group cannot be identified by others, I exert less effort.					
17. When I do not receive recognition for good group performance, due to my contribution not being identified by others, there is a reduction in my motivation to use my complete effort.					
18. When I can avoid taking blame for poor group performance, due to my contribution not being identified by others, I exert less effort.					
19. When the individual contributions of my group members cannot be easily observed, measured, and evaluated, they work less intensely.					
20. When my group members are not held accountable for their contributions, they do not perform an equitable share of the work.					
21. When my contributions cannot be identified, the threat of an unfavourable evaluation becomes nonexistent; consequently, I put forth less effort.					
22. When I believe my input is immaterial to making a difference to the group outcome, I do not utilize all my effort.					
23. When individual roles and performance targets are not established in the group, I exert less effort.					
24. When the number of group members increases, I experience diminished pressure on collaborative tasks, and therefore do not apply absolute effort.					
25. As the size of the group increases, there is a progressive reduction in group members' personal contribution to the group.					
26. When the number and demands of supervisors or team leaders increases, pressure is defused across all group members, and there is a progressive reduction in group members' contribution to a collaborative task.					
27. In large group settings, I consider my contribution too small to make a difference; consequently, I am not motivated to apply total effort.					
28. As the size of my group increases, assessing and evaluating my contribution to collaborative tasks decreases, therefore I work less intensely.					
29. As the size of my group increases, cooperation amongst group members decreases; hence, I work less intensely.					
30. When I am not convinced that my contribution will be influential in obtaining outcomes that I personally value, I exert less effort.					
31. When group outcomes are not linked to favourable individual outcomes, I work less intensely.					
32. When I perceive the distribution of rewards and compensation amongst members is unjust, I withhold my complete effort.					

1) SD = Strongly disagree, 2) D = Disagree, 3) NA/ND = Neither Agree nor Disagree (undecided), 4) A = Agree, 5) SA = Strongly Agree	SD	D	NA/ ND	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5
33. When I perceive that the policies and procedures used to establish the distribution of rewards and compensation amongst members are biased, I am less motivated to expend absolute effort.					
34. When the policies and procedures used to establish the distribution of rewards and compensation amongst members are not based on specific criteria, I apply less effort.					
35. When group member are not closely knit and well bonded, I work less intensely.					
36. When my group does not appreciate and respect the values and contributions of all its members, I put forth less effort.					
37. I exert effort proportionate to the cohesiveness of my group.					
38. The presence of domineering and intimidating group members make me feel that my contributions are not welcomed; consequently, I work less intensely.					
39. The presence of domineering and intimidating group members make me feel that my knowledge is insufficient to be useful to the group, therefore I work less intensely.					

Thank you for your time and co-operation.



**UNIVERSITY OF
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10 November 2010

Mr D Naicker
School of Management
WESTVILLE CAMPUS

Dear Mr Naicker

PROTOCOL: The Prevalence and Magnitude of Social Loafing in an Organizational Setting
ETHICAL APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/1283/2010 M: Faculty of Management Studies

In response to your application dated 29 October 2010, Student Number: **9508713** the Humanities & Social Sciences Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been given **FULL APPROVAL**.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

.....
Professor Steve Collings (Chair)
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

SC/sn

cc: Prof. S B Parumasur (Supervisor)
cc: Mrs. C Haddon

Postal Address:

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■ Edgewood

■ Howard College

■ Medical School

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■ Westville

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

CASE STUDY – CAREER CHOICE IN MIDDLE ADULTHOOD

By

Dhashendra Naicker

9508713

A case study submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

of

Masters of Commerce – Industrial Psychology

School of Management, Information Technology, and Governance

College of Law and Management Studies

Supervisor: Mr J.M. Naidoo

2013

DECLARATION

I Dhashendra Naicker declare that

- (i) The research reported in this case study, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.

- (ii) This case study has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

- (iii) This case study does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.

- (iv) This case study does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - a) Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced;
 - b) Where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed inside quotation marks, and referenced.

- (v) Where I have reproduced a publication of which I am author, co-author or editor, I have indicated in detail which part of the publication was actually written by myself alone and have fully referenced such publications.

- (vi) This case study does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the case study and in the References sections.

Signed:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Lastly, but above all, I acknowledge my adoration and reverence to my God, who has guided my being in all of my undertakings.

This study is dedicated to
Audrey and Hailey Naicker

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

For the purpose of this case study, the candidate has been identified as an appropriate individual to evaluate. The individual and family background, educational history, work experience, and problem identification and its significance will be discussed in this chapter. Moreover, the biographical data of the client will also be provided.

1.2. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

<u>NAME:</u>	Joyce (Pseudonym)
<u>GENDER:</u>	Female
<u>AGE:</u>	43
<u>DATE OF BIRTH:</u>	26/11/69
<u>MARITAL STATUS:</u>	Widowed
<u>RACE:</u>	Indian
<u>NATIONALITY:</u>	South African
<u>RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS:</u>	Mobeni Heights Durban
<u>HIGHEST SCHOOL QUALIFICATION:</u>	Matric
<u>NAME OF LAST SCHOOL ATTENDED:</u>	Ganges Secondary School
	Start date: 1982
	End date: 1986

1.3. FAMILY, INDIVIDUAL AND EARLY EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Joyce is widowed and is the sole breadwinner of a small family. She has two children, a girl aged 15 and a boy aged ten. Additionally, her mother lives with her.

Before starting high school, Joyce decided to pursue English, Afrikaans, Accounting, Mathematics, Geography and Biology as school subjects (Course G48). Joyce was content with her subject selection since it would potentially allow her access to various fields of tertiary study or careers she might wish to pursue. While at school, her extramural interests included netball and volleyball. Since completing school, her interests include reading, gardening, watching movies and spending quality time with her children.

She matriculated in 1986 with the following symbols:

English	-	C (HG)
Afrikaans	-	C (HG)
Accounting	-	D (SG)
Mathematics	-	B (SG)
Geography	-	D (HG)
Biology	-	E (SG)

In high school Joyce had a preference for Geography. She enjoyed learning about the physical features of the earth and its atmosphere, and of human activity as it affects and is affected by these. Additionally, she enjoyed the fact that Geography was not as structured as the other subjects and allowed her the opportunity to learn about various cultures and places.

The subject she disliked most was Accounting. The subject did not interest her and she claims that she could never understand the basic principles of the subject.

Upon completing her schooling Joyce did not qualify for acceptance to a University due the results she obtained in matric. She subsequently got married, had children and held various administrative positions.

In late 2009 her spouse unexpectedly passed on due to a hidden cardio-vascular condition. Joyce declares that she was devastated by the event and has since been overwhelmed by

the economic and financial impact this has had on her and her family. She asserts that since the incident she has been contemplating a career change to enhance her quality of life but claims that she has not made significant progress.

1.4. WORK HISTORY AND EXPERIENCE

Joyce worked as an Administrative Assistant for a shipping company in the Durban central business district between February 1990 and June 1994. She was a stay-at-home wife and mother from July 1994 to December 2006. In January 2007 she was employed as an Administrative Clerk in an insurance company on a fixed term period of one year. Joyce also worked as a teacher-aide in a pre-primary school between February 2008 and December 2009. Presently she holds a fixed term contract as an Administrative Officer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal which is due to end in December 2013.

The position in the shipping industry was obtained in order to attain initial work experience and the positions in the insurance company and pre-primary school were taken in order to supplement the income of her husband. Her position at UKZN was due to necessity in the aftermath of her husband's death.

Joyce claims that her collective administrative experience has helped her to develop good client interaction abilities, communication skills and a problem solving mind-set. At the pre-primary school she learned how to engage with children and to promote early childhood development. Her position at UKZN has afforded her the opportunity to work on a computerized student support services system, coordinate administration and provide basic finance and human resource support. Joyce asserts that in comparison to all of her work experience she enjoyed working at the pre-school the most. She found the experience intrinsically rewarding and satisfying and claims that all other work experience gained has little relevance to her future career aspirations.

1.5. CAREER ASPIRATIONS AND GOALS

Joyce has recently been made aware that she qualifies for a Mature Age Exemption from the Matriculation Board. This will allow her the opportunity to study a bachelor's degree at a tertiary institution within the Republic of South Africa as per Government Gazette No: 31674, page 24 of 5 December 2008.

Consequently, Joyce has, for a while, been contemplating registering for a teaching qualification, namely the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) with specialisation in early childhood development in order to become a primary school teacher. She claims that she has adequate financial reserves and monetary support from her extended family to advance this ambition.

Joyce asserts that since the death of her husband she has discovered some new perspectives on different aspects of the quality of life. She believes that there has been a shift in her original career plan. She formerly would have been content to simply hold a job but now feels that it is important that she pursue a career. Joyce has emphasised that a significant short term goal for her new career aspiration is to acquire a teaching qualification. Additionally, she claims that she has gained some informal but practical experience with reference to her teaching aspirations in her role as teacher-aide at the pre-primary school. Joyce, however, contends that she is anxious and uneasy about her career decision-making and questions whether she is making an informed choice. Consequently, she has been reluctant to register for the teaching qualification.

1.6. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Joyce admits that apart from her experience as a teacher-aide, she has done little research on her desired position to determine the core skills required and whether she possesses the attributes to succeed in the teaching profession. Joyce, therefore, believes that her reluctance to register for the B.Ed. degree may be due to inadequate environmental exploration and self-knowledge. Additionally, she is of the view that given her life stage the

pursuit of a teaching career may not be altogether feasible. She, consequently, remains hesitant about her future career choice.

The intention of this study is help Joyce establish purpose and meaning in her career choice so that she may be driven to advance her aspirations. Alternatively, the intention is to assist her in pursuing other suitable career alternatives that she may have propensity to succeed at.

1.7. CONCLUSION

This chapter has identified a candidate who is an appropriate individual to evaluate. The individual and family background, educational history, work experience, biographical data and problem identification of the client was examined.

CHAPTER 2

WORKING LIVES, CAREER, CAREER CHOICE AND MIDDLE ADULTHOOD

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a conceptual outline of the function that work and career performs in the lives of individuals. The function of work and the role of career are explained and defined, respectively. Likewise, the early life career stage which is part of the career life cycle is described and explained. Moreover, other significant facets that are expounded upon are job search and career choice, the usefulness of the career management model, career success, career motivation and commitment, and career maturity and career self-efficacy. Additionally, attention is given to relevant career concepts that are often utilized in career decision making.

2.2. WORKING LIVES AND CAREER

A fundamental feature of work and career is their centrality. Centrality denotes the degree of importance that work and career has in the life of the individual at any given point in time. Work plays a pivotal role in the lives of nearly all individuals and has a direct impact on their overall welfare. The significance of work for individuals can best be explained by them connecting or even equating their work to the quality of their life. Thus, for most individuals work and career equals the quality of their whole life (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). On a broad-spectrum, subsequent to family, work has been understood to be of comparatively greater importance when contrasted to other spheres of existence such as leisure, community and religion (Harpaz & Fu, 2002). Work satisfies a host of human needs, namely, physiological, safety, social, ego, and self-actualisation needs, as describe by Maslow (1970) in his Hierarchy of Needs Pyramid. Additionally, McClelland (1978) specifies that work and career satisfies an individual's need for achievement, commitment, motivation and power. Moreover, Hall (1976) stipulates that the need for aggression, altruism, autonomy and approval may also be satisfied by ones work and career. Work is also seen as a central sphere in which to achieve social equality and personal liberation.

Work is, therefore, an integral part of the fabric of most people's lives and has a direct influence on their general well-being.

Career is inextricably linked to the world of work in the 21st century (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011) and will be defined hereunder.

2.3. CAREER DEFINED

Given the importance of career and work, individuals and organisations are forced to give more attention to the nature of the career experience. Thus, at the outset, it is essential to accurately define the concept career. In 1976 Hall specified four separate connotations allotted to the concept career, namely:

- Career as advancement
- Career as profession
- Career as a lifelong sequence of work experiences; and
- Career as a lifelong sequence of role-related experiences.

Hall (1976) therefore, in part, defines career as the individually perceived sequence of attitudes and behaviours associated with work-related experiences and activities spanning a person's life. Greenhaus (1987) similarly defines career as the pattern of work-related experiences that span the course of a person's life. Schein (1978) differentiates between internal career and external career. Internal career involves an individual pursuing an occupation whilst external career indicates the organisations role in establishing a functional developmental pathway or course for employees to follow throughout their working life in an organisation. Baruch (2006) offers a contemporary definition of career as a long-term process of development of the employee along a path of experiences and jobs in one or more organisations. Correspondingly, Weiss (2001) indicates that career is a process of significant learnings and experiences that identify an individual's professional life, direction, competencies and accomplishments through positions, jobs, roles and assignments. Puah and Ananthram (2006) argue that a career is not a job, but revolves around a process of attitudinal adjustments and readjustments, intentional and goal-directed behaviour in a person's work life to achieve set occupational-related goals.

All six authors ultimately agree that career is a long-term process or sequence of behaviours and activities spanning an individual's whole life. Thus, career development can be scrutinized by linking career stages to periods during an individual's lifespan. In actual fact, career development can even be traced back an individual's early childhood (Staudinger & Bluck, 2001).

2.4. LIFE AND CAREER STAGES

A person's life and career cycle is often seen as a series of stages characterised by changing patterns of developmental tasks, career concerns, activities, values, and needs, which emerge as he/she ages and passes through various age ranges (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Super, 1990). A host of approaches with commonalities and minor variations to these life stages have been advocated over the years and are included in the works of, amongst others, Erikson (1966), Levinson (1986), and Schein (2006). Reviewing the literature of the aforementioned and numerous other authors, Schreuder & Coetzee (2011) tabulate these stages as follows:

- Career development in childhood
- Adolescent career development
- Late adolescent and adult career development
 - Early life/career stage
 - Middle adulthood life/career stage
 - Late life/career stage.

In view of the present case, emphasis will be place on Middle adulthood life/career stage. However, as a point of reference and for the purpose of contextualisation of information a concise discussion on late adolescent, early life and late life stages have been deemed appropriate to include.

2.4.1. LATE ADOLESCENT AND ADULT CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The late adolescent and adult life stages is a continuing sequence by which an individual advances through a chain of stages, each of which is typified by a relatively unique set of issues, themes or tasks.

2.4.1.1. LATE ADOLESCENCE

The chief developmental undertakings during late adolescence, also termed the exploration phase, are: acquiring an occupational self-image, evaluating alternate occupations, developing initial occupational choice, pursuing appropriate post-school education and advancing one's employability and attaining job offers from preferred organisations (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2010). The exploration stage is perceived as a phase of self-discovery and the formation of a professional self-image. Central needs during this stage comprise of peer acceptance, support and a job in which one can succeed (Miao, Lund & Evans, 2009).

Adult career development is categorized by three life/career stages: the early life/career, the mid-career and the late life career.

2.4.1.2. THE EARLY LIFE/CAREER STAGE

The early life/career stage encompasses two periods, the establishment and achievement phases. During the early life/career stage key developmental tasks comprise of learning the job, becoming familiar with organisational norms, policies and regulations, fitting into a chosen occupation and organisation, improving competence, sustaining employability and pursuing one's career goals and life interests. In early adulthood, physical and cognitive development is at its highest (Levinson, Darrow, Klein & McKee, 1978). Moral development, which starts in adolescence, is further advanced during adult development.

Life tasks of early adulthood consist of difficulties pertaining to attaining independence and responsibility, establishing one's identity, discovering a place in and contributing to society

and becoming established in an occupation and in family life (Feldman, 2002; Scandura, 2002). A deliberate commitment is made to a specific occupational field and energy is expended to stabilise oneself and create a secure standing in the working world (Miao *et al.*, 2009).

Levinson *et al.* (1978), identify a distinct phase of early adulthood, namely, the novice phase. The principal undertaking of this phase is discovering a site for oneself in the adult domain. This encompasses two tasks which can be of a contrasting nature, that is to say, investigating the adult world and constructing a stable adult life structure at the same time. In surveying the adult world, possibilities are kept open, commitments are evaded and alternatives are exploited with a sense of adventure and wonderment in which aspirations can be coloured by fantasies. Establishing a stable adult life structure, in contrast, includes becoming responsible for determining family relations and a stable work structure. Lack of ability to attain equilibrium between these tasks can cause ambivalence, uncertainty, confusion and anxiety and subsequently lead to, either a freewheeling, rootless, transient quality of life or a premature adult life structure that is based on inadequate exploration (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

According to Sdorow (1995), nearly 95 per cent of young adults embark on marriage during this stage, even though in contrast to women, men are less inclined to marry and are more concerned about their future careers, while women are preoccupied about family considerations as well as career. Although women are concerned with both, they have a robust need for advancement, which is conventionally related to career success (Gordon & Whelan, 1998).

An additional period of early adulthood is a transitional phase also referred to as '*age thirty transition*' (Levinson *et al.*, 1978). This phase persists for roughly three to five years. The individual feels life as becoming more serious and has a perception to change before it is too late for change. This period can be effortless or result in crisis, but in broad terms it requires modification of certain aspects of life, but not radical changes. The '*age thirty transition*' stage may even occur between the ages of 20 and 35 due to evolving attributes of the contemporary workplace and dynamic nature of the 21st century career (Jowell, 2003).

Finally, Greenhaus *et al* (2010) regard establishment and achievement as two intervening early life career concerns that have to be addressed by the individual as well as the organisation. Establishment commonly includes learning, assessing competence, fitting in, looking for approval, dealing with dependence and insecurity. Achievement largely encompasses contributing, enhancing competence, moving up, pursuing authority, finding independence and self-confidence (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

2.4.1.3. MIDDLE ADULTHOOD LIFE/CAREER STAGE

The mid-life transition and middle adulthood is influenced by an individual's awareness of the ageing process and an acceptance of his or her transience and mortality. This stage is also shaped by the consciousness of an individual's potential for intensified ailments and sickness (Pringle & Dixon, 2003). Middle adulthood encompasses bodily transformations, such as loss of bone density and a deterioration of muscle movement, pulmonary competence, ophthalmic acuteness, reaction time and the vigour or tenacity involved in arduous tasks. Apprehensions pertaining to physique and physical functioning are of foremost significance and may become a problem for maintaining a healthy body ego if the body is perceived as degenerating (Kets de Vries, 1999). The probability of cardiovascular and respiratory illnesses can give rise to stress. Conversely, stress in itself can bring on these diseases. The way stress is dealt with by an individual, however, is subject to the personality style of the individual and the denotation that stress has for the individual. For some individual's stress is incapacitating while for others it is stimulating (Craig, 1996).

At age fifty and beyond, females undergo the bodily adjustment of menopause. This physical transformation produces the demand for emotional and psychological adaptations (Pringle & Dixon, 2003). The period succeeding menopause is categorized as post-menopausal zest (Sheehy, 1995). Additionally, during mid-life psychological advantages include: more astuteness, independence, self-sufficiency, autonomy, being less motivated by instinctive needs, coming to terms with confines, developing more expansive social interests and a comprehensive life perspective (Levinson *et al.*, 1978). During this stage intellectual and mental performance is exemplified by being able to perceive issues more

accurately and impartially, being able to appreciate and comprehend varying positions and finding amalgamation that assimilates differing standpoints (Louw & Edwards, 1997).

Interestingly, some facets of intelligence show permanency while others alter. Crystallised intelligence acquired through experience, education and training may show permanence, continuity and improvement beyond age seventy. Contrastingly, fluid intelligence which denotes inherent capabilities such as speed of memorising, perception of relationships and inductive rational capacity may deteriorate (Craig, 1996).

Typically mid-life is a phase of greater interiority which is denoted by self-questioning and inner seeking. It is also a period when many individuals are at the pinnacle of their capabilities and feel that they are at the zenith of their lives. Contrastingly, for some, however, responsibilities are deemed as exhausting their time and energy (Kets de Vries, 1999).

Life tasks in middle adulthood comprise redefining one's identity, elucidating one's values and philosophy of life, regulating to variations in family life, exploiting more leisure time and finding new occupational satisfactions as training and experience become established. Challenges encountered during this stage include earning a living, upskilling and further development of oneself, living one's dream, achieving one's goals, recognition, plateauing and redundancy (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

During this phase women seek the freedom to explore other activities and interests in a more agentic way. Agency exhibits itself through power over the environment and is demonstrated in self-protection, self-assertion and self-expansion (Pringle & Dixon, 2003). Additionally, the individual attains a clearer sense of identity in the middle years through superior individuation. Individuation elucidates the boundaries between the individual and the outside world, including the individuals understanding of who he or she is and what they want to be and do (Levinson *et al.*, 1978).

2.5. MID-LIFE CRISIS

In the course of the late thirties or early forties, an apparent mid-life crisis can arise. Some individuals will have to struggle with identity questions like 'what have I achieved?' or 'where am I going?' The individual prevails on the divide between the outcomes of exploration, establishment and maintenance and the risk of regression. Academics and researchers concur that the evolution to the intermediate years can be just as precarious and, in some respects, more distressing than adolescence (Sheehy, 1995).

Diverse types of crisis behaviour have the potential to develop during this period. These include amongst others, depression, anxiety, attempts to regain youth through dieting and youthful clothing, workaholism, recklessness and alcoholism (Pitt, 1984).

Crisis behaviour results from the individual denying the inescapable actualities of the middle years and wants to adhere to the idealism of early adulthood when all things appeared achievable (Pitt, 1984). Within the work context, mid-life is commonly a phase of re-evaluation of the past and assessment of long-term career plans. It is an evaluation of real progress gauged in terms of desires. An individual's dream is contrasted to his or her reality of advancement. If a discrepancy is evident, individuals may settle the disparity by re-examining long-term goals and ambitions or by endeavouring to refashion the nature of their work as well as their view of work (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Realistic solutions may be found by viewing this as a period for development and improvement, rather than one of inaction or decline. By establishing innovative goals and attaining new knowledge and skills individuals can favourably re-engage exploratory needs. Additionally, by developing emotional intelligence they can increase self-knowledge concerning their career desires (Kets de Vries, 1999).

A protean perspective of career during mid-life gives individuals the responsibility to meet specific mid-career needs. This refers to a career shaped by the individual in reaction to widespread redefinition and restructuring which includes the ability of the individual to be variable, and versatile in response to his or her career ambitions. A protean perspective may also include amongst others things an individual changing work roles and tasks but more importantly changing occupational fields and occupational choice. This will entail a realistic self-assessment, opportunity to learn new skills and sharing of skills and expertise

through continuous learning. Classical examples of individuals who changed their artistic direction include Goethe and Shakespeare (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

2.6. CAREER CHOICE AND JOB SEARCH

Preceding entry into an organisation, all individuals ought to make a career choice. They need to discern what it is they would like to do, identify an organisation that extends positions in that specific domain or field, and then gain employment by the organisation before they can further pursue a career in their chosen field.

Largely occupational choice theories maintain that an individual, deliberately or unintentionally, chooses an occupation that complements his/her unique set of needs, motives, values, and talents (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010). This is illustrated by Parson's (1909 cited in Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011, p. 100) trait and factor theory.

2.6.1. PARSON'S TRAIT AND FACTOR THEORY

Parson's trait and factor theory advocates that when an individual is faced with the inevitability of selecting an occupation, the individual intentionally proceeds to take inventory of his/her vocational assets and liabilities, accumulates information about occupations, and finally makes an analysis of all the available intelligence and arrives at a decision. The fundamental characteristic of this theory is the supposition that individuals have distinctive patterns of ability and/or traits that can be empirically measured and correlated with the prerequisites of diverse types of jobs (Zunker, 2006).

Parson (1909 cited in Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011, p. 100) initially formed his theory to assist young individuals in making prudent career choices and becoming productively employed. Notwithstanding this the theory and its approach remains popular and useful in career counselling at all levels (Zunker, 2006).

Parson's approach entails helping people to develop (Sharf, 2010; Shoffner, 2006):

- a well-defined sense of themselves (individual Knowledge), including their aptitudes, interests, abilities, skills, attitudes, values, personality, ambitions, achievements and resource limitations;
- an understanding of the job or occupation, incorporating the prerequisites and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities and prospects in diverse fields of work; and
- a rational or sound pairing of the individual's traits to the job that best fits him or her.

Holland also regards occupational choice as a method of matching occupations and people (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010).

2.6.2. HOLLAND'S THEORY OF PERSONALITY AND OCCUPATIONAL TYPES

Holland proposes that individuals express their personalities in making an occupational choice. Consequently, according to Holland (1997), an artistic individual with characteristics, such as being impulsive, emotional, intuitive, and independent will in all likelihood choose being a graphic designer, landscape architect, interior decorator or journalist as career possibilities. In accordance with Holland (1997), individuals look for environments that will let them apply their skills and abilities and express their attitudes and values and take on acceptable challenges and roles. The fundamental concept is that individuals are drawn to a specific role demand of an occupational environment that agrees with their personal needs and provides them with satisfaction (Zunker, 2006).

2.6.3. SUPER'S CAREER DEVELOPMENT THEORY

According to Schreuder and Coetzee (2011), Super's career development theory also focuses on career choice as a fit between individuals and occupations. The fundamental concept of Super's theory presents career development as encompassing the formation and implementation of self-concepts in occupational contexts. The process involves a synthesis or compromise between the individuals' own view of their personal characteristics (self-concepts) and aspects of reality such as social, economic and cultural factors. Self-concepts

consist of the characteristics individuals think they possess, namely, their abilities, personality traits, needs, interests, and values. An occupational choice, therefore, enables an individual to play a role that is agreeable to his or her self-concept. Consequently, individuals will develop a concept of themselves, develop images or beliefs about various occupations, and take steps to enter the occupational field that is most compatible with their unique self-concept (Super, 1992).

Greenhaus *et al.* (2010) advances that the choice of an occupation is a progressive developmental activity that evolves with time. Several incidents permit the individual to gather information about him or herself and occupations. Accordingly, individuals learn and discover by observing and interrelating with their parents and siblings, and networking with close relatives and friends. Scholastic and educational involvements also offer additional learning opportunities. Performance at school and university, participation in extracurricular activities and discussions with fellow students, teachers and lecturers may prove to be useful. Casual or part-time work engagements also offer wide-ranging opportunities for reality testing. This presents the individual with the opportunity for testing his or her talents, interests, and learning what it is like to work outside the home.

Greenhaus *et al.* (2010) isolates cultural and social influences on occupational choices. These are the environment, both past and present, and include social class, income, place of residence, and the economic, political, and cultural climate. These facets have the propensity to impact the career choice an individual makes.

Greenhaus *et al.* (2010) ends by substantiating strategies to support with effective occupational decision making. It is imperative to foster self-awareness, having a deep appreciation of one's talents, interests, values, and preferred life-style. Precise occupational information needs to be established, as well. Alternate occupations needs to be understood and typecasts of unacquainted occupations and ignorance of certain occupational fields must be avoided. Effectual career goals which are practical and suitable must be established and a career strategy developed. The career strategy must encompass skills that need to be fostered, competencies that need to be developed, and opportunities for development need to be detected.

Succeeding these activities, the individual should have a reliable impression of what they would like to do and in which company. The individual can now apply for jobs, either by answering advertisements or placing their curriculum vitae with organisations in the hope of a position arising in the future. Organisations may now short list the individual and invite him or her for an interview. Other recruitment approaches may also be charted, such as, psychometric tests, phoning for references, and so forth. Should the individual be employed, he/she moves to the next stage in their career, that of organisational entry.

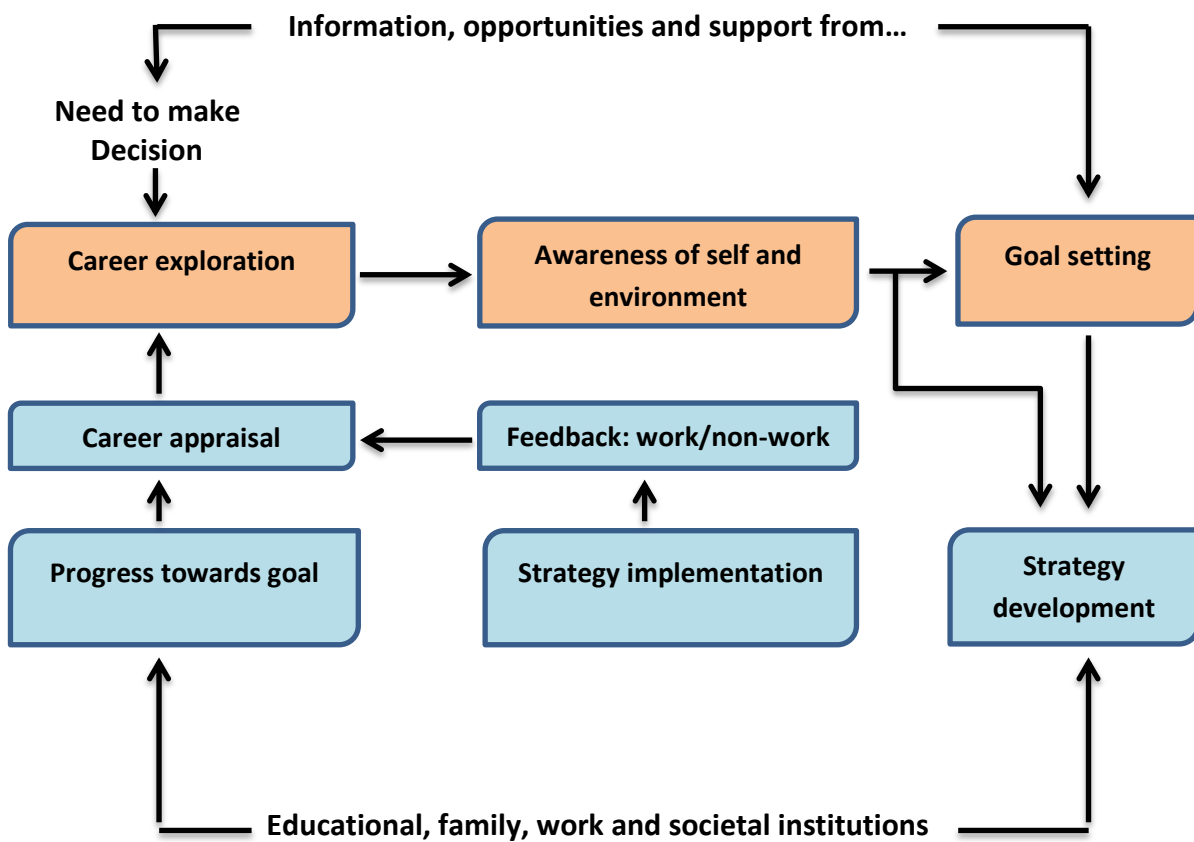
Notwithstanding, the foregoing theories of occupational choice, career planning and development models are also useful as to how individuals should manage their careers.

2.7. THE PLAN-AND-IMPLEMENT CAREER MODEL

Individuals can use the Plan-and-implement career model of Greenhaus *et al* (2010) to make informed decisions about their careers. The model illustrates how individuals should manage their careers, not necessarily how they do manage them. An illustration of the model follows:

FIGURE: 2.1.

A Career Management Model



Greenhaus, J.H, Callan, G.A. and Godshalk, V.M (2010). *Career Management* (4th Ed.). New York: Sage, p74.

Relevant steps pertaining to the current case will now be discussed. These encompass:

- career exploration,
- awareness of self and environment, and
- goal setting.

2.7.1. CAREER EXPLORATION AND AWARENESS

Career exploration is the gathering and examination of information concerning career-related issues. Career exploration can aid people in becoming cognisant of themselves and the world of work, devise career goals and choices and create strategies essential to achieve important goals particularly when launching their careers (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010).

Career exploration can be separated into exploration of one's own qualities known as self-exploration and evaluation of occupations, jobs, organisations and families which is known as environmental exploration.

2.7.1.1. SELF-EXPLORATION

In the course of self-exploration, it is essential for individuals to obtain information about their personal qualities that can be beneficial in career decision-making. Self-knowledge is the foundation of effective career planning. Personal qualities encompass interests, values and proficiency. Interest can be defined as an individual's fondness for certain activities and objects. A value is an outlook by which a person's preferences and behaviour are guided. Proficiency is the established and demonstrated efficiency by which an individual accomplishes a particular task. It is governed by the inherited aptitude of the individual and the forming influence of the environment. Accomplishments at school, past work histories and other achievements can be indicators of proficiency (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

2.7.1.2. ENVIRONMENTAL EXPLORATION

Environmental exploration empowers the individual to collect intelligence about the environment. It entails an examination of occupations, organisations and family needs. The intention of environmental exploration is to obtain sufficient information about these aspects and others to make a career decision that has agreeableness with these facets. Information about conceivable occupations should comprise of task activities, financial rewards, security, physical work setting, information on task variety and training requirements. Information on organisations encompasses financial health, strategies, and career management structures. Information on families involves the spouse's career aspirations and emotional needs, the children's (if any) emotional requirements, the family's financial wants and the family's preferred or desired lifestyle (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010).

2.7.1.3. AWARENESS

Awareness is a comparatively whole and precise perception of an individual's own qualities and the characteristics of his/her relevant environment (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010). A thorough self-and-environmental exploration will result in a meaningful awareness of self and of the environment, which will assist the employee to set realistic and achievable career goals.

2.7.2. CAREER GOALS

According to Greenhaus *et al.* (2010), a career goal is a favoured or preferred career-related result that an individual proposes to achieve. In formulating career goals, Individuals resolve what it is they want to accomplish with regard to their careers. Subsequently, they devise appropriate and agreeable strategies to support the attainment of their career goals (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

Career goals can be differentiated by their conceptual and operational nature. The conceptual career goal sums up the career ambitions of a person, his or her values, interests, aptitudes and preferences. A conceptual career goal captures the type of work a person wants to do, the type of contact with other people that he or she wishes to have and the physical environment. An operational career goal is the job that the person concerned is aiming for. It is the way in which the person wants to achieve his or her conceptual career goal (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

2.7.2.1. THE FUNCTION OF CAREER GOALS

Career goals have an expressive function in that gratification is derived when goals are attained, particularly when the related work is satisfying and when individuals make use of their experience. Goals may also have an instrumental function. The attainment of one goal will empower the individual to take aim of the next goal (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

2.7.2.2. CHARACTERISTICS OF CAREER GOAL

Career goals can be extended to the characteristics of goal setting, namely; specificity, measurability, flexibility, attainability, congruence and acceptability (Smit and Cronjé, 2002).

Specificity denotes what the goals are related to, the time frame for achieving them and the desired outcome. Accordingly, career goals must also be specified in terms that can be evaluated, hence *measurability* is integral to good goal setting. *Flexibility* of an individual's career goals is crucial to effective career management since the broader and immediate environment is never static and the changing world requires organisations to also be flexible in their goal setting. Uncertainty and volatility in the environment requires flexible career goal setting; hence the setting of too many long-term career goals is not recommended. Career goals should be realistic and achievable. Sensible and *attainable* career goals should take into account the qualities, needs, values, lifestyle, career anchors and career motives of the individual when formulating career goals. Establishing career goals that are too simple to attain provide no authentic experience of success, while career goals that are too challenging can trigger feelings of failure. Self-exploration and environmental exploration, is consequently an indispensable prerequisite for devising attainable career goals. Career goals must also be congruent. *Congruency* specifies that the attainment of one goal should not impede the attainment of another. Career goals should consequently be articulated in terms of long and short-term goals. Short-term goals should identify the education, training and experience required to achieve the long-term goals. Finally, individuals are most likely to follow career goals that are in line with their perceptions and preferences. Goal *acceptability* that can promote career commitment may be achieved through an authentic self-exploration process (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

2.7.3. CAREER STRATEGY

Career strategy entails a sequence of activities intended to assist an individual accomplish a particular career goal. The intention of career strategies is to help individuals in achieving their career goals. This involves individuals making decisions about the required steps to attain a favoured outcome (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010).

Research indicates that the following categories of career strategies may be utilized prior to and after organisational entry: displaying one's proficiency, acquiring new skills, strengthening one's image, taking advantage of opportunities, developing an association with a colleague, working long hours, and taking part in company politics (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010).

The advanced specifics of career strategies cannot be prearranged; individuals acquire new insights into a specific career strategy only when they have begun to follow it. When assembling a career strategy or sequence of career strategies, individuals must commence by revising their long-term goals. This entails establishing an operational goal which indicates the means to one's strategy. Essentially, an operational goal is the way in which a particular job can be utilized to accomplish the conceptual goal which is the end result, reward or desired outcome. The individual concerned should then list the actions or conduct necessary to achieve this long-term goal (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

The respective activities or modes of behaviour should be assessed on the foundation of its potential influence towards attaining the goal and of its appropriateness in an ethical sense. The prospective influence of an action or mode of behaviour can be evaluated by deliberating over it with more knowledgeable and seasoned individuals or employees and by giving consideration to the way in which others behave. Individuals also need to be aware that the implementation of one part of a specific career strategy can turn out to be an obstacle to another part (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010).

A career strategy must thus be considered in its entirety and should not be in disagreement with an individual's ethical values. The final list of objectives on the long-term career strategy list should be reasonably concise and brief. The motive for including each item should be stipulated and a projected time of implementation must be specified. After the long-term has been founded, a short-term goal may be established together with a list of possible activities and modes of behaviour for realizing this short-term. It is crucial that the short-term goal constitute a step in the attainment of the long-term goal (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010). Even though the aforementioned procedure may give the impression of being entirely logical, it is essential that individuals remain open to new information and be prepared to revise their strategy as and when the need may arise.

The other aspects of the career management model include feedback, progress towards goals and career appraisal, these relate to events that take place after organisational entry in a desired industry or environment and are therefore, less significant to the current case. However, there are other key career concepts, if properly defined and conceptualized by individuals, will assist in sound career decision making.

2.8. KEY CAREER CONCEPTS UTILIZED IN CAREER DECISION MAKING

Key career concepts that are largely distinct or comparatively interchangeable in explaining the objective and subjective careers of individuals can prove useful in aiding individuals to make sound career decision. These include career success, career motivation, career commitment, career maturity and career self-efficacy.

2.8.1. CAREER SUCCESS

The concept of career success has various meanings for different individuals. According to Judge and Kammeyer-Muller (2007), career success can be described as the real or perceived accomplishments individuals have accrued as an outcome of their work experience. The manner in which individuals define career success for themselves can powerfully impact their career decisions. For some individuals, career success may signify promotion. To others it denotes becoming a specialist in their occupational field. Some judge career success as a life of social contribution by developing many different skills and abilities and using those abilities to help others grow and develop. It may also represent progressing repeatedly from one challenge to another. Success can also imply the degree to which there is a fit between an individual's self-perceived talents and abilities, motives and needs, attitudes and values and the perceptions of their jobs (Schein, 1993).

Research reveals that women are inclined to use more personal benchmarks for career success, such as employability and career satisfaction instead of the male criteria for promotions, organisational level attained and salary (Ackah & Heaton, 2003). Additionally, people's job satisfaction, career satisfaction and career well-being is affected by their career

experiences which lead to positive and/or negative evaluations and feelings about their careers and indicate some of the other benchmarks used by both males and females in determining career success (Kidd, 2008).

In regard to current business tendencies like downsizing and restructuring, it is vital that the meaning of success should no longer be reliant on the traditional objective characteristics of success, namely, promotion, salary increases and perks but should rather be reflected by the individual's perception of their psychological internal career success (Smit & Cronje, 2002).

2.8.2. CAREER MOTIVATION

Career motivation is a multi-dimensional concept internal to the individual, guided by the setting and circumstances and revealed in the individual's decisions and behaviours (London, 1983). The three major domains of career motivation are:

- career identity,
- career insight, and
- career resilience.

Career identity is a framework of meanings in which the individual determinedly connects his own motivation, interests and competencies with agreeable career roles (Meijers, 1998). Accordingly, it is the extent to which individuals define themselves by their work and by their organisation and how centrally individuals' careers are to their identity (Ibarra, 2003).

Career insight can be expressed as the degree to which an individual has realistic perceptions of him or herself and the organisation and links these perceptions to career goals (London, 1983). This will encompass self-knowledge, which entails the individual being aware of his or her strengths and weaknesses and can be linked to the individuals work commitment, organisational commitment and view of being a citizen in the organisation (Feldman, 2002).

Career resilience is the capacity to acclimatise to varying circumstances. It entails accepting job and organisational changes, embracing working with new and different individuals,

demonstrating self-confidence and being prepared to take chances or risks (London, 1983). Career resilience is derived from the concepts hardiness, self-efficacy and achievement motivation. Career vulnerability denotes the opposite of career resilience and expresses the degree of psychological fragility by becoming upset and finding it difficult to function when confronted with less than optimal career conditions like barriers to career goals, uncertainty and poor relationships with co-workers (London, 1983).

2.8.3. CAREER COMMITMENT

The theory of career commitment is strongly connected to career motivation and is described as the depth of one's motivation to work in a selected career role (Ballout, 2009). It is also perceived as the enthusiasm individuals have for their preferred work roles and the readiness they have to pledge themselves to the efforts needed to achieve their personal career goals. Research indicates that career commitment is positively related to career satisfaction, salary level and performance effectiveness (Day & Allen, 2004). Additionally, career commitment predicts both objective and subjective career success (Poon, 2004).

2.8.4. CAREER MATURITY AND CAREER SELF-EFFICACY

Career maturity is a concept that is connected to career resilience. It is revealed in individuals who make career decisions that reflect decisiveness, involvement, independence, task orientation and preparedness to compromise between needs and reality.

In turn the concept of career maturity is similarly linked to career self-efficacy. This indicates the extent of complicatedness of career tasks, which individuals adjudge they are to attempt and how well they think they can implement the courses of actions entailed to deal with those tasks and the extent to which their confidences will endure, in spite of impediments. Moreover, career self-efficacy denotes the extent to which individual's beliefs can be conveyed to other tasks necessary for making career decisions. Whereas low career decision-making self-efficacy enables avoidance of career decision tasks and extends

career indecision, high career decision-making self-efficacy results in a high level of participation in career decision-making behaviours and tasks (Watson, Foxcrof & Eaton, 2001). Additionally, Day and Allen (2004) found career self-efficacy to be related to indicators of career success and performance effectiveness.

2.9. CONCLUSION

This section has provided a theoretical background into aspects related to the function that work and career performs in the lives of individuals. Likewise, the early life career stage which is part of the career life cycle was described and explained. Moreover, other related facets that were expounded upon include job search and career choice, the usefulness of the career management model, career success, career motivation and commitment, and career maturity and career self-efficacy. Additionally, attention was given to relevant career concepts that are often utilized in career decision making.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter delineates the assessment techniques employed to perform this study. Two separate assessment techniques were utilised over a four day period. This comprised of three interview sessions and the administration of six psychometric tests.

The interview and test sessions were conducted in a neutral venue that was free from disturbing influences. The venue was well ventilated and the artificial lighting was suitable, additionally, the setting was ergonomically conducive for both interviewing and testing. A whiteboard and markers were also available for demonstration purposes. The psychometric tests were conducted under the supervision of a registered Industrial Psychologist.

Amongst other aspects, the face-to-face question and answer interview sessions sort to solicit background information on the client and to establish and identify any work and or career related concerns that were affecting her. The psychometric tests that were utilised necessitated the client to complete predetermined questionnaires (tests), applicable and appropriate to the established concern that was identified during the interview stage. Consequently, the theoretical background on each of the psychometric questionnaires, as well as the interview sessions will be discussed.

3.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF PSYCHOMETRIC TESTS UTILISED

Six psychometric tests were completed by the client. These include the 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire, Achievement Motivation Questionnaire, Career Development Questionnaire, 19 Field Interest Inventory, Interpersonal Relations Questionnaire, and the Values Scale. The background of each test is set-out hereunder.

3.2.1. 16 PERSONALITY FACTOR QUESTIONNAIRE (16 PF)

The intention of the 16 PF is to establish the person's interests and attitudes and to derive a personality profile of the client founded on 16 principal scales and additional secondary elements. The 16 PF reflects the strength and direction of an individual's personality according to 16 main source traits and further secondary dimensions (Krug, 1994).

The 16 PF is a "multi-dimensional set of sixteen questionnaire scales, arranged in omnibus form. It is designed to make available, in a practical testing time, information about an individual's standing on the majority of primary personality factors ..." (Cattell, Eber & Tatsuoka, 1970:1).

The test is composed of 187 multiple-choice items and there are no correct or incorrect responses. Respondents choose from amongst options A, B, or C, and shade in the response of their individual choice on the answer sheet provided. For instance in response to the statement, "I like watching team games", the respondent may choose A: Yes, B: Occasionally or C: No. Additionally, in response to the statement "Woman is to child as cat is to", the respondent may choose A: kitten, B: dog or C: boy. There is no stipulated time limit for the completion of the questionnaire; however, respondents take approximately 30 – 45 minutes to complete the questionnaire (Krug, 1994).

The 16 PF establishes where individuals are positioned on 16 bipolar dimensions used to measure personality. The dimensions or factors vacillate from low score descriptions or types to high score descriptions or types and comprise of the following 16 classifications:

- **Factor A**

Low score description: reserved, detached, critical, and cool.

High score description: outgoing, warm-hearted, easy-going, and participating.

- **Factor B**

Low score description: less intelligent and concrete thinking.

High score description: more intelligent and abstract thinking.

- **Factor C**

Low score description: affected by feelings, emotionally less stable, and easily upset.

High score description: emotionally stable, faces reality, and calm.

- **Factor E**

Low score description: humble, mild, obedient, and conforming.

High score description: assertive, independent, aggressive, and stubborn.

- **Factor F**

Low score description: sober, prudent, serious, and taciturn.

High score description: happy-go-lucky, heedless, gay, and enthusiastic.

- **Factor G**

Low score description: expedient, and a law to himself or herself.

High score description: conscientious, persevering, stain, and rule bound.

- **Factor H**

Low score description: shy, restrained, diffident, and timid.

High score description: venturesome, socially bold, uninhibited, and spontaneous.

- **Factor I**

Low score description: tough-minded, self-reliant, realistic, and no-nonsense.

High score description: tender-minded, dependent, over-protected, and sensitive.

- **Factor L**

Low score description: trusting, adaptable, free of jealousy, and easy to get on with.

High score description: suspicious, self-opinionated, and hard to fool.

- **Factor M**

Low score description: practical, careful, conventional, regulated by external realities, and proper.

High score description: imaginative, wrapped up in inner urgencies, careless of practical matters, and bohemian.

- **Factor N**

Low score description: forthright, natural, aptless, and sentimental.

High score description: shrewd, calculating, worldly, and penetrating.

- **Factor O**

Low score description: placid, self-assured, confident, and serene.

High score description: apprehensive, worrying, depressive, and troubled.

- **Factor Q1**

Low score description: conservative, respecting established ideas, and tolerant of traditional difficulties.

High score description: experimenting, critical, liberal, analytical, and free thinking.

- **Factor Q2**

Low score description: group-dependent, a 'joiner' and sound follower.

High score description: less sufficient, prefers own decision, and resourceful.

- **Factor Q3**

Low score description: casual, careless of protocol, untidy, and follows on urges.

High score description: controlled, socially-precise, self-disciplined, and compulsive.

- **Factor Q4**

Low score description: relaxed, tranquil, torpid, and unfrustrated.

High score description: tense, driven, overwrought, and fretful (Krug, 1994).

3.2.1.1. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE 16 PF QUESTIONNAIRE

Reliability signifies the consistency or stability of a measure. Likewise, validity refers to the integral accuracy and precision of a measure (Muchinsky, Kriek & Schreuder 2005). A valid measure is indicative of one that produces correct estimates of what is being assessed. At the inception and early development of the instrument Cattell (1949) assembled a preliminary list of 171 items or terms, deemed to constitute and describe traits that apply to human behaviour. College students were then required to assess their colleagues on these 171 terms, upon which the results were intercorrelated and factor analysed. Thereafter,

the 171 items were condensed to 36 dimensions, called surface traits (Cattell, 1957). Successive factor analysis ultimately produced 16 distinct factors that accounted for all the variables. Consistent with the factor analytical approach, items that correlated highly with each of the 16 principal factors, were included, and those with relatively low correlations were excluded (Cattell, 1957).

According to Kaplan and Saccuzzo (2008) the short-term test-retest correlation coefficients for the 16 source traits range from 0.65 to 0.93 with a mean coefficient of 0.83 may well be described as impressive. The same, however, cites that long-term test-retest coefficients are less impressive with a range of 0.21 to 0.64. Additionally, discouraging are the correlations between the various forms which range from a low of 0.16 to a high of 0.79, with median coefficients in the 0.50 and 0.60's, depending on which forms are correlated.

However, Cattell (1957) maintains that the 16 source traits of the instrument do intercorrelate, with some correlations as high as 0.75. To deal with this overlap, the 16 factors themselves were factor analysed. Accordingly, Kaplan and Saccuzzo (2008) concede that the analyses of the psychometric properties of the 16 PF made by Cattell does reflect an attempt at providing a psychometrically sound instrument.

3.2.2. 19 FIELD INTEREST INVENTORY (19 FII)

The 19 FII was assembled to determine the vocational interests of high school pupils between Standards 8 to 10, students, and adults in 19 wide-ranging areas of interest. The inventory measures the degree to which an entity is actively or passively interested in the 19 broad fields, as well as the extent to which their interest is work or hobby orientated (Fouche & Alberts, 2001).

Interest is described as a comparatively continuous, positive or negative directedness in relation to a definite and particular activity and is established on the whole personality. The questions in the 19 FII pertain to the pursuit of activities which support and underpin any of the 19 broad and significant occupational fields. The individuals directedness with regard to a certain cluster of activities should be indicative of his interest in a vocation field or fields to which these activities form the basis (Fouche & Alberts, 2001).

The fields of the inventory are structured in prearranged logical groups to simplify interpretation of the interest profile. The 19 wide-ranging fields of interest are delineated hereunder and the assigned numbers for each field are reproduced as they appear in the inventory:

- Fine Arts (FA) (1): incorporates interest in activities which encroach on painting, sculpture, sketching and also on the design of advertisements and sign boards known as commercial art.
- Performing Arts (PA) (5): encompasses gratification in activities such as singing, ballet, opera, operetta, and music endeavours.
- Language (L) (16): embraces an admiration and enjoyment for literature and the practical use and analysis of language.
- Historical (H) (7): denotes an appreciation and satisfaction in the classics and in significant events of the past.
- Service (Se) (17): signifies an interest in the rendering of service to persons in society who are not needy, as undertaken by hairdressers, shop assistants and waiters.
- Social Work (SW) (3): indicates an interest in the rendering of service to the needy in society.
- Sociability (Sa) (10): denotes an interest in social interaction and contact. This includes the organisation of and participation in social functions.
- Public Speaking (PS) (8): refers chiefly to the delivering of speeches and making appearances on the public stage.
- Law (Lw) (14): signifies the study and application of laws and legal principles.
- Creative Thought (CT) (11): denotes an interest in the utilisation of logical thought for problem solving and in the execution of creative work.
- Science (Sc) (6): involves interest in the physical and biological sciences.

- Practical – Male (PM) (18): embraces the mechanical and technical areas of interest and may be denoted in the usage of tools and technical equipment for the hands-on execution of a task.
- Practical – Female (PF) (13): signifies an domestic activities that includes amongst other activities the making of clothes, housekeeping and other activities pursued within the home context, especially by females.
- Numerical (Nu) (9): encompasses an entity's interest in the utilisation of numbers and or other mathematical techniques for the effecting of calculations.
- Business (B) (19): denotes an interest in all varieties of trading with for the expressed purpose of making a profit.
- Clerical (Cl) (2): embraces concentration on predictable routine work typically executed by clerks.
- Travel (Tr) (12): incorporates the degree to which individuals are fond of traveling regularly.
- Nature (Na) (4): chiefly represents an interest in activities which are pursued outdoors and incorporates forestry, farming of crops, and stock farming.
- Sport (Sp) (15): indicates the degree to which an entity exhibits concentration on outdoor sporting activities.
- Work – Hobby (W/H): specifies whether an individual is work or hobby oriented in his or her interests.
- Active – Passive (A/P): reveals whether an individual is actively interested in the pursuit of activities or simply desires to participate passively in activities of interest as an observer (Fouche & Alberts, 2001).

The scale utilised in the 19 FII is a normalised nine-point standard scale, thus, providing standard scores of 1-9 with an average of 5 and a standard deviation of 1.96 (Fouche & Alberts, 2001) .

There is no stipulated time limit for the completion of the inventory; however, respondents take approximately 45 minutes to complete the inventory. Consequently, respondents are urged to work as quickly as possible.

3.2.2.1. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE 19 FIELD INTEREST INVENTORY

The reliability of the 19 FII is determined and calculated in line with the reliability coefficient method and incorporates indices. In the initial development of the 19 FII the Kuder Interest Inventory was utilised in conjunction with the preliminary 20 FII and a factor analytic approach was implemented. The earlier 20 FII was eventually collapsed into the 19 FII by combining the fields, Creativity (Cr) and Thinking (T) to form the field Creative Thought (CT) (Fouche & Alberts, 2001).

According to Fouche and Alberts (2001), the intercorrelations of the initial 20 FII included all the interest fields of the Kuder Interest Inventory, with one exception, namely, the low correlation between the field Persuasive in the Kuder and the Public Speaking field in the 20 FII. Additionally, it is worth noting that the 19 FII includes some ten additional fields which are not incorporated by the Kuder Interest Inventory.

The Kuder Interest Inventory and the 19 FII equally reveal high loadings in construct validity on a number of factors, while the 19 FII shows loading on an additional six factors which are not measured by the Kuder Inventory. A factor analysis on the intercorrelations of the variables in the 19 FII and the Kuder Interest Inventory revealed the emergence of the same factors on the whole. However, as can be expected, the 19 FII once more revealed loadings on a variety of factors not included in the Kuder Inventory (Fouche & Alberts, 2001).

3.2.3. ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE (PMV)

The Achievement Motivation Questionnaire (PMV) was established to assess the intensity of an adult individual's need for achievement. The PMV is frequently used in industry to assist in the making of recruitment, selection and placement decisions since it determines the relative strength of the entity's motivation to achieve. Additionally, it has analytic and

diagnostic usefulness in career counselling and vocational guidance. Moreover, the PMV can be practically incorporated in cross-cultural investigations since norms are obtainable for the diverse language groups in both white and black population groups. Given that separate norms for males and females are available in the PMV, gender differences amongst the five dimensions of achievement motivation can, therefore, also be investigated (Pottas, Erwee, Boshoff & Lessing, 1988).

The PMV utilises forced-choice items to assess an entity's motivation to achieve. Within each item two tendencies, A and B, are portrayed. One of them signifies achievement motivated behaviour and the other signals the opposite drive. The respondent has to select whether he or she best resembles A or B, thereby indirectly revealing their perception of themselves in relation to achievement motivation (Pottas *et al.*, 1988).

A factor analytic approach was observed in the establishment of the questionnaire. Two factors were extracted which can be subdivided into three and two sub-factors respectively. Generally the scores for the two principal factors or the total score can be adequate as a foundation for decisions. On the other hand, when faint differences between individuals have to be made or in the case of measurement for diagnostic determinations, it is sensible to evaluate the comparative levels of the five sub-factors. The concept of achievement motivation in addition to content of the main factors is explained hereunder:

- ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION (PM)

The PM score is obtained by adding the scores of the five sub-factors A, B, C, D, and E or by adding the scores of the two main factors (AA and BB). Persons who attain a high score can be defined as individuals who venture to do their finest in all they undertake. Fundamental to this determination is a predisposition to devise high personal standards of distinction and the confidence that dependence on one's own skills and abilities is pivotal in attaining success and achievement. With the intention of attaining their objectives they persevere in their endeavours, are action-orientated and are conscious of the need for effective time management.

- **GOAL DIRECTEDNESS (AA)**

The score of this factor is obtained by adding the scores from the first three sub-factors, namely; A, B, and C – these are defined later. Persons who achieve high scores on this key factor are determined on achieving personal goals and persist despite adversity. They are systematic and their behaviour is future-oriented. Time is deemed as a crucial resource which must be exploited effectively so as to achieve objectives. They have the propensity to be industrious, to exert themselves and are action-orientated.

- **PERSONAL EXCELLENCE (BB)**

The score for this factor is calculated by adding the scores of the last two sub-factors, D and E. High scores on this factor specify that high personal standards of excellence are devised. High scorers are certain that one should rely on one's own skills and abilities to attain success, instead of on fate or mealy exertion. They bask in challenges, take calculated risks and deem that adverse situations can be conquered by taking initiative (Pottas *et al.*, 1988).

There is no stipulated time limit for the completion of the questionnaire; however, respondents take approximately 20 - 30 minutes to complete the inventory.

The dependability of the scores hinges on the accuracy of scoring. All score should, therefore, be verified by a third party or otherwise be counted twice. Caution should be taken that the appropriate scoring stencil is utilised and that the scores are reassigned precisely. The score of factor AA is acquired by adding the raw scores of sub-factors A, B, and C and for factor BB the scores of sub-factors D and E are added. The PM score is the total score of the five sub-factors. This score can also be obtained by adding the scores of factor AA and factor BB. The norms are then traced in the appropriate table and the stanines are written in the spaces provided. At this juncture the profile can be finalised by marking the stanines on the various scales and by joining these points (Pottas *et al.*, 1988).

3.2.3.1. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The Kuder-Richardson reliability coefficient was utilised to confirm reliability of the questionnaire. Weak items were gradually disregarded and excluded and only those items

which generated a subscale with a satisfactorily high reliability coefficient were kept. These items were retained in the questionnaire. The Kuder-Richardson 20 reliabilities were then computed for each subgroup separately (Pottas *et al.*, 1988).

To guarantee construct validity, a factor analytic approach was employed in the establishment of the questionnaire so as to ensure that the construct, achievement motivation, was assessed as precisely as achievable. The two main factors and sub-factors were extracted and permitted the construct to be described in detail. Additionally, the scores of the PMV questionnaire were also correlated with scores from interrelated tests, such as the Autonomous and Social Achievement Values (ASAV). The intercorrelations between the two questionnaires established that a large amount of similarity exists with what is assessed by the PMV and the ASAV (Pottas *et al.*, 1988).

3.2.4. CAREER DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (CDQ)

The aim of the Career Development Questionnaire is to specify in what precise area of career development one might conceivably be experiencing difficulties. Acquiring this knowledge makes counteractive procedures achievable (Langley, 1999).

The CDQ is not a test it is a questionnaire, hence, there are no right and wrong answers. The instrument contains 100 statements related to career development. The respondent is required to read each statement carefully and then chooses a true or false response for each of the statements by shading in the appropriate space (Langley, 1999).

The questionnaire takes approximately 30 to 45 minutes to complete. There is no stipulated time limit for the completion of the questionnaire; however, respondents are admonished to work through the questionnaire as speedily as achievable.

3.2.4.1. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

According to Langley, du Toit and Herbst (1992), the reliability coefficients of the scales for the three groups utilised in the instrument have been established and are determined to be

acceptable if used for guidance purposes only. The same was found by Langley *et al.* (1992) in results obtained from university students.

However, only the content validity of the CDQ was focused upon in the above study and the resulting measures were captured in this regard:

- Items were meticulously inspected for face validity
- The wording and formulation of sentences were scrutinised by experts
- The item scale correlations were verified (Langley *et al.*, 1992).

3.2.5. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE (IRQ)

The fast pace of life and resultant higher tension levels for most young individuals may influence their powers to adapt to such an extent that incorrect mechanisms of psychological adjustment may be acquired. Consequently, the individual's search to establish a sense of identity may get affected. Self-diffusion and role-diffusion as well as deficient adjustment mechanisms need to be identified as early as possible, therefore, objective evaluation is necessary. Consequently, the main aim of the IRQ is to measure interpersonal relations of respondents (Joubert & Schlebusch, 1988).

Psychological adjustment refers to a dynamic process of satisfactory adjustment whereby an individual can overcome different developmental problems by means of satisfactory intra and interpersonal relations with the result that he or she may be able to satisfy his or her own needs, comply with the demands of his environment and establish a sense of identity. Consequently, the IRQ was compiled to measure the effect and significance of personality traits in the life of the individual in search of an identity. Poor adjustment is implied whenever behaviour strategies and tension reactions prevent harmony from being reached with the 'self' and between the 'self' and the demands of the environment and has self-diffusion or role diffusion as a result (Joubert & Schlebusch, 1988).

Following an exhaustive literature study, the general aim of the IRQ is to give reliable and valid evaluation of the personal, home, social and formal relations of respondents by means of 12 components of psychological adjustment, namely:

- Self-confidence
- Self-esteem
- Self-control
- Nervousness,
- Health
- Family influences
- Personal freedom
- Sociability in general
- Sociability with the opposite sex
- Sociability with the same sex
- Moral sense, and
- Formal relations (Joubert & Schlebusch, 1988).

In the process of constructing the IRQ a logical strategy was used with the result that the test user will be able to explain individual differences with a theoretical framework. A factor analytical approach was adopted to establish the relations between the 12 components of the IRQ and to allocate items to an Abridged and an Extended Questionnaire. If only an overview of the adjustment of the respondent is required, the abridged questionnaire, which consists of 100 items involving five components and takes about one hour to complete, may be administered. The full questionnaire which consists of 260 items involving all components and takes approximately two hours to administer was utilised in this study. The view adopted is that because the testee knows himself/herself the best, self-evaluation by the respondent should make available a reliable and valid measurement of adjustment.

3.2.5.1. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE IRQ

According to Joubert (1988) an examination of the reliability coefficients of the IRQ scales, estimated by means of the Kuder-Richardson 20 formula show that the reliability coefficients range from 0.65 to 0.85, thus the internal reliability of all scales is satisfactory. The test-retest reliability coefficients of the IRQ scales are also reported to be adequate.

Therefore it seems reasonable to conclude that the IRQ will give consistent and stable measurements (Joubert & Schlebusch, 1988).

The validities of the IRQ scales were investigated during the administration for item analysis and the determination of norms. The validity data, method and results of this investigation reported by Joubert (1988) establish that evidence found indicate that the IRQ should be effective in use.

The investigations concerning the experiment, factorial, convergent and discriminant validity of the IRQ scales provided indications that the IRQ as a whole can be considered to have construct validity. Once again, these investigations are reported by Joubert (1988). However, the report on the construct validity of the IRQ cannot be regarded as conclusive and further investigations are advised.

3.2.6. THE VALUE SCALE (VS)

The Value Scale (VS) was developed to measure an individual's needs for each of the following:

Ability utilisation, Achievement, Advancement, Aesthetics, Altruism, Authority, Autonomy, Creativity, Cultural identity, Economic rewards, Economic security, Own life style, Personal development, Physical activities, Physical prowess, Prestige, Risk, Social interaction, Social relations, Spirituality, Variety, and Agreeable working conditions.

Values and needs have a bearing on preferences for ideals and life styles. Values have a distinct connection to careers, vocational interests, job-satisfaction and they are essentially objectives that one seeks to attain to satisfy a need (Langley *et al.*, 1992). The relative importance of work in an individual's own value system is critical to the career counsellor. Some individuals like to work because they enjoy the need satisfaction they derive from actually working; others work to earn money which they spend on activities other than work. An understanding of these work values and needs is important to the counsellor in order to determine the underlying reasons for job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The main reason for job dissatisfaction is a poor match between work need satisfaction and post requirements (Nevill & Super, 1986).

A need can be satisfied in various roles at different stages of life. A man can for instance satisfy his need for altruism through his student and worker roles by becoming a social worker during late adolescence and young adulthood. He can satisfy that same need in his role as a father and husband when he marries and has children. He can continue to satisfy his need for altruism in his community role when he possibly becomes a volunteer worker later in life. It is the task of the counsellor to point out to the client that the same needs can be satisfied in more than one role.

The intended use of the VS is to provide individual guidance amongst pupils, students and adults by means of explaining their individual needs experienced and satisfied in their various life roles and by measuring the relative importance that work role plays as a means of needs satisfaction in the context of their other life roles. The 110 items of the VS yield 22 separate scales, each of which measures a value or striving for need satisfaction. The purpose of the VS is to assist a person by means of guidance to become aware of the need satisfaction he or she considers important for work satisfaction (Langley *et al.*, 1992).

The VS can be completed in approximately 30 -50 minutes and there are no wrong or right responses.

3.2.6.1. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE VALUE SCALE

According to Langley *et al.* (1992), an examination of the reliability coefficients of the VS scales, estimated by means of the Kuder-Richardson 8 formula show that all the scales obtained reliability coefficients higher than 0.70 for the total sample, with 12 scales having a reliability coefficient of 0.80 or higher. The reliability coefficients of the VS may, thus, be regarded as being satisfactory and will give consistent and stable measurements if the questionnaire is utilised in conjunction with other relevant instruments.

To guarantee content validity the ensuing procedure was utilised in advance:

- A literature study was carried out on needs and lists of needs were collected.
- The lists of needs so developed, was scrutinised.
- The needs were positioned in classifications to avert replication and an illustrative value per category was identified.

- Definitions were accumulated for the needs.
- Definitions were refined and enhanced during the deliberations of project leaders and research workers.
- On the basis of the final-mentioned definitions of these needs, items were compiled.

The item selection process encompassed item scale correlations and factor analysis.

The ability of test scores to differentiate between different groups can provide support for the construct validity of an instrument. As a result of the large number of individuals that were included in establishing validity, a small numerical difference which can also be statistically significant, was obtained. However, it does not always have psychological meaning in practice. As the differences were very small, Langley *et al.* (1992) believe it is not possible to make meaningful deductions.

A factor analysis of the VS items was performed on the pooled data of three subsamples comprising of English, Afrikaans and African Language speaking individuals (N = 5 350). Additionally, a principal component analysis was performed in order to form a better understanding of the constructs. This resulted in six factors with eigenvalues greater than one. These factors were rotated in the varimax position and explained 76.3% of the total variance.

In accordance with the results of this exercise, needs may be classified into the following six factors:

- Inner-oriented needs,
- Material needs,
- Autonomous Life style,
- Humanism and Religion,
- Social needs, and
- Physical needs (Langley *et al.*, 1992).

Additionally, the scores of the VS were also correlated with scores from interrelated tests, such as the Life Role Inventory (LRI), Career Development Questionnaire (CDQ) and the Self-Directed Search Questionnaire (SDS). The intercorrelations between the VS and each of the aforementioned established a number of significant correlations; therefore, indicating that similarity exists with what is assessed by the VS and the other instruments.

3.3. INTERVIEWING

One technique of gathering data is to interview respondents to obtain information. The interview may be described as a conversation with a purpose (Robbins, Judge, Odendaal & Roodt, 2009). Usually, an interview is a face-to-face meeting, with a particular purpose or objective resulting in an exchange of information. Interviews can be structured or unstructured and may be conducted either face to face, by telephone or through the integrated use of telecommunications and informatics which is also known as Information and Communications Technology (ICT) (Sekaran, 2010).

Interviews form an essential section of any assessment and can be used at any phase of the research procedure. This technique can be employed to isolate areas for more exhaustive exploration and to authenticate interpretation findings, or may be utilised as the main source of data collection (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

The interview is an adaptable instrument, which can vacillate from being totally structured, that is comprised of asking a predetermined, fixed set of questions in precise order; or may be unstructured, that is, the interviewer would have numerous topics that need to be covered and interrogated, without subscribing to a predetermined sequence of asking fixed questions. The structured interview restricts discussion and the interviewee is restricted to a choice of answers. In an unstructured interview, the questions are allowed to develop as a result of the exchange with the client. This enables the interviewer to determine the objectives to be achieved as well as the main questions (Nel, Van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono, Werner, 2004).

The interview sessions in this study, firstly, adopted a structured interview format based on broad predetermined questions so as to establish a background of the client and to identify possible career concerns. Based on the interviewees response to the structured interview the second and third interview sessions adopted an unstructured interview and the question here were allowed to develop as a result of the exchange with the client so as to solicit more information on key areas of concern that initially emerged during the structured interview.

3.4. CONCLUSION

The theoretical background on each of the tests (16 Personality Factor Questionnaire, 19 Field Interest Inventory, Achievement Motivation Questionnaire, Career Development Questionnaire, Interpersonal Relations Questionnaire, and Values Scale) has been discussed. Distinct consideration has been offered as to what are being measured, scaling, time limits, and how these tests are scored and conducted. Interviewing was the other procedure employed to obtain information in this study. Consequently, an overview of interviews has been discussed. The findings obtained from each of the aforementioned, will be presented in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF PSYCHOMETRIC TEST RESULTS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This section is a presentation of the analysis of results obtained through the psychometric tests utilized to examine the client's problem. The results obtained from the battery of tests administered to the client will be presented and analysed.

4.2. ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE (PMV)

The subject scored extremely high on overall Achievement Motivation (PM) and therefore, on the basis of the test, it can be inferred that the client does have a strong tendency to do well in almost everything which she undertakes and has a very high need for achievement. She will, therefore, possess relatively acceptable personal standards of excellence and will believe to some extent that reliance on own skills and abilities is decisive in achieving success. She should also be exceedingly persistent in her endeavours to attain her objectives and should be action oriented and exceptionally aware of effective time management.

The overall Achievement Motivation score, however, must be considered in conjunction with the various sub-category scores that encompass total Achievement Motivation.

The score for Goal directedness (AA) is correspondingly high and therefore, on the basis of the test indicates that the client should have a strong inclination toward achieving personal goals and persevering despite adversity. She would also be described as having a robust tendency in terms of being methodical and future-orientated. She should firmly regard time as a vital resource which must be utilized effectively in order to achieve objectives. She would have a compelling tendency to be industrious, to exert herself and to be action-orientated.

The score for Persistence (A) is significantly high and therefore, on the basis of the test indicates that the client should have a strong tendency to persevere in seeking solutions to

problems despite adverse circumstances. Setbacks will be viewed as challenges. She would have a formidable tendency to ascribe successes to the utilization of her own skills. She will also have a firm tendency to complete tasks, not to procrastinate and to refrain from delay when confronted with the need to grapple with complex tasks.

In terms of Awareness of time (B), there is a strong inclination for the client to always work according to a time schedule and to plan ahead. On the basis of the test, it can be inferred that the client's affairs should always be in order and she may have a preference for structure in her life. She would always prepare well in advance for any eventuality. She is inclined to feel guilty about inefficient use of time, when she is late for an appointment or if she deviates from her timetable. She will be concerned with the future and should also have precisely formulated plans or definite career goals for the future.

With regard to Action Orientation (C), the scores indicate that she has an extremely strong leaning to be an active, energetic person. On the basis of the test, it can be inferred that the client would firmly utilize time optimally. She also should have a very low tendency to tolerate idleness and may also not be inclined to extend rest breaks when completing a task. She is inclined to perceive time as dynamic and fast-moving.

In terms of Personal Excellence (BB) the client would have relatively acceptable personal standards of excellence formulated. It can be inferred that the client would also have a tendency to be convinced that one should depend on one's own skills and abilities to achieve success, rather than on luck or mere effort. She should be somewhat inclined to embrace challenges, take calculated risks and believe that unfavourable circumstances can be overcome by taking initiative.

With reference to Aspiration Level (D), the client may be described as moderately inclined to embark on demanding and challenging tasks when failure may be experienced. Therefore, calculated risks might not always be taken and challenges would not always be preferred to certainty of success. She would, therefore, sometimes not be setting high performance standards for herself and may expect the same of others. She would sometimes be inclined not to go to great lengths to achieve goals. She would be inclined to rather be part of a large organisation than manage her own enterprise. She would be somewhat inclined to accept help in the solving of complex tasks.

In connection with Personal Causation (E), the score indicates that the client trusts in her own abilities and skills and has a conviction that control can be exerted over life events and the environment. She may not generally believe that she is a victim of circumstance. She would have a tendency to believe that her actions are correct in most cases and that she will be able to execute a task to the best of her ability. She would prefer situations where she can take personal initiative and should want at all costs to reach the highest point in life. She is, therefore, characterized by a motivation to achieve success rather than by a motivation to avoid failure.

4.3. 16 PERSONALITY FACTOR QUESTIONNAIRE (16PF)

The respondent's personality profile generally depicts an individual with an inclination towards being tender-minded, artistic, dependent, overprotected, fidgety, clinging, and insecure. She is also inclined to have a preference for sentimental music and may claim to use reason rather than force in getting things done. Additionally, in school she may have had a preference for English rather than Math.

Additionally, the personality assessment indicates that the client has a preference to be alone and may not need the support of groups. Accordingly, she may have a tendency to feel that she can problem-solve better alone than in a group, hence, she may have a preference to work alone rather than with committees.

The client's personality profile reveals that she is inclined to have control over her emotional life and behaviour with a preference for getting her thoughts organized before speaking out and not leaving things to chance.

Her personality profile reveals that she is likely to be somewhat unconventional, impractical and unconcerned about everyday matters with a tendency to forget trivial matters.

The respondent's personality profile also depicts an individual with a moderate tendency to be worried, guilty, anxious, self-deprecating, self-reproaching and moody, accompanied with episodes of depression.

The personality assessment also indicates that the client is likely to be reserved, detached, critical and cool.

Finally, the personality profile reveals that the client is inclined to be conservative, respecting established ideas and tolerant of traditional difficulties.

4.4. 19 FIELD INTEREST INVENTORY (19FII)

On the basis of the test, the testee displays a very high interest in the Business field. Subsequently, she also has a strong and equal interest in the Language, Public Speaking, Law, and Science fields. Next, she has a healthy and equal interest in the Historical, Creative Thought, and Numerical fields. In all of the other fields, her interest varies from average to very low.

From her scores on the Work-Hobby aspect, she appears to be work orientated and in relation to the Active-Passive aspect her score indicates a preference to participate positively in activities rather than to be a passive spectator.

The scores obtained by the client indicate that she should be most happy in a field that embraces trading with a view to making a profit (such as managing a trading company or operating a business).

Moreover, she would also be happy in a field that promotes an appreciation for literature and the practical use and analysis of language (such as teaching literature and language usage). She would be correspondingly satisfied in a field that incorporates the delivering of speeches and appearances in public. The client would also be equally content in a field that involves the study of law as well as the application of laws and legal principles. Finally, she would be similarly pleased in a field that embraces the physical and biological sciences (such as teaching earth or biological science).

The test scores, however, should be related to the client's aptitudes and other personality characteristics before any recommendations or guidance is offered.

4.5. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE (IRQ)

The significant findings based on those components of the Interpersonal Relations Questionnaire relevant to the clients identified problem, is set out below:

- Family Influences – on the grounds of this component, it can be suggested that there may be extraordinary family influence on the client which can be deduced from the satisfaction she conveyed pertaining to her surviving parent along with the socio-economic circumstances of her family. However, the client's stanine score of 9 is an indication that the client may be regarded as poorly adjusted with regard to this component.
- Self-esteem – it can be suggested that the client has very high self-esteem. This may be inferred from her expressed self-acceptance and the extent to which she feels that she can live up to her personal standards and comply with the norms of society. Additionally, her self-esteem may also be deduced from the congruence between the ideas she has about herself and her feelings about what others expect from her. Her degree of self-esteem may also be attributed to the extent to which she feels that she compares favourably with friends of her own age group and is accepted by them.
- Self-confidence – on the substance of this factor, it can be proposed that the client has high confidence that she will succeed in the tasks she attempts and be satisfied with the results.
- Health – it can be inferred that the client has a fairly robust outlook concerning her own body and the capacity to make full use of her bodily powers. This can be construed from her ability to appreciate life and to work proficiently.
- Formal Relations – it can be inferred that the client would have a high threshold to take part in formal relations. This is reflected in her preparedness and enthusiasm

for satisfactory and healthy interpersonal relations with superiors in instructive situations and her inclination to draw happiness from her relations with friends and superiors. Additionally, her ability to participate in formal relations may also be attributed to her preparedness to trust individuals who are significant to her.

- Social Relations with Members of the Same Sex – the testing of this component uncovered that the testee should have proficiency to participate in social activities with members of the same sex. This implies that she may have the preparedness and eagerness to make friends with a specific female or group of females.
- Personal Freedom – on the basis of the test, the testee may be differentiated as an individual who experiences a relatively high degree of personal freedom. This signifies that the client may not be constrained by mature persons who are significant to her. Consequently, it may be inferred that she should be unrestricted in the attainment her own unique abilities.
- Sociability in General – this component of the test revealed that the client has a compelling capacity to participate in group social activities. This evidently suggests that she should have the willingness and enthusiasm to make friends with other people, be attentive to the activities of her colleagues, express empathy to other people, and share with others and communicate effectively with them.
- Social Relations with Members of the Opposite Sex – the testing of this component uncovered that the testee may have difficulty to participate in social activities with members of the opposite sex. This implies that she may be unprepared to make advances to specific males and in turn to accept propositions from specific males. Consequently, the client's stanine score of 4 is an indication that the client may be regarded as poorly adjusted with regard to this component.

- Lie Scale – the clients low score on the lie scale indicates that her scores on the other scales are honest and objective. Consequently, a high degree of confidence may be place on her test results.

4.6. VALUE SCALE (VS)

The significant findings based on those components of Value Scale and relevant to the clients identified problem, is set out below:

On the basis of the test, the subject has an extremely high and equal need for Advancement, Economic Rewards, Personal Development, and Prestige.

Consequently, it may be inferred that the testee has a high need to advance in her career, to have an improved standard of living, to settle in a better environment and to have healthier earnings. Subsequently and consistent with Advancement, it can be concluded that the client has a high necessity to maintain a high level of existence and to have the financial power to compliment such a standard. Additionally, the client has a high need to develop and to have strategies about what she wants to do with herself. Moreover, she has a high need for social, economic or occupational status, which provokes respect, esteem and appreciation.

Next the client also has a high and equal but comparatively lower need for Achievement, Altruism, Autonomy, and Own life style. This is indicative that she has a high need to feel that she has done something well. Additionally, her need to help others and to be mindful about their well-being is correspondingly high. Moreover, her need to make her own choices and to carry out strategies as she sees fit; to have freedom of action within her domain is also equally high. It can also be inferred that the client has a high need to have liberty to live her own life consistent with her own standards and values.

In contrast, her need for Social Interaction is significantly low. This is suggestive of her having a low need to give attention to other people and to converse with them as part of her work.

Relatedly, the client has a low need for Social Relations. Joyce's low need for Social Relations is conveyed in her lack of attaching value to pleasant, friendly contact with people with whom she associates with at work or in another domain such as home.

Finally, Joyce has a relatively low need for Risk. Her low need for risk is indicative of her apathy to appreciate the thrill of physical danger, financial gain or loss and other risks incurred in projects proposed, undertaken or carried out.

4.7. CAREER DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (CDQ)

The significant findings based on those components of the Career Development Questionnaire relevant to the clients identified problem, is set out below.

On the basis of the test, it can be inferred that the testee's self-knowledge and ability to make decisions are well developed. Accordingly, this indicates that the testee has an appreciation for the significance of life roles, work values and occupational interests. Moreover, there is an indication that she should be able to make efficient and successful decisions. Additionally, the testee should possess sufficient career information and would be able to adequately integrate self-information and career information. This is indicative that the testee has sufficient knowledge of the world of work and has the capacity to incorporate pertinent knowledge on herself with information on the world of work. Correspondingly, she also has adequate knowledge to carry on with career planning to the extent of making career decisions and implementing a career plan.

4.8. CONCLUSION

The analysis and results generated from the various assessment instruments utilized, in combination with the subject's background and profile provides the foundation for making recommendations with a view to corrective action in terms of the subject's problem.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

Brown (2011) maintains that since an individual's personal life and work life are directly interconnected it is always beneficial to examine both spheres inclusively and not in isolation. Consequently, the analysis of the tests in conjunction with the client's background will serve as a framework for providing recommendations.

5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the literature, the assessments conducted and the client's personal history the ensuing discussion attempts to isolate those obstruction areas related to her career choice. More specifically the recommendations are proposed in view of her reluctance to register for a B.Ed. degree and to pursue a teaching career in of the view her life stage. Evidently, recommendations will be offered in terms of the feasibility of the client pursuing a teaching career. Also, an attempt will be made to highlight those areas that are deemed to be positive contributors or that may be regarded as strengths in advancing her career choice. Consequently, in endeavouring to assist the client with her career problem, the subsequent recommendations can be suggested.

Notwithstanding the client's life stage the literature indicates that it is not uncommon for individuals to re-evaluate and reconsider their career choice during mid-life. The protean perspective of career during mid-life gives individuals the responsibility to meet specific mid-career needs. This refers to a career shaped by the individual in reaction to widespread redefinition and restructuring which includes the ability of the individual to be variable, and versatile in response to his or her career ambitions. A protean perspective may also include amongst others things an individual changing work roles and tasks but more importantly changing occupational fields and occupational choice. This will entail a realistic self-assessment, opportunity to learn new skills and sharing of skills and expertise through continuous learning (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Accordingly, the client should be made

aware that it is conceivable and possible for an individual to succeed at a change in occupational field and choice even during mid-life.

However, it is equally significant for the client to receive realistic feedback on the assessments conducted in order to address her identified problem.

5.2.1. ASPIRATION LEVEL

The psychometric testing revealed that Joyce is only moderately inclined to embark on demanding and challenging tasks when failure is a possibility. Therefore, calculated risks might not always be taken and challenges would not always be preferred to certainty of success. Accordingly, the test revealed that she would sometimes be inclined not to go to great lengths to achieve goals.

It is conceivable that due to the fear of failure the client has not conceptualised the significance of her goal to register for a B.Ed. degree to her overall career choice. Consequently, it is suggested that in order to overcome any such fear and to establish a more healthy aspiration level that the client carefully contextualises her career goal into her overall career choice. Joyce must also be helped to perceive that her goal of pursuing a B.Ed. degree is specific, flexible, measurable, attainable, and congruent with her career choice. Accordingly, she must find acceptance of her goal as both necessary and attainable in relation to her career choice. This would allow her to aspire towards her career choice and embrace the demands and challenges she may encounter along the way.

Additionally, she should be encouraged to understand the significance of reasonable risk-taking and that risk is often implicit with advancement and growth. Moreover, she needs to develop an appreciation for successes as well as failures through risk.

5.2.2. COMBINATION OF PERSONALITY FACTORS

The clients personality profile generally depicts an individual with an inclination towards being tender-minded, insecure with a moderate tendency to be self-deprecating and self-

reproaching. Additionally, the personality assessment indicates that the client has a preference to be alone and may not need the support of others. It is conceivable that the foregoing is preventing the client from pursuing her career choice.

With reference to Joyce's inclination towards being tender-minded and insecure it is recommended that she be directed to develop and strengthen her self-reliance, independence and be encouraged to be more realistic. This intervention will in turn address any feelings of self-deprecation and self-reproach held by the client.

According to Singh (1998) tender-minded individuals have a dislike for occupations that are perceived to be rough. Accordingly, it would be beneficial to probe the client on her perception of the teaching profession. If she perceives the profession to be rough (which may be an indication that she has chosen it for status and economic reward rather than personal agreeableness) it would be advantageous to assist the client in readjusting her assessment and perception of the profession.

In terms of the client's preference to be alone rather than rely on the support of others it is recommended that she be directed to express her concerns and feelings in reference to her career choice with significant other's with the intention of gathering moral support and realistic feedback.

5.2.3. COMPETING INTERESTS

Interestingly, Joyce has a very strong inclination towards the Business field. This is followed by a strong and equal interest in the Language, Public Speaking, Law and Science fields. Next, she has a healthy and equal interest in the Historical, Creative Thought, and Numerical fields.

The client's interest in the Language, Public Speaking, Science, Historical, Creative Thought and Numerical fields bode well for her pursuit of a career in the teaching profession, however, the client also needs to be made aware that her preference for the Business and the Law fields are possible occupations worth considering.

5.2.4. FAMILY INFLUENCES

It can be suggested that there may be extraordinary family influence on the client. The client's stanine score of 9 is an indication that the client may be regarded as poorly adjusted with regard to this component. It is conceivable that being a widow with two dependent children and a live-in mother has resulted in the client feeling an extreme need to unduly submit to the demands of her family.

The client needs to re-evaluate her outlook and stance toward her family's influence on her career. She should be made aware that her current tendency, in this regard, has the potential to hinder her from pursuing her career. It is suggested that she contextualise the various roles she occupies in society, that of daughter, mother, caregiver; and synthesis these with the roles that other significant individuals within her domain occupy. Additionally, she needs to evaluate her individual family demands in terms of whether these are excessive, disproportionate, unjustified or even improper. Accordingly, she would need to dispel any family demands and influences that fall into the said categories.

5.2.5. SOCIAL INTERACTION

Finally, Joyce has a significantly low need for social interaction which is suggestive of her having a low need to give attention to other people and to converse with them as part of her work.

The client needs to be made aware that her low need for social interaction could subliminally be preventing her from pursuing her career choice. Social interaction through the giving of attention to other people and conversing with them is implicit to the teaching profession. The client should be encouraged to register for a social skills training course that places emphasis on:

- instructional interventions to increase social knowledge and improve social problem solving,
- prompting and reinforcing social interaction in one or more social settings.

5.3. CONCLUSION

Career choice is a significant aspect of career management and planning and more so during mid-life and must be given careful consideration by the individual. It is important for individuals to know what they require from their careers during the different life stages in order to avoid making poor decisions. Accordingly, it is imperative that individuals have sufficient environmental exploration and self-knowledge to make choices that they will be able to pursue and attain.

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UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

CASE STUDY - JOB SEARCH IN EARLY LIFE CAREER STAGE

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A case study submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

of

Masters of Commerce – Industrial Psychology

School of Management, Information Technology, and Governance

College of Law and Management Studies

Supervisor: Mr Mervyn Naidoo

2013

DECLARATION

I Dhashendra Naicker declare that

- (i) The research reported in this case study, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.

- (ii) This case study has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

- (iii) This case study does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.

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Signed:

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

For the purpose of this case study, the candidate has been identified as an appropriate individual to evaluate. The individual and family background, educational history, work experience, and problem identification and its significance will be discussed in this chapter. Moreover, the biographical data of the client will also be provided.

1.2. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

<u>NAME:</u>	Jane (Pseudonym)
<u>GENDER:</u>	Female
<u>AGE:</u>	24
<u>DATE OF BIRTH:</u>	14/11/88
<u>MARITAL STATUS:</u>	Single
<u>RACE:</u>	Indian
<u>NATIONALITY:</u>	South African
<u>RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS:</u>	Reservoir Hills Durban
<u>HIGHEST SCHOOL QUALIFICATION:</u>	Matric
<u>NAME OF LAST SCHOOL ATTENDED:</u>	Danville Park Girls High School Start date: 2002 End date: 2006

1.3. FAMILY, INDIVIDUAL AND EARLY EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Jane is part of a small family consisting of four members. Her father is a project manager at an international electronics manufacturing organisation, her mother is a teacher and her brother who is older than her is an equity analyst for an investment bank.

Before starting high school, Jane resolved to fulfil all her life ambitions as fast as possible rather than to procrastinate and have incomplete aspirations. Consequently, she decided to pursue English, Afrikaans, Accounting, Mathematics, Physics and Biology as her secondary school subjects (Course S7). Her parents suggested that she choose these subjects with the intention that it will allow her to pursue a broad spectrum of fields she might later wish to study at university (Accounting - Commerce, Biology - Health Science, Physics - Engineering). Jane was happy with her subject selection since it would potentially allow her access to whatever chosen field of study she might wish to pursue. While at school, her extramural interests included netball, squash, and tennis. Her interest in these activities went beyond participation in that she enjoyed the resultant team spirit that brought the participants and school closer together. Since completing school, her interests now include reading, spending time with friends and enjoying any free time by relaxing and meditating.

She matriculated in 2006 with the following symbols:

English	-	A
Afrikaans	-	A
Accounting	-	A
Mathematics	-	D
Physics	-	C
Biology	-	B

In high school Jane had a preference for English. She enjoyed dissecting literature and poems in order to find out the authors or poets dedicated meaning. Additionally, she enjoyed the fact that English was not as structured as the other subjects and allowed her the opportunity to be creative without being wrong or right.

The subject she most disliked was Biology. The subject did not interest her and the swotting of volumes of content felt tedious and laborious.

On the 10th of June 2011, Jane had a motor-vehicle accident in which she sustained numerous injuries. She was hospitalised for a period of three weeks, of which she spent three days in the hospital's intensive-care unit. Jane declares that since the accident she has discovered some new perspectives on different aspects of the quality of life.

1.4. ACADEMIC HISTORY

Jane commenced studies towards a B.Com in Marketing and Supply Chain in 2007 which she completed in 2009. She subsequently completed a B.Com Honours in Marketing and Supply Chain in 2010.

The supply chain aspect of both degrees interested her in terms of how supply chain professionals essentially solve problems and enact solutions.

At undergraduate level, Jane had a preference for Economics above her other modules. In particular, she found lectures relating to the way the economy operates to be incredibly interesting. Additionally, the majority of the Economics lecturers seemed genuinely passionate about their subject matter which generated her interest in the subject further. Unfortunately she could not major with Economics at undergraduate level due to her second year Economics results.

The module she disliked most was Law. She found the material to be unhelpful and not related to her area of interest.

She cites her father who is a project manager as an influential figure for her module and degree selection. Jane found his conversations with her about his work experience tremendously stimulating. It is against this backdrop that she chose Supply Chain Honours with the hope that it will allow her to one day become a process/business analyst.

1.5. INFORMAL WORK HISTORY AND EXPERIENCE

Jane held holiday jobs that included waitressing and in-store promotional services. Additionally, she worked part-time as a manager for a franchised fast-food chain in the Westville area between February and June 2011. She presently holds a part-time job as a Student advisor and administrator at UKZN.

The position at the fast-food chain was obtained in order to attain work experience as a manager and the UKZN position was acquired due to necessity, taking into consideration that she had not secured employment in her field of interest.

At the fast-food chain she learned how to lead and manage employees as well as the correct etiquette on customer service and how the hospitality industry operates. At UKZN she is learning how to work on the computerized student support services system which however is unrelated to her career aspirations.

1.6. CAREER ASPIRATIONS AND GOALS

Jane hopes to be a project leader or working as a business analyst at a large **Fast Moving Consumer Goods** (FMCG) organisation in the next five years.

She believes her past and future short-term positions will add to her work experience for the expressed purpose of helping her attain a placement in a graduate programme. She is of the opinion that this will assist her in fast tracking her aspirations to be a project leader or business analyst. She has also chosen to pursue her studies of Economics at level three (non-degree purposes) which will provide her with the knowledge of how a business functions holistically as well as how to interpret quantitative data.

She favours her career goal of becoming a project leader or business analyst, as she is interested in creating solutions to problems, she personally thinks of herself as a problem solver. Jane considers the position of a project leader or business analyst to always be challenging and will never become stagnant as no problem will be exactly the same as another. She is, therefore, confident that she will never become bored or have to deal with the same issues continuously. Jane is encouraged by the belief that this position can

potentially also offer her the opportunity to work in a number of different industries. She believes that the core function of the position is to evaluate the efficiency and profitability of an existing business system and to determine improvements in the capacity of a firm in order to make larger profits based on the way it runs in the future. Jane places hard work and the ability to work close to the ground with the intention of 'getting ones hands dirty' in terms of all the processes involved in a Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) organisation as some of the foremost qualities required for the position. She asserts that if she attains her desired position and acquires sufficient experience she would at some point in the future like to start her own Business/Process Analyst consultancy.

A short term career goal of Jane is to function in the position of a Demand Forecaster. Having already completed her Honours in Marketing and Supply Chain, she has achieved a significant short term goal towards her desired position. However, she cites not being employed in her chosen industry as one of the significant short term goals that she wishes she had achieved at this point. Jane views this as a temporary obstacle.

Jane believes that there has been a shift in her original career plan. She originally would have been content working for a firm in her desired position but now feels that it is important that she opens her own consultancy. Jane has emphasised that a significant short term goal for her new career aspiration is to acquire a job that allows her to gain experience in how a business operates as well as acquire a position that allows her to network with different people in the right industries. Additionally, she claims that she has gained some of the practical experience required in terms of her new career aspiration in her management role that she occupied at the franchised fast-food chain. Jane contends that two major obstacles in pursuing her new goal include the large amount of capital required and business knowledge that will be needed in order to run her own consultancy.

Her second choice in terms of her career aspirations is to be a Business Planner. Incidentally, this was also one of her earlier career goals.

1.7. JOB SEARCH ACTIVITIES

Jane admits that she has not actively been engaged in job search activities for her desired position. However, she has attended a few interviews organised by the University's Graduate Recruitment Programme. She contends that these interview sessions did not provide much assistance in addressing what she needs to acquire in addition to the required experience. She has made no attempt to offer her services gratis in order to acquire the necessary experience or unearth additional requirements that will advance her career aspirations. Jane maintains that her academic studies have strengthened and developed her knowledge in Logistics through the analysis of practical case studies in her Supply Chain modules at both Post and Under-graduate levels. However, she asserts that she still needs to strengthen her knowledge base of Quantitative Business Analysis in order to move forward with her career ambitions.

1.8. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Jane admits that apart from information shared by her father, she has not done any research on her desired position to determine the core skills and attributes required. Jane, therefore, believes that her inability to engage in meaningful job search activities may be due to inadequate career exploration. She consequently, feels "directionless" and "stagnant" in terms of advancing her career and admits feeling hesitant about her career aspirations.

Jane's inability to engage in appropriate job search activities, her sense of lacking direction and hesitance, her feelings of temporary stagnation and not advancing her career aspirations is causing her to feel anxious and calls into question the legitimacy and worthiness of her career choice. She needs to establish purpose and meaning in her career choice so as to be driven to advance her aspirations through authentic job search.

1.9. CONCLUSION

This chapter has identified a candidate who is an appropriate individual to evaluate. The individual and family background, educational history, work experience, biographical data and problem identification of the client was examined.

CHAPTER 2

WORKING LIVES, CAREER, JOB SEARCH AND EARLY LIFE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a conceptual outline of the function that work and career performs in the lives of individuals. The function of work and the role of career are explained and defined, respectively. Likewise, the early life career stage which is part of the career life cycle is described and explained. Moreover, other related facets that are expounded upon are, job search and career choice, the usefulness of the career management model, career success, career motivation and commitment, and career maturity and career self-efficacy. Additionally, attention is given to relevant career concepts that are often utilized in career decision making.

2.2. WORKING LIVES AND CAREER

A fundamental feature of work and career is their centrality. Centrality denotes the degree of importance that work and career has in the life of the individual at any given point in time. Work plays a pivotal role in the lives of nearly all individuals and has a direct impact on their overall welfare. The significance of work for individuals can best be explained by them connecting or even equating their work to the quality of their life. Thus, for most individuals work and career equals the quality of their whole life (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). On a broad-spectrum, subsequent to family, work has been understood to be of comparatively greater importance when contrasted to other spheres of existence such as leisure, community and religion (Harpaz & Fu, 2002). Work satisfies a host of human needs, namely, physiological, safety, social, ego, and self-actualisation needs, as describe by Maslow (1970) in his Hierarchy of Needs Pyramid. Additionally, McClelland (1978) specifies that work and career satisfies an individual's need for achievement, commitment, motivation and power. Moreover, Hall (1976) stipulates that the need for aggression, altruism, autonomy and approval may also be satisfied by ones work and career. Work is also seen as a central sphere in which to achieve social equality and personal liberation.

Work is, therefore, an integral part of the fabric of most people's lives and has a direct influence on their general well-being.

Career is inextricably linked to the world of work in the 21st century (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011) and will be defined hereunder.

2.3. CAREER DEFINED

Given the importance of career and work, individuals and organisations are forced to give more attention to the nature of the career experience. Thus, at the outset, it is essential to accurately define the concept career. In 1976 Hall specified four separate connotations allotted to the concept career, namely:

- Career as advancement
- Career as profession
- Career as a lifelong sequence of work experiences; and
- Career as a lifelong sequence of role-related experiences.

Hall (1976) therefore, in part, defines career as the individually perceived sequence of attitudes and behaviours associated with work-related experiences and activities spanning a person's life. Greenhaus (1987) similarly defines career as the pattern of work-related experiences that span the course of a person's life. Schein (1978) differentiates between internal career and external career. Internal career involves an individual pursuing an occupation whilst external career indicates the organisations role in establishing a functional developmental pathway or course for employees to follow throughout their working life in an organisation. Baruch (2006) offers a contemporary definition of career as a long-term process of development of the employee along a path of experiences and jobs in one or more organisations. Correspondingly, Weiss (2001) indicates that career is a process of significant learnings and experiences that identify an individual's professional life, direction, competencies and accomplishments through positions, jobs, roles and assignments. Puah and Ananthram (2006) argue that a career is not a job, but revolves around a process of attitudinal adjustments and readjustments, intentional and goal-directed behaviour in a person's work life to achieve set occupational-related goals.

All six authors ultimately agree that career is a long-term process or sequence of behaviours and activities spanning an individual's whole life. Thus, career development can be scrutinized by linking career stages to periods during an individual's lifespan. In actual fact, career development can even be traced back an individual's early childhood (Staudinger & Bluck, 2001).

2.4. LIFE AND CAREER STAGES

A person's life and career cycle is often seen as a series of stages characterised by changing patterns of developmental tasks, career concerns, activities, values, and needs, which emerge as he/she ages and passes through various age ranges (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011; Super, 1990). A host of approaches with commonalities and minor variations to these life stages have been advocated over the years and are included in the works of, amongst others, Erikson (1966), Levinson (1986), and Schein (2006). Reviewing the literature of the aforementioned and numerous other authors, Schreuder & Coetzee (2011) tabulate these stages as follows:

- Career development in childhood
- Adolescent career development
- Late adolescent and adult career development
 - Early life/career stage
 - Middle adulthood life/career stage
 - Late life/career stage.

In view of the present case, emphasis will be placed on early life/career stage as part of late adolescent and adult career development. However, as a point of reference and for the purpose of contextualisation of information a concise discussion on middle adulthood and late life stage have been deemed appropriate to include.

2.4.1. LATE ADOLESCENT AND ADULT CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The late adolescent and adult life stages is a continuing sequence by which an individual advances through a chain of stages, each of which is typified by a relatively unique set of issues, themes or tasks.

2.4.1.1. LATE ADOLESCENCE

The chief developmental undertakings during late adolescence, also termed the exploration phase, are: acquiring an occupational self-image, evaluating alternate occupations, developing initial occupational choice, pursuing appropriate post-school education and advancing one's employability and attaining job offers from preferred organisations (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2010). The exploration stage is perceived as a phase of self-discovery and the formation of a professional self-image. Central needs during this stage comprise of peer acceptance, support and a job in which one can succeed (Miao, Lund & Evans, 2009).

Adult career development is categorized by three life/career stages: the early life/career, the mid-career and the late life career.

2.4.1.2. THE EARLY LIFE/CAREER STAGE

The early life/career stage encompasses two periods, the establishment and achievement phases. During the early life/career stage key developmental tasks comprise of learning the job, becoming familiar with organisational norms, policies and regulations, fitting into a chosen occupation and organisation, improving competence, sustaining employability and pursuing one's career goals and life interests. In early adulthood, physical and cognitive development is at its highest (Levinson, Darrow, Klein & McKee, 1978). Moral development, which starts in adolescence, is further advanced during adult development.

Life tasks of early adulthood consist of difficulties pertaining to attaining independence and responsibility, establishing one's identity, discovering a place in and contributing to society and becoming established in an occupation and in family life (Feldman, 2002; Scandura,

2002). A deliberate commitment is made to a specific occupational field and energy is expended to stabilise oneself and create a secure standing in the working world (Miao *et al.*, 2009).

Levinson *et al.* (1978), identify a distinct phase of early adulthood, namely, the novice phase. The principal undertaking of this phase is discovering a site for oneself in the adult domain. This encompasses two tasks which can be of a contrasting nature, that is to say, investigating the adult world and constructing a stable adult life structure at the same time. In surveying the adult world, possibilities are kept open, commitments are evaded and alternatives are exploited with a sense of adventure and wonderment in which aspirations can be coloured by fantasies. Establishing a stable adult life structure, in contrast, includes becoming responsible for determining family relations and a stable work structure. Lack of ability to attain equilibrium between these tasks can cause ambivalence, uncertainty, confusion and anxiety and subsequently lead to, either a freewheeling, rootless, transient quality of life or a premature adult life structure that is based on inadequate exploration (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

According to Sdorow (1995), nearly 95 per cent of young adults embark on marriage during this stage, even though in contrast to women, men are less inclined to marry and are more concerned about their future careers, while women are preoccupied about family considerations as well as career. Although women are concerned with both, they have a robust need for advancement, which is conventionally related to career success (Gordon & Whelan, 1998).

An additional period of early adulthood is a transitional phase also referred to as '*age thirty transition*' (Levinson *et al.*, 1978). This phase persists for roughly three to five years. The individual feels life as becoming more serious and has a perception to change before it is too late for change. This period can be effortless or result in crisis, but in broad terms it requires modification of certain aspects of life, but not radical changes. The '*age thirty transition*' stage may even occur between the ages of 20 and 35 due to evolving attributes of the contemporary workplace and dynamic nature of the 21st century career (Jowell, 2003).

Finally, Greenhaus *et al* (2010) regard establishment and achievement as two intervening early life career concerns that have to be addressed by the individual as well as the

organisation. Establishment commonly includes learning, assessing competence, fitting in, looking for approval, dealing with dependence and insecurity. Achievement largely encompasses contributing, enhancing competence, moving up, pursuing authority, finding independence and self-confidence (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

2.5. JOB SEARCH AND CAREER CHOICE

Preceding entry into an organisation, all individuals ought to make a career choice. They need to discern what it is they would like to do, identify an organisation that extends positions in that specific domain or field, and then gain employment by the organisation before they can further pursue a career in their chosen field.

Largely occupational choice theories maintain that an individual, deliberately or unintentionally, chooses an occupation that complements his/her unique set of needs, motives, values, and talents (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010). This is illustrated by Parson's (1909 cited in Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011, p. 100) trait and factor theory.

2.5.1. PARSON'S TRAIT AND FACTOR THEORY

Parson's trait and factor theory advocates that when an individual is faced with the inevitability of selecting an occupation, the individual intentionally proceeds to take inventory of his/her vocational assets and liabilities, accumulates information about occupations, and finally makes an analysis of all the available intelligence and arrives at a decision. The fundamental characteristic of this theory is the supposition that individuals have distinctive patterns of ability and/or traits that can be empirically measured and correlated with the prerequisites of diverse types of jobs (Zunker, 2006).

Parson (1909 cited in Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011, p. 100) formed his theory to assist young individuals in making prudent career choices and becoming productively employed. His approach entails helping people to develop (Sharf, 2010; Shoffner, 2006):

- a well-defined sense of themselves (individual Knowledge), including their aptitudes, interests, abilities, skills, attitudes, values, personality, ambitions, achievements and resource limitations;
- an understanding of the job or occupation, incorporating the prerequisites and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities and prospects in diverse fields of work; and
- a rational or sound pairing of the individual's traits to the job that best fits him or her.

Holland also regards occupational choice as a method of matching occupations and people (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010).

2.5.2. HOLLAND'S THEORY OF PERSONALITY AND OCCUPATIONAL TYPES

Holland proposes that individuals express their personalities in making an occupational choice. Consequently, according to Holland (1997), an artistic individual with characteristics, such as being impulsive, emotional, intuitive, and independent will in all likelihood choose being a graphic designer, landscape architect, interior decorator or journalist as career possibilities. In accordance with Holland (1997), individuals look for environments that will let them apply their skills and abilities and express their attitudes and values and take on acceptable challenges and roles. The fundamental concept is that individuals are drawn to a specific role demand of an occupational environment that agrees with their personal needs and provides them with satisfaction (Zunker, 2006).

2.5.3. SUPER'S CAREER DEVELOPMENT THEORY

According to Schreuder and Coetzee (2011), Super's career development theory also focuses on career choice as a fit between individuals and occupations. The fundamental concept of Super's theory presents career development as encompassing the formation and implementation of self-concepts in occupational contexts. The process involves a synthesis or compromise between the individuals' own view of their personal characteristics (self-

concepts) and aspects of reality such as social, economic and cultural factors. Self-concepts consist of the characteristics individuals think they possess, namely, their abilities, personality traits, needs, interests, and values. An occupational choice, therefore, enables an individual to play a role that is agreeable to his or her self-concept. Consequently, individuals will develop a concept of themselves, develop images or beliefs about various occupations, and take steps to enter the occupational field that is most compatible with their unique self-concept (Super, 1992).

Greenhaus *et al.* (2010) advances that the choice of an occupation is a progressive developmental activity that evolves with time. Several incidents permit the individual to gather information about him or herself and occupations. Accordingly, individuals learn and discover by observing and interrelating with their parents and siblings, and networking with close relatives and friends. Scholastic and educational involvements also offer additional learning opportunities. Performance at school and university, participation in extracurricular activities and discussions with fellow students, teachers and lecturers may prove to be useful. Casual or part-time work engagements also offer wide-ranging opportunities for reality testing. This presents the individual with the opportunity for testing his or her talents, interests, and learning what it is like to work outside the home.

Greenhaus *et al.* (2010) isolates cultural and social influences on occupational choices. These are the environment, both past and present, and include social class, income, place of residence, and the economic, political, and cultural climate. These facets have the propensity to impact the career choice an individual makes.

Greenhaus *et al.* (2010) ends by substantiating strategies to support with effective occupational decision making. It is imperative to foster self-awareness, having a deep appreciation of one's talents, interests, values, and preferred life-style. Precise occupational information needs to be established, as well. Alternate occupations needs to be understood and typecasts of unacquainted occupations and ignorance of certain occupational fields must be avoided. Effectual career goals which are practical and suitable must be established and a career strategy developed. The career strategy must encompass skills that need to be fostered, competencies that need to be developed, and opportunities for development need to be detected.

Succeeding these activities, the individual should have a reliable impression of what they would like to do and in which company. The individual can now apply for jobs, either by answering advertisements or placing their curriculum vitae with organisations in the hope of a position arising in the future. Organisations may now short list the individual and invite him or her for an interview. Other recruitment approaches may also be charted, such as, psychometric tests, phoning for references, and so forth. Should the individual be employed, he/she moves to the next stage in their career, that of organisational entry.

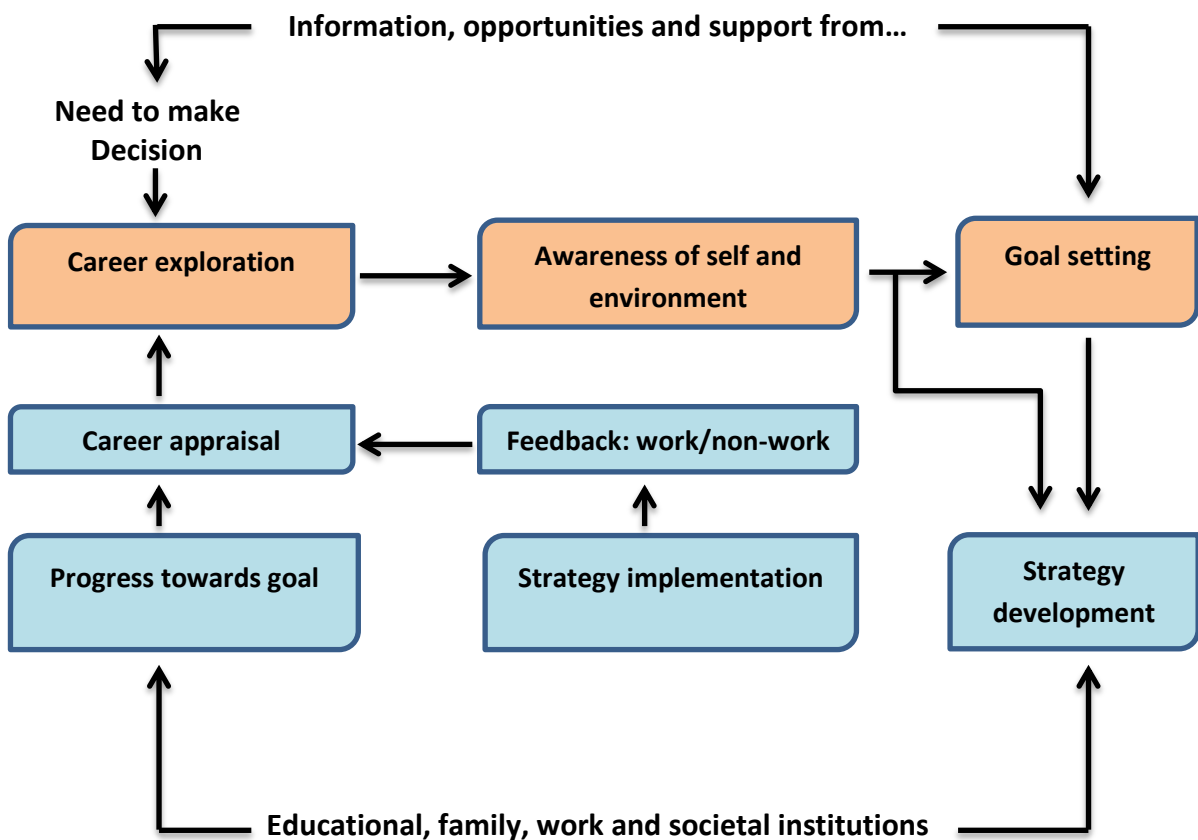
Notwithstanding, the foregoing theories of occupational choice, career planning and development models are also useful as to how individuals should manage their careers.

2.6. THE PLAN-AND-IMPLEMENT CAREER MODEL

Individuals can use the Plan-and-implement career model of Greenhaus *et al* (2010) to make informed decisions about their careers. The model illustrates how individuals should manage their careers, not necessarily how they do manage them. An illustration of the model follows:

FIGURE: 2.1.

A Career Management Model



Greenhaus, J.H, Callan, G.A. and Godshalk, V.M (2010). *Career Management* (4th Ed.). New York: Sage, p74.

Relevant steps pertaining to the current case will now be discussed. These encompass:

- career exploration,
- awareness of self and environment, and
- goal setting.

2.6.1. CAREER EXPLORATION AND AWARENESS

Career exploration is the gathering and examination of information concerning career-related issues. Career exploration can aid people in becoming cognisant of themselves and the world of work, devise career goals and choices and create strategies essential to achieve important goals particularly when launching their careers (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010).

Career exploration can be separated into exploration of one's own qualities known as self-exploration and evaluation of occupations, jobs, organisations and families which is known as environmental exploration.

2.6.1.1. SELF-EXPLORATION

In the course of self-exploration, it is essential for individuals to obtain information about their personal qualities that can be beneficial in career decision-making. Self-knowledge is the foundation of effective career planning. Personal qualities encompass interests, values and proficiency. Interest can be defined as an individual's fondness for certain activities and objects. A value is an outlook by which a person's preferences and behaviour are guided. Proficiency is the established and demonstrated efficiency by which an individual accomplishes a particular task. It is governed by the inherited aptitude of the individual and the forming influence of the environment. Accomplishments at school, past work histories and other achievements can be indicators of proficiency (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

2.6.1.2. ENVIRONMENTAL EXPLORATION

Environmental exploration empowers the individual to collect intelligence about the environment. It entails an examination of occupations, organisations and family needs. The intention of environmental exploration is to obtain sufficient information about these aspects and others to make a career decision that has agreeableness with these facets. Information about conceivable occupations should comprise of task activities, financial rewards, security, physical work setting, information on task variety and training requirements. Information on organisations encompasses financial health, strategies, and career management structures. Information on families involves the spouse's career aspirations and emotional needs, the children's (if any) emotional requirements, the family's financial wants and the family's preferred or desired lifestyle (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010).

2.6.1.3. AWARENESS

Awareness is a comparatively whole and precise perception of an individual's own qualities and the characteristics of his/her relevant environment (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010). A thorough self-and-environmental exploration will result in a meaningful awareness of self and of the environment, which will assist the employee to set realistic and achievable career goals.

2.6.2. CAREER GOALS

According to Greenhaus *et al.* (2010), a career goal is a favoured or preferred career-related result that an individual proposes to achieve. In formulating career goals, Individuals resolve what it is they want to accomplish with regard to their careers. Subsequently, they devise appropriate and agreeable strategies to support the attainment of their career goals (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

Career goals can be differentiated by their conceptual and operational nature. The conceptual career goal sums up the career ambitions of a person, his or her values, interests, aptitudes and preferences. A conceptual career goal captures the type of work a person wants to do, the type of contact with other people that he or she wishes to have and the physical environment. An operational career goal is the job that the person concerned is aiming for. It is the way in which the person wants to achieve his or her conceptual career goal (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

2.6.2.1. THE FUNCTION OF CAREER GOALS

Career goals have an expressive function in that gratification is derived when goals are attained, particularly when the related work is satisfying and when individuals make use of their experience. Goals may also have an instrumental function. The attainment of one goal will empower the individual to take aim of the next goal (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

2.6.2.2. CHARACTERISTICS OF CAREER GOAL

Career goals can be extended to the characteristics of goal setting, namely; specificity, measurability, flexibility, attainability, congruence and acceptability (Smit and Cronjé, 2002).

Specificity denotes what the goals are related to, the time frame for achieving them and the desired outcome. Accordingly, career goals must also be specified in terms that can be evaluated, hence *measurability* is integral to good goal setting. *Flexibility* of an individual's career goals is crucial to effective career management since the broader and immediate environment is never static and the changing world requires organisations to also be flexible in their goal setting. Uncertainty and volatility in the environment requires flexible career goal setting; hence the setting of too many long-term career goals is not recommended. Career goals should be realistic and achievable. Sensible and *attainable* career goals should take into account the qualities, needs, values, lifestyle, career anchors and career motives of the individual when formulating career goals. Establishing career goals that are too simple to attain provide no authentic experience of success, while career goals that are too challenging can trigger feelings of failure. Self-exploration and environmental exploration, is consequently an indispensable prerequisite for devising attainable career goals. Career goals must also be congruent. *Congruency* specifies that the attainment of one goal should not impede the attainment of another. Career goals should consequently be articulated in terms of long and short-term goals. Short-term goals should identify the education, training and experience required to achieve the long-term goals. Finally, individuals are most likely to follow career goals that are in line with their perceptions and preferences. Goal *acceptability* that can promote career commitment may be achieved through an authentic self-exploration process (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

2.6.3. CAREER STRATEGY

Career strategy entails a sequence of activities intended to assist an individual accomplish a particular career goal. The intention of career strategies is to help individuals in achieving their career goals. This involves individuals making decisions about the required steps to attain a favoured outcome (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010).

Research indicates that the following categories of career strategies may be utilized prior to and after organisational entry: displaying one's proficiency, acquiring new skills, strengthening one's image, taking advantage of opportunities, developing an association with a colleague, working long hours, and taking part in company politics (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010).

The advanced specifics of career strategies cannot be prearranged; individuals acquire new insights into a specific career strategy only when they have begun to follow it. When assembling a career strategy or sequence of career strategies, individuals must commence by revising their long-term goals. This entails establishing an operational goal which indicates the means to one's strategy. Essentially, an operational goal is the way in which a particular job can be utilized to accomplish the conceptual goal which is the end result, reward or desired outcome. The individual concerned should then list the actions or conduct necessary to achieve this long-term goal (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011).

The respective activities or modes of behaviour should be assessed on the foundation of its potential influence towards attaining the goal and of its appropriateness in an ethical sense. The prospective influence of an action or mode of behaviour can be evaluated by deliberating over it with more knowledgeable and seasoned individuals or employees and by giving consideration to the way in which others behave. Individuals also need to be aware that the implementation of one part of a specific career strategy can turn out to be an obstacle to another part (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010).

A career strategy must thus be considered in its entirety and should not be in disagreement with an individual's ethical values. The final list of objectives on the long-term career strategy list should be reasonably concise and brief. The motive for including each item should be stipulated and a projected time of implementation must be specified. After the long-term has been founded, a short-term goal may be established together with a list of possible activities and modes of behaviour for realizing this short-term. It is crucial that the short-term goal constitute a step in the attainment of the long-term goal (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2010). Even though the aforementioned procedure may give the impression of being entirely logical, it is essential that individuals remain open to new information and be prepared to revise their strategy as and when the need may arise.

The other aspects of the career management model include feedback, progress towards goals and career appraisal, these relate to events that take place after organisational entry in a desired industry or environment and are therefore, less significant to the current case. However, there are other key career concepts, if properly defined and conceptualized by individuals, will assist in sound career decision making.

2.7. KEY CAREER CONCEPTS UTILIZED IN CAREER DECISION MAKING

Key career concepts that are largely distinct or comparatively interchangeable in explaining the objective and subjective careers of individuals can prove useful in aiding individuals to make sound career decision. These include career success, career motivation, career commitment, career maturity and career self-efficacy.

2.7.1. CAREER SUCCESS

The concept of career success has various meanings for different individuals. According to Judge and Kammeyer-Muller (2007), career success can be described as the real or perceived accomplishments individuals have accrued as an outcome of their work experience. The manner in which individuals define career success for themselves can powerfully impact their career decisions. For some individuals, career success may signify promotion. To others it denotes becoming a specialist in their occupational field. Some judge career success as a life of social contribution by developing many different skills and abilities and using those abilities to help others grow and develop. It may also represent progressing repeatedly from one challenge to another. Success can also imply the degree to which there is a fit between an individual's self-perceived talents and abilities, motives and needs, attitudes and values and the perceptions of their jobs (Schein, 1993).

Research reveals that women are inclined to use more personal benchmarks for career success, such as employability and career satisfaction instead of the male criteria for promotions, organisational level attained and salary (Ackah & Heaton, 2003). Additionally, people's job satisfaction, career satisfaction and career well-being is affected by their career

experiences which lead to positive and/or negative evaluations and feelings about their careers and indicate some of the other benchmarks used by both males and females in determining career success (Kidd, 2008).

In regard to current business tendencies like downsizing and restructuring, it is vital that the meaning of success should no longer be reliant on the traditional objective characteristics of success, namely, promotion, salary increases and perks but should rather be reflected by the individual's perception of their psychological internal career success (Smit & Cronje, 2002).

2.7.2. CAREER MOTIVATION

Career motivation is a multi-dimensional concept internal to the individual, guided by the setting and circumstances and revealed in the individual's decisions and behaviours (London, 1983). The three major domains of career motivation are:

- career identity,
- career insight, and
- career resilience.

Career identity is a framework of meanings in which the individual determinedly connects his own motivation, interests and competencies with agreeable career roles (Meijers, 1998). Accordingly, it is the extent to which individuals define themselves by their work and by their organisation and how centrally individuals' careers are to their identity (Ibarra, 2003).

Career insight can be expressed as the degree to which an individual has realistic perceptions of him or herself and the organisation and links these perceptions to career goals (London, 1983). This will encompass self-knowledge, which entails the individual being aware of his or her strengths and weaknesses and can be linked to the individuals work commitment, organisational commitment and view of being a citizen in the organisation (Feldman, 2002).

Career resilience is the capacity to acclimatise to varying circumstances. It entails accepting job and organisational changes, embracing working with new and different individuals,

demonstrating self-confidence and being prepared to take chances or risks (London, 1983). Career resilience is derived from the concepts hardiness, self-efficacy and achievement motivation. Career vulnerability denotes the opposite of career resilience and expresses the degree of psychological fragility by becoming upset and finding it difficult to function when confronted with less than optimal career conditions like barriers to career goals, uncertainty and poor relationships with co-workers (London, 1983).

2.7.3. CAREER COMMITMENT

The theory of career commitment is strongly connected to career motivation and is described as the depth of one's motivation to work in a selected career role (Ballout, 2009). It is also perceived as the enthusiasm individuals have for their preferred work roles and the readiness they have to pledge themselves to the efforts needed to achieve their personal career goals. Research indicates that career commitment is positively related to career satisfaction, salary level and performance effectiveness (Day & Allen, 2004). Additionally, career commitment predicts both objective and subjective career success (Poon, 2004).

2.7.4. CAREER MATURITY AND CAREER SELF-EFFICACY

Career maturity is a concept that is connected to career resilience. It is revealed in individuals who make career decisions that reflect decisiveness, involvement, independence, task orientation and preparedness to compromise between needs and reality.

In turn the concept of career maturity is similarly linked to career self-efficacy. This indicates the extent of complicatedness of career tasks, which individuals adjudge they are to attempt and how well they think they can implement the courses of actions entailed to deal with those tasks and the extent to which their confidences will endure, in spite of impediments. Moreover, career self-efficacy denotes the extent to which individual's beliefs can be conveyed to other tasks necessary for making career decisions. Whereas low career decision-making self-efficacy enables avoidance of career decision tasks and extends

career indecision, high career decision-making self-efficacy results in a high level of participation in career decision-making behaviours and tasks (Watson, Foxcrof & Eaton, 2001). Additionally, Day and Allen (2004) found career self-efficacy to be related to indicators of career success and performance effectiveness.

2.8. CONCLUSION

This section has provided a theoretical background into aspects related to the function that work and career performs in the lives of individuals. Likewise, the early life career stage which is part of the career life cycle was described and explained. Moreover, other related facets that were expounded upon include job search and career choice, the usefulness of the career management model, career success, career motivation and commitment, and career maturity and career self-efficacy. Additionally, attention was given to relevant career concepts that are often utilized in career decision making.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter delineates the assessment techniques employed to perform this study. Two separate assessment techniques were utilised over a four day period. This comprised of three interview sessions and the administration of six psychometric tests.

The interview and test sessions were conducted in a neutral venue that was free from disturbing influences. The venue was well ventilated and the artificial lighting was suitable, additionally, the setting was ergonomically conducive for both interviewing and testing. A whiteboard and markers were also available for demonstration purposes. The psychometric tests were conducted under the supervision of a registered Industrial Psychologist.

Amongst other aspects, the face-to-face question and answer interview sessions sort to solicit background information on the client and to establish and identify any work and or career related concerns that were affecting her. The psychometric tests that were utilised necessitated the client to complete predetermined questionnaires (tests), applicable and appropriate to the established concern that was identified during the interview stage. Consequently, the theoretical background on each of the psychometric questionnaires, as well as the interview sessions will be discussed.

3.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF PSYCHOMETRIC TESTS UTILISED

Six psychometric tests were completed by the client. These include the 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire, Achievement Motivation Questionnaire, Career Development Questionnaire, 19 Field Interest Inventory, Interpersonal Relations Questionnaire, and the Values Scale. The background of each test is set-out hereunder.

3.2.1. 16 PERSONALITY FACTOR QUESTIONNAIRE (16 PF)

The intention of the 16 PF is to establish the person's interests and attitudes and to derive a personality profile of the client founded on 16 principal scales and additional secondary elements. The 16 PF reflects the strength and direction of an individual's personality according to 16 main source traits and further secondary dimensions (Krug, 1994).

The 16 PF is a "multi-dimensional set of sixteen questionnaire scales, arranged in omnibus form. It is designed to make available, in a practical testing time, information about an individual's standing on the majority of primary personality factors ..." (Cattell, Eber & Tatsuoka, 1970:1).

The test is composed of 187 multiple-choice items and there are no correct or incorrect responses. Respondents choose from amongst options A, B, or C, and shade in the response of their individual choice on the answer sheet provided. For instance in response to the statement, "I like watching team games", the respondent may choose A: Yes, B: Occasionally or C: No. Additionally, in response to the statement "Woman is to child as cat is to", the respondent may choose A: kitten, B: dog or C: boy. There is no stipulated time limit for the completion of the questionnaire; however, respondents take approximately 30 – 45 minutes to complete the questionnaire (Krug, 1994).

The 16 PF establishes where individuals are positioned on 16 bipolar dimensions used to measure personality. The dimensions or factors vacillate from low score descriptions or types to high score descriptions or types and comprise of the following 16 classifications:

- **Factor A**

Low score description: reserved, detached, critical, and cool.

High score description: outgoing, warm-hearted, easy-going, and participating.

- **Factor B**

Low score description: less intelligent and concrete thinking.

High score description: more intelligent and abstract thinking.

- **Factor C**
 - Low score description: affected by feelings, emotionally less stable, and easily upset.
 - High score description: emotionally stable, faces reality, and calm.
- **Factor E**
 - Low score description: humble, mild, obedient, and conforming.
 - High score description: assertive, independent, aggressive, and stubborn.
- **Factor F**
 - Low score description: sober, prudent, serious, and taciturn.
 - High score description: happy-go-lucky, heedless, gay, and enthusiastic.
- **Factor G**
 - Low score description: expedient, and a law to himself or herself.
 - High score description: conscientious, persevering, stain, and rule bound.
- **Factor H**
 - Low score description: shy, restrained, diffident, and timid.
 - High score description: venturesome, socially bold, uninhibited, and spontaneous.
- **Factor I**
 - Low score description: tough-minded, self-reliant, realistic, and no-nonsense.
 - High score description: tender-minded, dependent, over-protected, and sensitive.
- **Factor L**
 - Low score description: trusting, adaptable, free of jealousy, and easy to get on with.
 - High score description: suspicious, self-opinionated, and hard to fool.
- **Factor M**
 - Low score description: practical, careful, conventional, regulated by external realities, and proper.
 - High score description: imaginative, wrapped up in inner urgencies, careless of practical matters, and bohemian.

- **Factor N**
Low score description: forthright, natural, aptless, and sentimental.
High score description: shrewd, calculating, worldly, and penetrating.
- **Factor O**
Low score description: placid, self-assured, confident, and serene.
High score description: apprehensive, worrying, depressive, and troubled.
- **Factor Q1**
Low score description: conservative, respecting established ideas, and tolerant of traditional difficulties.
High score description: experimenting, critical, liberal, analytical, and free thinking.
- **Factor Q2**
Low score description: group-dependent, a 'joiner' and sound follower.
High score description: less sufficient, prefers own decision, and resourceful.
- **Factor Q3**
Low score description: casual, careless of protocol, untidy, and follows on urges.
High score description: controlled, socially-precise, self-disciplined, and compulsive.
- **Factor Q4**
Low score description: relaxed, tranquil, torpid, and unfrustrated.
High score description: tense, driven, overwrought, and fretful (Krug, 1994).

3.2.1.1. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE 16 PF QUESTIONNAIRE

Reliability signifies the consistency or stability of a measure. Likewise, validity refers to the integral accuracy and precision of a measure (Muchinsky, Kriek & Schreuder 2005). A valid measure is indicative of one that produces correct estimates of what is being assessed. At the inception and early development of the instrument Cattell (1949) assembled a preliminary list of 171 items or terms, deemed to constitute and describe traits that apply to human behaviour. College students were then required to assess their colleagues on these 171 terms, upon which the results were intercorrelated and factor analysed. Thereafter,

the 171 items were condensed to 36 dimensions, called surface traits (Cattell, 1957). Successive factor analysis ultimately produced 16 distinct factors that accounted for all the variables. Consistent with the factor analytical approach, items that correlated highly with each of the 16 principal factors, were included, and those with relatively low correlations were excluded (Cattell, 1957).

According to Kaplan and Saccuzzo (2008) the short-term test-retest correlation coefficients for the 16 source traits range from 0.65 to 0.93 with a mean coefficient of 0.83 may well be described as impressive. The same, however, cites that long-term test-retest coefficients are less impressive with a range of 0.21 to 0.64. Additionally, discouraging are the correlations between the various forms which range from a low of 0.16 to a high of 0.79, with median coefficients in the 0.50 and 0.60's, depending on which forms are correlated.

However, Cattell (1957) maintains that the 16 source traits of the instrument do intercorrelate, with some correlations as high as 0.75. To deal with this overlap, the 16 factors themselves were factor analysed. Accordingly, Kaplan and Saccuzzo (2008) concede that the analyses of the psychometric properties of the 16 PF made by Cattell does reflect an attempt at providing a psychometrically sound instrument.

3.2.2. 19 FIELD INTEREST INVENTORY (19 FII)

The 19 FII was assembled to determine the vocational interests of high school pupils between Standards 8 to 10, students, and adults in 19 wide-ranging areas of interest. The inventory measures the degree to which an entity is actively or passively interested in the 19 broad fields, as well as the extent to which their interest is work or hobby orientated (Fouche & Alberts, 2001).

Interest is described as a comparatively continuous, positive or negative directedness in relation to a definite and particular activity and is established on the whole personality. The questions in the 19 FII pertain to the pursuit of activities which support and underpin any of the 19 broad and significant occupational fields. The individuals directedness with regard to a certain cluster of activities should be indicative of his interest in a vocation field or fields to which these activities form the basis (Fouche & Alberts, 2001).

The fields of the inventory are structured in prearranged logical groups to simplify interpretation of the interest profile. The 19 wide-ranging fields of interest are delineated hereunder and the assigned numbers for each field are reproduced as they appear in the inventory:

- Fine Arts (FA) (1): incorporates interest in activities which encroach on painting, sculpture, sketching and also on the design of advertisements and sign boards known as commercial art.
- Performing Arts (PA) (5): encompasses gratification in activities such as singing, ballet, opera, operetta, and music endeavours.
- Language (L) (16): embraces an admiration and enjoyment for literature and the practical use and analysis of language.
- Historical (H) (7): denotes an appreciation and satisfaction in the classics and in significant events of the past.
- Service (Se) (17): signifies an interest in the rendering of service to persons in society who are not needy, as undertaken by hairdressers, shop assistants and waiters.
- Social Work (SW) (3): indicates an interest in the rendering of service to the needy in society.
- Sociability (Sa) (10): denotes an interest in social interaction and contact. This includes the organisation of and participation in social functions.
- Public Speaking (PS) (8): refers chiefly to the delivering of speeches and making appearances on the public stage.
- Law (Lw) (14): signifies the study and application of laws and legal principles.
- Creative Thought (CT) (11): denotes an interest in the utilisation of logical thought for problem solving and in the execution of creative work.
- Science (Sc) (6): involves interest in the physical and biological sciences.

- Practical – Male (PM) (18): embraces the mechanical and technical areas of interest and may be denoted in the usage of tools and technical equipment for the hands-on execution of a task.
- Practical – Female (PF) (13): signifies an domestic activities that includes amongst other activities the making of clothes, housekeeping and other activities pursued within the home context, especially by females.
- Numerical (Nu) (9): encompasses an entity's interest in the utilisation of numbers and or other mathematical techniques for the effecting of calculations.
- Business (B) (19): denotes an interest in all varieties of trading with for the expressed purpose of making a profit.
- Clerical (Cl) (2): embraces concentration on predictable routine work typically executed by clerks.
- Travel (Tr) (12): incorporates the degree to which individuals are fond of traveling regularly.
- Nature (Na) (4): chiefly represents an interest in activities which are pursued outdoors and incorporates forestry, farming of crops, and stock farming.
- Sport (Sp) (15): indicates the degree to which an entity exhibits concentration on outdoor sporting activities.
- Work – Hobby (W/H): specifies whether an individual is work or hobby oriented in his or her interests.
- Active – Passive (A/P): reveals whether an individual is actively interested in the pursuit of activities or simply desires to participate passively in activities of interest as an observer (Fouche & Alberts, 2001).

The scale utilised in the 19 FII is a normalised nine-point standard scale, thus, providing standard scores of 1-9 with an average of 5 and a standard deviation of 1.96 (Fouche & Alberts, 2001) .

There is no stipulated time limit for the completion of the inventory; however, respondents take approximately 45 minutes to complete the inventory. Consequently, respondents are urged to work as quickly as possible.

3.2.2.1. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE 19 FIELD INTEREST INVENTORY

The reliability of the 19 FII is determined and calculated in line with the reliability coefficient method and incorporates indices. In the initial development of the 19 FII the Kuder Interest Inventory was utilised in conjunction with the preliminary 20 FII and a factor analytic approach was implemented. The earlier 20 FII was eventually collapsed into the 19 FII by combining the fields, Creativity (Cr) and Thinking (T) to form the field Creative Thought (CT) (Fouche & Alberts, 2001).

According to Fouche and Alberts (2001), the intercorrelations of the initial 20 FII included all the interest fields of the Kuder Interest Inventory, with one exception, namely, the low correlation between the field Persuasive in the Kuder and the Public Speaking field in the 20 FII. Additionally, it is worth noting that the 19 FII includes some ten additional fields which are not incorporated by the Kuder Interest Inventory.

The Kuder Interest Inventory and the 19 FII equally reveal high loadings in construct validity on a number of factors, while the 19 FII shows loading on an additional six factors which are not measured by the Kuder Inventory. A factor analysis on the intercorrelations of the variables in the 19 FII and the Kuder Interest Inventory revealed the emergence of the same factors on the whole. However, as can be expected, the 19 FII once more revealed loadings on a variety of factors not included in the Kuder Inventory (Fouche & Alberts, 2001).

3.2.3. ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE (PMV)

The Achievement Motivation Questionnaire (PMV) was established to assess the intensity of an adult individual's need for achievement. The PMV is frequently used in industry to assist in the making of recruitment, selection and placement decisions since it determines the

relative strength of the entity's motivation to achieve. Additionally, it has analytic and diagnostic usefulness in career counselling and vocational guidance. Moreover, the PMV can be practically incorporated in cross-cultural investigations since norms are obtainable for the diverse language groups in both white and black population groups. Given that separate norms for males and females are available in the PMV, gender differences amongst the five dimensions of achievement motivation can, therefore, also be investigated (Pottas, Erwee, Boshoff & Lessing, 1988).

The PMV utilises forced-choice items to assess an entity's motivation to achieve. Within each item two tendencies, A and B, are portrayed. One of them signifies achievement motivated behaviour and the other signals the opposite drive. The respondent has to select whether he or she best resembles A or B, thereby indirectly revealing their perception of themselves in relation to achievement motivation (Pottas *et al.*, 1988).

A factor analytic approach was observed in the establishment of the questionnaire. Two factors were extracted which can be subdivided into three and two sub-factors respectively. Generally the scores for the two principal factors or the total score can be adequate as a foundation for decisions. On the other hand, when faint differences between individuals have to be made or in the case of measurement for diagnostic determinations, it is sensible to evaluate the comparative levels of the five sub-factors. The concept of achievement motivation in addition to content of the main factors is explained hereunder:

- **ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION (PM)**

The PM score is obtained by adding the scores of the five sub-factors A, B, C, D, and E or by adding the scores of the two main factors (AA and BB). Persons who attain a high score can be defined as individuals who venture to do their finest in all they undertake. Fundamental to this determination is a predisposition to devise high personal standards of distinction and the confidence that dependence on one's own skills and abilities is pivotal in attaining success and achievement. With the intention of attaining their objectives they persevere in their endeavours, are action-orientated and are conscious of the need for effective time management.

- GOAL DIRECTEDNESS (AA)

The score of this factor is obtained by adding the scores from the first three sub-factors, namely; A, B, and C – these are defined later. Persons who achieve high scores on this key factor are determined on achieving personal goals and persist despite adversity. They are systematic and their behaviour is future-oriented. Time is deemed as a crucial resource which must be exploited effectively so as to achieve objectives. They have the propensity to be industrious, to exert themselves and are action-orientated.

- PERSONAL EXCELLENCE (BB)

The score for this factor is calculated by adding the scores of the last two sub-factors, D and E. High scores on this factor specify that high personal standards of excellence are devised. High scorers are certain that one should rely on one's own skills and abilities to attain success, instead of on fate or mealy exertion. They bask in challenges, take calculated risks and deem that adverse situations can be conquered by taking initiative (Pottas *et al.*, 1988).

There is no stipulated time limit for the completion of the questionnaire; however, respondents take approximately 20 - 30 minutes to complete the inventory.

The dependability of the scores hinges on the accuracy of scoring. All score should, therefore, be verified by a third party or otherwise be counted twice. Caution should be taken that the appropriate scoring stencil is utilised and that the scores are reassigned precisely. The score of factor AA is acquired by adding the raw scores of sub-factors A, B, and C and for factor BB the scores of sub-factors D and E are added. The PM score is the total score of the five sub-factors. This score can also be obtained by adding the scores of factor AA and factor BB. The norms are then traced in the appropriate table and the stanines are written in the spaces provided. At this juncture the profile can be finalised by marking the stanines on the various scales and by joining these points (Pottas *et al.*, 1988).

3.2.3.1. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The Kuder-Richardson reliability coefficient was utilised to confirm reliability of the questionnaire. Weak items were gradually disregarded and excluded and only those items which generated a subscale with a satisfactorily high reliability coefficient were kept. These items were retained in the questionnaire. The Kuder-Richardson 20 reliabilities were then computed for each subgroup separately (Pottas *et al.*, 1988).

To guarantee construct validity, a factor analytic approach was employed in the establishment of the questionnaire so as to ensure that the construct, achievement motivation, was assessed as precisely as achievable. The two main factors and sub-factors were extracted and permitted the construct to be described in detail. Additionally, the scores of the PMV questionnaire were also correlated with scores from interrelated tests, such as the Autonomous and Social Achievement Values (ASAV). The intercorrelations between the two questionnaires established that a large amount of similarity exists with what is assessed by the PMV and the ASAV (Pottas *et al.*, 1988).

3.2.4. CAREER DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (CDQ)

The aim of the Career Development Questionnaire is to specify in what precise area of career development one might conceivably be experiencing difficulties. Acquiring this knowledge makes counteractive procedures achievable (Langley, 1999).

The CDQ is not a test it is a questionnaire, hence, there are no right and wrong answers. The instrument contains 100 statements related to career development. The respondent is required to read each statement carefully and then chooses a true or false response for each of the statements by shading in the appropriate space (Langley, 1999).

The questionnaire takes approximately 30 to 45 minutes to complete. There is no stipulated time limit for the completion of the questionnaire; however, respondents are admonished to work through the questionnaire as speedily as achievable.

3.2.4.1. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

According to Langley, du Toit and Herbst (1992), the reliability coefficients of the scales for the three groups utilised in the instrument have been established and are determined to be acceptable if used for guidance purposes only. The same was found by Langley *et al.* (1992) in results obtained from university students.

However, only the content validity of the CDQ was focused upon in the above study and the resulting measures were captured in this regard:

- Items were meticulously inspected for face validity
- The wording and formulation of sentences were scrutinised by experts
- The item scale correlations were verified (Langley *et al.*, 1992).

3.2.5. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE (IRQ)

The fast pace of life and resultant higher tension levels for most young individuals may influence their powers to adapt to such an extent that incorrect mechanisms of psychological adjustment may be acquired. Consequently, the individual's search to establish a sense of identity may get affected. Self-diffusion and role-diffusion as well as deficient adjustment mechanisms need to be identified as early as possible, therefore, objective evaluation is necessary. Consequently, the main aim of the IRQ is to measure interpersonal relations of respondents (Joubert & Schlebusch, 1988).

Psychological adjustment refers to a dynamic process of satisfactory adjustment whereby an individual can overcome different developmental problems by means of satisfactory intra and interpersonal relations with the result that he or she may be able to satisfy his or her own needs, comply with the demands of his environment and establish a sense of identity. Consequently, the IRQ was compiled to measure the effect and significance of personality traits in the life of the individual in search of an identity. Poor adjustment is implied whenever behaviour strategies and tension reactions prevent harmony from being reached with the 'self' and between the 'self' and the demands of the environment and has self-diffusion or role diffusion as a result (Joubert & Schlebusch, 1988).

Following an exhaustive literature study, the general aim of the IRQ is to give reliable and valid evaluation of the personal, home, social and formal relations of young respondent by means of 12 components of psychological adjustment, namely:

- Self-confidence
- Self-esteem
- Self-control
- Nervousness,
- Health
- Family influences
- Personal freedom
- Sociability in general
- Sociability with the opposite sex
- Sociability with the same sex
- Moral sense, and
- Formal relations (Joubert & Schlebusch, 1988).

In the process of constructing the IRQ a logical strategy was used with the result that the test user will be able to explain individual differences with a theoretical framework. A factor analytical approach was adopted to establish the relations between the 12 components of the IRQ and to allocate items to an Abridged and an Extended Questionnaire. If only an overview of the adjustment of the respondent is required, the abridged questionnaire, which consists of 100 items involving five components and takes about one hour to complete, may be administered. The full questionnaire which consists of 260 items involving all components and takes approximately two hours to administer was utilised in this study. The view adopted is that because the testee knows himself/herself the best, self-evaluation by the respondent should make available a reliable and valid measurement of adjustment.

3.2.5.1. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE IRQ

According to Joubert (1988) an examination of the reliability coefficients of the IRQ scales, estimated by means of the Kuder-Richardson 20 formula show that the reliability

coefficients range from 0.65 to 0.85, thus the internal reliability of all scales is satisfactory. The test-retest reliability coefficients of the IRQ scales are also reported to be adequate. Therefore it seems reasonable to conclude that the IRQ will give consistent and stable measurements (Joubert & Schlebusch, 1988).

The validities of the IRQ scales were investigated during the administration for item analysis and the determination of norms. The validity data, method and results of this investigation reported by Joubert (1988) establish that evidence found indicate that the IRQ should be effective in use.

The investigations concerning the experiment, factorial, convergent and discriminant validity of the IRQ scales provided indications that the IRQ as a whole can be considered to have construct validity. Once again, these investigations are reported by Joubert (1988). However, the report on the construct validity of the IRQ cannot be regarded as conclusive and further investigations are advised.

3.2.6. THE VALUE SCALE (VS)

The Value Scale (VS) was developed to measure an individual's needs for each of the following:

Ability utilisation, Achievement, Advancement, Aesthetics, Altruism, Authority, Autonomy, Creativity, Cultural identity, Economic rewards, Economic security, Own life style, Personal development, Physical activities, Physical prowess, Prestige, Risk, Social interaction, Social relations, Spirituality, Variety, and Agreeable working conditions.

Values and needs have a bearing on preferences for ideals and life styles. Values have a distinct connection to careers, vocational interests, job-satisfaction and they are essentially objectives that one seeks to attain to satisfy a need (Langley *et al.*, 1992). The relative importance of work in an individual's own value system is critical to the career counsellor. Some individuals like to work because they enjoy the need satisfaction they derive from actually working; others work to earn money which they spend on activities other than work. An understanding of these work values and needs is important to the counsellor in order to determine the underlying reasons for job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The main

reason for job dissatisfaction is a poor match between work need satisfaction and post requirements (Nevill & Super, 1986).

A need can be satisfied in various roles at different stages of life. A man can for instance satisfy his need for altruism through his student and worker roles by becoming a social worker during late adolescence and young adulthood. He can satisfy that same need in his role as a father and husband when he marries and has children. He can continue to satisfy his need for altruism in his community role when he possibly becomes a volunteer worker later in life. It is the task of the counsellor to point out to the client that the same needs can be satisfied in more than one role.

The intended use of the VS is to provide individual guidance amongst pupils, students and adults by means of explaining their individual needs experienced and satisfied in their various life roles and by measuring the relative importance that work role plays as a means of needs satisfaction in the context of their other life roles. The 110 items of the VS yield 22 separate scales, each of which measures a value or striving for need satisfaction. The purpose of the VS is to assist a person by means of guidance to become aware of the need satisfaction he or she considers important for work satisfaction (Langley *et al.*, 1992).

The VS can be completed in approximately 30 -50 minutes and there are no wrong or right responses.

3.2.6.1. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE VALUE SCALE

According to Langley *et al.* (1992), an examination of the reliability coefficients of the VS scales, estimated by means of the Kuder-Richardson 8 formula show that all the scales obtained reliability coefficients higher than 0.70 for the total sample, with 12 scales having a reliability coefficient of 0.80 or higher. The reliability coefficients of the VS may, thus, be regarded as being satisfactory and will give consistent and stable measurements if the questionnaire is utilised in conjunction with other relevant instruments.

To guarantee content validity the ensuing procedure was utilised in advance:

- A literature study was carried out on needs and lists of needs were collected.
- The lists of needs so developed, was scrutinised.

- The needs were positioned in classifications to avert replication and an illustrative value per category was identified.
- Definitions were accumulated for the needs.
- Definitions were refined and enhanced during the deliberations of project leaders and research workers.
- On the basis of the final-mentioned definitions of these needs, items were compiled.

The item selection process encompassed item scale correlations and factor analysis.

The ability of test scores to differentiate between different groups can provide support for the construct validity of an instrument. As a result of the large number of individuals that were included in establishing validity, a small numerical difference which can also be statistically significant, was obtained. However, it does not always have psychological meaning in practice. As the differences were very small, Langley *et al.* (1992) believe it is not possible to make meaningful deductions.

A factor analysis of the VS items was performed on the pooled data of three subsamples comprising of English, Afrikaans and African Language speaking individuals (N = 5 350). Additionally, a principal component analysis was performed in order to form a better understanding of the constructs. This resulted in six factors with eigenvalues greater than one. These factors were rotated in the varimax position and explained 76.3% of the total variance.

In accordance with the results of this exercise, needs may be classified into the following six factors:

- Inner-oriented needs,
- Material needs,
- Autonomous Life style,
- Humanism and Religion,
- Social needs, and
- Physical needs (Langley *et al.*, 1992).

Additionally, the scores of the VS were also correlated with scores from interrelated tests, such as the Life Role Inventory (LRI), Career Development Questionnaire (CDQ) and the Self-

Directed Search Questionnaire (SDS). The intercorrelations between the VS and each of the aforementioned established a number of significant correlations; therefore, indicating that similarity exists with what is assessed by the VS and the other instruments.

3.3. INTERVIEWING

One technique of gathering data is to interview respondents to obtain information. The interview may be described as a conversation with a purpose (Robbins, Judge, Odendaal & Roodt, 2009). Usually, an interview is a face-to-face meeting, with a particular purpose or objective resulting in an exchange of information. Interviews can be structured or unstructured and may be conducted either face to face, by telephone or through the integrated use of telecommunications and informatics which is also known as Information and Communications Technology (ICT) (Sekaran, 2010).

Interviews form an essential section of any assessment and can be used at any phase of the research procedure. This technique can be employed to isolate areas for more exhaustive exploration and to authenticate interpretation findings, or may be utilised as the main source of data collection (Robbins *et al.*, 2009).

The interview is an adaptable instrument, which can vacillate from being totally structured, that is comprised of asking a predetermined, fixed set of questions in precise order; or may be unstructured, that is, the interviewer would have numerous topics that need to be covered and interrogated, without subscribing to a predetermined sequence of asking fixed questions. The structured interview restricts discussion and the interviewee is restricted to a choice of answers. In an unstructured interview, the questions are allowed to develop as a result of the exchange with the client. This enables the interviewer to determine the objectives to be achieved as well as the main questions (Nel, Van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono, Werner, 2004).

The interview sessions in this study, firstly, adopted a structured interview format based on broad predetermined questions so as to establish a background of the client and to identify possible career concerns. Based on the interviewees response to the structured interview

the second and third interview sessions adopted an unstructured interview and the question here were allowed to develop as a result of the exchange with the client so as to solicit more information on key areas of concern that initially emerged during the structured interview.

3.4. CONCLUSION

The theoretical background on each of the tests (16 Personality Factor Questionnaire, 19 Field Interest Inventory, Achievement Motivation Questionnaire, Career Development Questionnaire, Interpersonal Relations Questionnaire, and Values Scale) has been discussed. Distinct consideration has been offered as to what are being measured, scaling, time limits, and how these tests are scored and conducted. Interviewing was the other procedure employed to obtain information in this study. Consequently, an overview of interviews has been discussed. The findings obtained from each of the aforementioned, will be presented in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF PSYCHOMETRIC TEST RESULTS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This section is a presentation of the analysis of results obtained through the psychometric tests utilized to examine the client's problem. The results obtained from the battery of tests administered to the client will be presented and analysed.

4.2. ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE (PMV)

This subject scored relatively high on overall Achievement Motivation (PM) and therefore, on the basis of the test, it can be inferred that the client does have a tendency to do well in almost everything which she undertakes and has a relatively high need for achievement. She will, therefore, possess relatively acceptable personal standards of excellence and will believe to some extent that reliance on own skills and abilities is decisive in achieving success. She should also be somewhat action oriented and somewhat aware of effective time management.

The score for Goal directedness (AA) is just above average and therefore, on the basis of the test indicates that the client should have a moderate inclination toward achieving personal goals and persevering despite adversity. She would also be described as having an average tendency in terms of being methodical and future-orientated. She may also not fully regard time as a vital resource which must be utilized effectively in order to achieve objectives. She would have a moderate tendency to be industrious, to exert herself and to be action-orientated.

The score for Persistence (A) is relatively high and therefore, on the basis of the test indicates that the client should have a healthy tendency to persevere in seeking solutions to problems despite adverse circumstances. Setbacks will be viewed as challenges. She would have a tendency to ascribe successes to the utilization of her own skills. She may also have a tendency to complete tasks, not to procrastinate and to refrain from delay when confronted with the need to grapple with complex tasks.

In terms of Awareness of time (B), there is an inclination for the client to not always work according to time schedule and to plan ahead and on some occasions she may. On the basis of the test, it can be inferred that the client's affairs may not always be in order and she may not have a preference for structure in her life. She might not always prepare well in advance for any eventuality. She is inclined to not feel guilty about inefficient use of time, when she is late for an appointment or if she deviates from her timetable. She may not be so concerned with the future and also would not have precisely formulated plans or definite career goals for the future.

With regard to Action Orientation (C), the scores indicate that she has a leaning to not be an active, energetic person. On the basis of the test, it can be inferred that the client would not utilize time optimally. She also should have a high tendency to tolerate idleness and may also be inclined to extend rest breaks when completing a task. She is inclined not to perceive time as dynamic and fast-moving.

In terms of Personal Excellence (BB) the client would have high personal standards of excellence formulated. It can be inferred that the client would be convinced that one should depend on one's own skills and abilities to achieve success, rather than on luck or mere effort. She should revel in challenges, take calculated risks and believe that unfavourable circumstance can be overcome by taking initiative.

With reference to Aspiration Level (D), the client has an inclination to embark on demanding and challenging tasks even though failure may be experienced. Therefore, calculated risks might be taken and challenges should be preferred to certainty of success. She should, therefore, be setting high performance standards for herself and expect the same of others. She should be going to great lengths to obtain goals. She would rather manage her own enterprise than merely be part of a large organisation. She would not easily accept help in the solving of complex tasks.

In connection with Personal Causation (E), the score indicates that the client trusts in her own abilities and skills and has a conviction that control can be exerted over life events and the environment. She may not generally believe that she is a victim of circumstance. She would have a tendency to believe that her actions are correct in most cases and that she will be able to execute a task to the best of her ability. She would prefer situations where she

can take personal initiative and should want at all costs to reach the highest point in life. She is, therefore, characterized by a motivation to achieve success rather than by a motivation to avoid failure.

4.3. 16 PERSONALITY FACTOR QUESTIONNAIRE (16PF)

The respondent's personality profile generally depicts a happy-go-lucky, lively, enthusiastic social extrovert. She is inclined to have a preference for popular to classical music, having more friends than most people, enjoying parties, shows, and jobs that offer change, variety and travel.

Her personality profile reveals that she is likely to be somewhat tense, driven, overwrought, and fretful.

Additionally, the personality assessment indicates that the client is likely to be reserved, detached, critical, and cool as opposed to being warm-hearted and may be inclined to have had a history of unsatisfying interpersonal relationships.

The client's personality profile reveals that she is inclined to be trusting, adaptable, free of jealousy, and easy to get on with and are generally regarded as a healthy sign.

The personality assessment also indicates that the client is likely to be forthright, natural, artless, and sentimental and may be generally less constrained by rules and standards.

Finally, the personality profile reveals that the client is inclined to be placid, self-assured, confident, and serene and may even come across as self-satisfied or smug. On the basis of the test, the client may not likely be bound by convention and by the standards of other people.

4.4. 19 FIELD INTEREST INVENTORY (19FII)

On the basis of the test, the testee displays a very high and equal interest in Language, Creative Thought, and the Practical Male. She also has a strong interest in Business. Additionally, she has a healthy interest in Sociability, Public Speaking, and Law. The client

also has an above moderate and equal interest in Science, Numerical, Travel, and Sport. In all of the other fields, her interest varies from moderate to very low. From her scores on the Work-Hobby aspect, she appears to be work orientated and in relation to the Active-Passive aspect her score indicates a preference to participate positively in activities rather than to be a passive spectator.

The scores obtained by the client indicate that she should be most happy in a field that engenders an appreciation for literature and the practical use and analysis of language (such as teaching/lecturing literature and language usage) or in a field that engenders the use of logical thought for the solution of problems and in the execution of creative work. Finally, the client would be equally happy in the mechanical and technical field that engenders an interest in the handling of tools for the practical execution of a task.

The test scores, however, should be related to the client's aptitudes and other personality characteristics before any recommendations or guidance is offered.

4.5. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE (IRQ)

The significant findings based on those components of the Interpersonal Relations Questionnaire relevant to the clients identified problem, is set out below:

- Personal Freedom – on the basis of the test, the testee may be differentiated as an individual who experiences an extremely high degree of personal freedom. This plainly signifies that the client may not be constrained by mature persons who are significant to her. Consequently, it may be inferred that she should be unrestricted in the attainment her own unique abilities. However, the client's stanine score of 9 is an indication that the client may be regarded as poorly adjusted with regard to this component.
- Sociability in General – this component of the test revealed that the client has an exceedingly compelling capacity to participate in group social activities. This evidently suggests that she should have the willingness and enthusiasm to make friends with other people, be attentive to the activities of her colleagues, express

empathy to other people, and share with others and communicate effectively with them.

- Social Relations with Members of the Opposite Sex – the testing of this component uncovered that the testee should have exceptional proficiency to participate in social activities with members of the opposite sex. This distinctly implies that she may have the preparedness and eagerness to make advances to specific males and in turn to accept propositions from specific males. Consequently, the client's stanine score of 8 is an indication that the client may be regarded as poorly adjusted with regard to this component.
- Family Influences – on the grounds of this component, it can be suggested that there may be notable family influence on the client which can be deduced from the satisfaction she conveyed pertaining to her parents in addition to the socio-economic circumstances of her family.
- Health – it can be inferred that the client has a fairly robust outlook concerning her own body and the capacity to make full use of her bodily powers. This can be construed from her ability to appreciate life and to work proficiently.
- Self-esteem – it can be suggested that the client has a fairly healthy self-esteem. This may be inferred from her expressed self-acceptance, the extent to which she feels that she can live up to her personal standards and comply with the norms of society. Additionally, her self-esteem may also be deduced from the congruence between the ideas she has about herself and her feelings about what others expect from her. Her degree of self-esteem may also be attributed to the extent to which she feels that she compares favourably with friends of her own age group and is accepted by them.
- Social Relations with Members of the Same Sex – the testing of this component revealed that the testee would have the ability to take part in social activities with

members of the same sex. This can be inferred from her expressed readiness to make friends with a specific female and a specific group of females.

- Formal Relations – it can be inferred that the client would have a very a low threshold to take part in formal relations. This is reflected in her unpreparedness and lack of enthusiasm for satisfactory and healthy interpersonal relations with superiors in instructive situations and her indifference to draw happiness from her relations with friends and superior. Additionally, her possible low ability to participate in formal relations may also be attributed to her apathy to trust individuals who are significant to her. Consequently, the client's stanine score of 3 is an indication that the client may be regarded as poorly adjusted with regard to this component.
- Lie Scale – the clients low score on the lie scale indicates that her scores on the other scales are honest and objective. Consequently, a high degree of confidence may be place on her test results.

4.6. VALUE SCALE (VS)

On the basis of the test, the subject has an extremely high need for Economic Security. Subsequently, it can be concluded that the client has a high necessity to have a stable income and to be certain of being able to survive tough economic spells.

The client also has a high and equal need for Creativity and Economic Rewards. Her need for creativity is indicative of her desire to develop or make something original. This may entail an object, writing, painting or other art work, an idea, a novel method, or an organisational innovation. The subject's high need for economic rewards relates to her wish to maintain a high benchmark for living and to have the financial power to sustain it.

Additionally, the testee has a relatively high and equal need for Achievement, Advancement and Personal Development. Jane's need for achievement is suggestive of her yearning for the feeling that she has done something well. Additionally, her need for advancement is expressed in her desire to progress in her career, to have a better standard of living, to live

in a better environment and to have a better income. Moreover, her need for personal development is conveyed in her desire to advance and to have plans about what she wants to do with her life.

Likewise, she has a somewhat high and equal need for Ability Utilization, Autonomy and Own Life Style. Jane's need for ability utilization is suggestive of her longing for the opportunity to develop her talents and skills. Furthermore, her need for autonomy is conveyed in her desire to make her own decisions and to carry out plans as she sees fit and to have independence of action within her sphere. Similarly, her need for own life style is communicated in her longing for freedom to live her own life according to her own standards and values.

In contrast, her need for Physical Prowess is significantly low. This is suggestive of her indifference to follow an occupation which demands physical prowess.

Correspondingly, Jane has a relatively low and equal need for Risk as well as Spirituality. Her low need for risk is indicative of her apathy to appreciate the thrill of physical danger, financial gain or loss and other risks incurred in projects proposed, undertaken or carried out. Similarly, her low need for spirituality is conveyed in her lack of concern to live according to religious principles.

Relatedly, the client has a somewhat low and equal need for Aesthetics, Authority and Physical Activities. Her low need for aesthetics is suggestive of her dispiritedness to enhance and enjoy the beauty of processes, products and surrounding, both natural and man-made. Moreover, Jane's low need for authority is conveyed in her lack of concern to have an influence over others and to encourage them to follow a certain point of view or policy. Consequently, she has indifference to her own position, power, expertise, charisma or seniority. Similarly, her low need for physical activities is expressed in her lack of concern to be physically active and fit.

Finally, the testee has a slightly low need for Cultural Identity. Jane's low need for cultural identity is evidenced by her apathy to have freedom to conduct herself in public and in private life according to the habits of her group.

4.7. CAREER DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (CDQ)

On the basis of the test, it can be inferred that the testee's self-knowledge and ability to make decisions can be further developed. Contrastingly, the testee has sufficient career information and has adequately integrated self-information and career information. Correspondingly, she also has adequate knowledge to carry on with career planning.

4.8. CONCLUSION

The analysis and results generated from the various assessment instruments utilized, in combination with the subject's background and profile provides the foundation for making recommendations with a view to corrective action in terms of the subject's problem.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

Brown (2011) maintains that since an individual's personal life and work life are directly interconnected it is always beneficial to examine both spheres inclusively and not in isolation. Consequently, an analysis of the different assessment techniques in conjunction with the client's background indicates that she has further capacity than is currently being harnessed to engage in more constructive and meaningful job search activity. Consequently, in endeavouring to assist the client with her career problem, the subsequent recommendations can be suggested.

5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The ensuing discussion attempts to isolate the relevant and significant obstruction areas to Jane's problem of not engaging in adequate job search activities and to provide corrective action.

5.2.1. GOAL ACCOMPLISHMENT

The psychometric testing revealed that Jane is average on achieving personal goals and may not always plan ahead and may not have a preference for structure in her life.

It is conceivable that the client has not conceptualised the significance of job search to her overall career goal or goals. Consequently, ***it is suggested that the client carefully contextualises job search into her conceptual and operational career goals.*** Conceptual career goals pertain to the overall career ambitions of individuals, their values, interests, aptitudes and preferences. Operational career goals refer to the job an individual concerned is aiming for. Consequently, it is the manner in which the person wants to accomplish his or her conceptual goal. ***Jane must also ensure that her goal of engaging in***

meaningful job search must be specific, flexible, measurable, attainable, congruent with her other career goals, acceptable to herself and placed within a definite timeframe.

5.2.2. PERCEPTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CONCEPT OF TIME

It is noteworthy that the client may not fully regard time as a vital resource. Accordingly, she may have a tendency to not always work according to time schedules or feel guilty about inefficient use of time. Additionally, it may be inferred that she would not utilize time optimally and has the propensity to tolerate idleness. Moreover, she might not perceive time as dynamic and fast-moving, consequently, resulting in delayed or procrastinated job search.

Jane needs to be directed to ***develop her time management skills and assertiveness acumen through specific workshops and training***. The end result of which should equip her to track herself on those activities she is spending most of her time on and thereby enabling her to compile a realistic plan for going forward and identifying and pursuing those opportunities that will advance her career such as meaningful job search. This would also assist her in discerning what really deserves her time and will stop her from spending time on non-value adding activities. Implicit to this she should be encouraged to ***re-evaluate her perception of time and its overall significance to her personal and career life***.

5.2.3. CONFLICTING AND COMPETING INTERESTS

Interestingly, Jane also has an inclination towards managing her own enterprise rather than merely being part of a large organisation. Consequently, it may be inferred that the client's inclination may be obstructing job search by competing for her resource capacities and also causing feelings of ambivalence.

The client needs to be made ***aware of the instrumental function of career goal setting***. It is plausible that the client has difficulty accepting that the achievement of one goal will enable her to aim for the following one. She needs to be advised that ***incremental steps are required in attaining career goals and plans***. Consequently, she should be directed to start

job search towards the position of a business analyst, business planner or business forecaster, acquire sufficient experience in the position, network with relevant individuals, embark on entrepreneurial training and explore the feasibility of managing her own business analyst consultancy.

5.2.4. PERSONAL FREEDOM, SUPERIORS AND AUTHORITY FIGURES

Although, the client may be experiencing notable family influence, she is less constrained by rules, standards and mature persons who are significant to her and she may not likely be bound by convention and by standards of other people. Jane may be differentiated as an individual who experiences an extremely high degree of personal freedom. Similarly, she has an inclination towards a very low threshold for taking part in formal relations which may be reflected in an unpreparedness and lack of enthusiasm for satisfactory and healthy interpersonal relations with superiors in instructive situations. This indicates a concern for working with authority figures which may serve as an impediment to job search.

The client needs to ***re-evaluate her outlook and stance toward authority in the workplace.*** She should be made aware that her current tendency, in this regard, has the potential to hinder her from engaging in job search and even entering the workplace. It is suggested that she contextualise the various roles she occupies and will occupy in society, that of daughter, student, girlfriend, spouse, mother, employee, manager, entrepreneur; and synthesis these with the roles that other significant individuals within her domain will occupy.

5.2.5. ECONOMIC SECURITY AND RISK

Additionally, Jane has an excessively high inclination towards economic security and economic rewards, although her need for risk may be considered to be remarkably low.

The client ***needs to be made aware that an excessively high inclination towards economic security may be preventing her from initially entering the labour market*** since it is plausible that she is looking from the outset for employment that will sustain her high

inclination towards economic security and rewards. Once again the client needs to be reminded of the ***instrumental function of career planning and goal setting and that incremental steps are necessary for the attainment of both.***

Additionally, she ***should be encouraged to understand the significance of reasonable risk-taking and that risk is often implicit with advancement and growth.*** Moreover, she needs to develop an appreciation for successes as well as failures through risk.

5.2.6. SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND DECISION-MAKING ABILITY

Finally, the client's self-knowledge and ability to make decisions may be further developed.

The client must be encouraged to ***re-evaluate information about herself and her personal qualities.*** This will include her interests, values and proficiency. Correspondingly, this will lead to more informed and decisive career decision making.

5.3. CONCLUSION

Prior to entry into an organisation, all individuals ought to make a career choice. They need to discern what it is they would like to do, identify an organisation that offers positions in that specific domain or field, and then gain employment by the organisation. Job search and appropriate job search activities are critical to accomplishing this and is an inextricable link in the process of gaining meaningful employment.

The inability to engage in authentic job search can be most discouraging to individuals entering the labour market for the first time. Career counselling is an important and beneficial aspect in assisting individuals to overcome such an obstacle.

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