MANAGERIAL EXPERIENCES OF AUTHENTICITY IN THE WORKPLACE

by

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SUMMARY

Authenticity is a positive psychological construct often described as being true to oneself, and being authentic means displaying behaviour and expressing oneself in a manner that is consistent with the true self. The aim of this research was to explore managerial experiences of authenticity in the workplace. Purposive sampling was used to select five managers to participate in the study. Data was gathered using semi-structured interviews and data analysis revealed four main themes and related sub-themes. Key findings include that managers construct authenticity as being true to oneself, and that their authenticity is facilitated by contextually appropriate behaviour, the manifestation of multiple selves and open, structured work environments. Barriers to authenticity include interpersonal judgement, limitations on self-expression, leader power and authority, organisational culture and irregular work practices. Being authentic was found to have a positive impact on intrapersonal and interpersonal relations, whilst inauthentic behaviour had negative consequences at both levels.

Keywords: authentic, authenticity, inauthentic, authentic leadership, being true to oneself, interpretive qualitative research

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1   INTRODUCTION

"To thine own self be true,
and it must follow, as the night the day,
thou cans't not then be false to any man" (William Shakespeare)

Shakespeare's words resonate in today's complex world of work, where employees are increasingly challenged by a technologically and socially diverse work environment to be true to themselves. Work has often been considered a critical component to the individual's mental health, with the organisation being the socio-psychological environment in which much of the world's work gets done (Lowman, 1993). The ability to act authentically, that is, to be true to oneself, to not be false, in the work environment has been cited by some as a significant contributing factor to the individual's well-being, as well as a contributing factor to enhance organisational performance (Ryan, La Guardia & Rawthorne, 2005; Vannini, 2006).

In the South African work context there are many changes and challenges that influence the well-being and coping capacity and performance of the employee. The growing diversity of the workforce especially challenges the employee to remain congruent to her[1] self, without compromising or disrespecting other people's expectations of behaviour. The SA employee's experience of acting authentically in the work environment may guide understanding of individual well-being and coping in a strenuous and diverse work environment.

The aim of this research is to explore the experiences of authenticity in public service managers. In this chapter I will discuss the background and motivation of the research and how it culminates in the research question and problem statement. I will explain the

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1 Gender will be addressed in the feminine voice, that is, her/she will also include the male form   15

research objectives and research methodology and describe the approach used to undertake the research.

1.2. BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

1.2.1 Reported challenges experienced in the Public Service

The public sector is the largest single employer in South Africa and its employees face numerous challenges. Some of the reported challenges faced by employees include increasing diversity in the workplace; employment equity legislation; fraud and corruption; a lack of trust between supervisor and supervisee, poor leadership; management ineffectiveness; performance anxiety; inability to freely express one's thoughts and opinions and poor communication. These challenges are highlighted in a report by the Public Service Commission (PSC), called the State of the Public Service Report (2007; 2008). The PSC is a body that has been established in terms of section 196 (4) of the Constitution. Its functions include, *inter alia*, investigations, monitoring and evaluating the public administration's personnel practices.

The State of the Public Service Report (PSC, 2007; 2008) highlights these various human resource challenges, all of which may have implications on the employee's ability to act authentically. In relation to performance management, the report reveals that the basic requirement of entering into performance agreements and scheduling performance assessments are not always complied with. Research indicates that performance rewards are awarded to employees in the absence of credible performance management processes having been followed (PSC, 2007).

Leadership in the area of managing poor performance was found to be lacking and the overall perception of employees is that processes are not fair and that subjectivity prevails (PSC, 2007; 2008). This implies that the true indicators of performance are lacking and a misconception that the employee is doing well is created, when in fact they are not. This raises questions about supervisory ethics, integrity, honesty and authenticity. Conducting

performance management in this manner is evidence of inauthentic behaviour and Harter (2006) suggests that such behaviour may be motivated by attempts to win favour, acceptance, impress others and preserve critical relationships.

The number of grievances lodged by employees is high; approximately 3372 were reported to the PSC from January 2005 to June 2006. Grievances lodged were in the areas of performance assessment, the handling of salary payments and increases, as well as, ineffective recruitment and selection procedures (PSC, 2007; 2008). Turning to the grievance procedure indicates that all other dispute resolution mechanisms have failed and that the problem is unresolvable at the employee and supervisor level. This indicates a breakdown in relationships at the interpersonal level and highlights difficulties in communication. It also indicates that employees and supervisors involved in grievances may experience difficulties expressing themselves authentically once such problems are formalised.

The Public Service is also critically challenged in the area of fraud and corruption. The number of cases of alleged corruption reported is high and such cases refer to alleged abuse of government owned vehicles, allegations of fraud and procurement irregularities, such as social grant fraud, favouring friends/relatives and not following proper procedures when issuing tenders. There is a perception that there are high levels of corruption in the Public Service. This perception is held by the public, as feedback on the resolution of reported cases is poor. Allegations of corruption are often given significant media attention. This attention highlights the high levels of occurrence of fraud and corruption, alerts the public and contributes to their unfavourable perceptions of government service delivery.

In dealing with fraud and corruption, it is accepted that legislating values and beliefs do not build "virtuous citizens" (PSC, 2007, p. 15), rather that public officials are expected to internalise the set standards and integrate ethical behaviour into their everyday decision-making (PSC, 2007). Fraud and corruption impacts on both the public and employees within the organisation. It relates directly to ethical and authentic behaviour.

Individuals who are exposed to, and witness cases of, corrupt behaviour are ethically challenged and expected to act authentically. According to Harter (2005), many studies in the area of authenticity have focused on the lack of authentic self-behaviour, particularly deceit of others, secrecy, imposter tendencies and self-deception. Such high levels of fraud and corruption contribute to interpersonal conflict and create negative emotions.

1.2.2 My experience of working in the Public Service

I began my career in the public service with tremendous excitement and eagerness, in 1996. It was soon after the new government was democratically elected and I was filled with enthusiasm and excitement about the creation of a new society that our new democracy would bring. It was fitting that I found myself in a job that contributed to this new society and, in my mind, I would be actively working toward building a better South Africa. Idealistic as this may sound, eleven years later, I still work in a Public Service and I hold this belief close to my heart, as I feel that it prevents me from forgetting where I came from (an unemployed graduate), it helps me stay grounded and allows me to build meaning around the work that I do.

Through the years, my enthusiasm has waned; the ebb and flow of the excitement has been influenced by numerous factors. The Public Service is a gigantic bureaucracy with a slow pace of delivery. As such, it can be a frustrating place to work. Poor leadership is often evident through the lack of focused interventions that target set goals. Sadly, there are an incredible number of cases of fraud and corruption evidenced in newspaper reports; racism, deceit, mistrust and unnecessary conflict fuelled by selfish motives, all of which contribute to a generally poor quality of work. The spin-off to so many problems is a demotivated workforce and a very low public opinion of the Public Service.

My career has been rewarding, in that I have progressed from a practitioner to a middle level manager. My journey of success is filled with amazing learning opportunities and experiences that have contributed to my growth and development. Leadership and being successful in this area has become a feature of interest to me. I have been exposed to

excellent and inspiring leaders, as well as unethical and corrupt leaders. Irrespective of the type of leader, those public servants who are employed in leadership roles face increasing demands and tremendous challenges. The expectation of such leaders to deliver on mandates, resolve conflict and operate within a tremendously structured environment is very high. Leaders are bombarded with ethical dilemmas and the manner in which they behave impacts on the individual, the group and the organisation. Such a demanding role results in heightened anxiety, increased levels of stress and the resultant impact on physical and mental health.

The problem areas described above are of great concern to me and, over time their impact on me became noticeable. With the exception of waning excitement and enthusiasm, I find myself constantly searching for understanding and yearning to help alleviate some of these frustrations. Furthermore, of tremendous significance was the feeling that I did not have a voice any more; that, in this new democracy, I was unable to voice my dissatisfaction with the manner in which work was conducted. I was acutely aware of the political influence of the day and perhaps, largely for reasons of self- preservation and the inability to fully trust others' intentions, I found myself being very careful of what I said and who I said it to. In such an environment it is difficult to remain objective, unemotional and self-aware; and I find myself asking again and again, "is this the real me, is this the authentic me?" Today, as I write these reflections, I am acutely aware of the role I play in my organisation, the contribution I make to building a better life for others and I can state with no pretences that I enjoy the work that I do and will continue to persevere toward the greater cause, irrespective of the challenges that manifest in my world of work. I am inspired by Viktor Frankl's words in his profound book *Man's Search for Meaning* (1992, p.12), "for success, like happiness, cannot be pursued; it must ensue, and it only does so as the unintended side-effect of one's dedication to a cause other than oneself…" I find myself dedicated to my work and convinced that I can make some impact and difference, even if it is only in the lives of the team that I lead.

1.2.3   How I became interested in authenticity as a research topic

My first research proposal rested in the quantitative domain. I chose a topic that dealt with competency based assessments. I was convinced that the only way to complete the dissertation was to ensure that I had a valid questionnaire and that my sample would span a range of managers in the Public Service; the target was one hundred and fifty. The research question was in many ways meaningless to me, I was attempting to understand managerial perceptions of competency based assessment and how this differed across race and gender. I pursued this relentlessly, encountering many obstacles and experiencing a great sense of frustration concerning the lack of significant meaning of the research. At no point during this time did I consider qualitative research. I was firmly rooted in the belief that one could not do a Masters dissertation using the qualitative paradigm – this was just "not good enough". My research work was stalled, thankfully, when I was unable to acquire a valid questionnaire with which to conduct my research. I say thankfully, because it was during this time that I began reflecting on my work environment from an involved and critical standpoint. I began noticing and experiencing serious and debilitating conflict. The conflict spanned race, gender and work boundaries and was having a critical impact on the delivery of services.

My part in the conflict became intensified by my role in the organisation. I was in a middle management position in human resource management and development. It is common in public organisations for employees to expect the Human Resource component, through its development and employee wellness programmes, to resolve organisational conflict. Supervisors, managers and staff often involved me in their conflicts and expected a human resources resolution to the problem. I began a few concurrent processes in my efforts to assist. I would make time to assist employees with various problems and this spanned giving advice on career management to developing job descriptions. We began implementing and training in employee performance management and labour relations. Two significant interventions that were implemented were, a Department-wide team-building effort and a Diversity Management Programme for the middle and senior management of the organisation.

It was the Diversity Management Programme that led me to this research topic. The facilitators of the programme, one whom is the supervisor of this research, began the training by looking at life histories. It was an eye-opening experience, but one that revealed many hidden agendas. At the end of the three days, I asked myself, are people here really speaking the truth, is this who they really are? It had so much to do with the incongruity between what was said in the life history and the behaviour that was being experienced in the work environment. A significant revelation for me was that I was unable to share my complete life story with this group and I regretted and questioned why. I found myself asking of me "was that really you" and coming to the conclusion that that was "really not me". I was intrigued about the why and after much self-reflection realised that I was uncomfortable and reluctant to be "me" in this group, as I had not fully trusted them and secondly, I felt that my goals and those of many in the group were not congruent and therefore I was unable to connect with them. I was new in the group and did not want to give too much of myself as I was unaware of how they would respond. I had already felt that my ideals were seen as "foolish" in this group. After a discussion with the facilitator (current supervisor), we agreed that one of the problems in the group was "authenticity", that is, that people in the group experienced difficulty in being authentic, being who they truly are and this contributed to the lack of understanding, dislike, mistrust and conflict that was preventing the group from functioning optimally.

After researching the area of authenticity and delving into the idea of the "real self" I became intrigued about how others viewed this concept, whether it was given much thought (if any at all) and what impact it was having on people's lives and specifically their work lives. These questions became meaningful enough to pursue through scientific study and thus the journey to understanding authenticity began.

1.3   MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH

The institution of government is focused on improving service delivery and often uses systems solutions in the drive to resolve many workplace problems. Human resource solutions, performance management systems, training and development initiatives and

employee assistance programmes are examples of such solutions in place to assist employees. These remain structural, mechanistic solutions, with very little attempt to deal with the human/psychological aspects of work. A public servant is expected to act in a predefined manner, through the adoption of codes and value propositions within an organisational system that is facing many challenges and problems. Employees and managers are expected to meet performance targets within these challenges and this has a direct impact on well-being and authentic behaviour. Research indicates that such inauthentic feelings reduce work satisfaction and sense of well-being (Vannini, 2006).

The motivation for this research is based on the need to understand authentic experiences of employees in the public service. Very little research has been conducted on positive emotions, character traits and the enabling environment of the public service. In building an understanding of authentic experience, the research would contribute to evidence-based decision-making on creating a supportive working environment and training and development initiatives on leadership and self-development.

A number of researchers have indicated that there is a lack of empirical research in authenticity and that the construct has been neglected in mainstream psychology (Harter, 2005; Lopez & Rice, 2006; Vannini, 2006; Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis & Joseph, 2008). According to Harter (2005, p. 382), there is "no single, coherent body of literature on authentic self-behaviour", but there are numerous unconnected pieces of literature that address authenticity. These include historical analyses, clinical treatments, socio-psychological perspectives and developmental formulation (Harter, 2005). These studies have focused largely on the lack of authentic self-behaviour, particularly deceit of others, secrecy, imposter tendencies, self-monitoring, compliance and self-deception (Harter, 2005). Furthermore, Vannini (2006, p. 236) states that "despite their significance for the self and society, the concepts of inauthenticity and authenticity have long suffered from definitional lack of clarity" and "that no qualitative research exists on what it means to feel authentic or inauthentic". Lopez and Rice (2006) call for continued study in authenticity as such a focus may illuminate interpersonal conditions and processes that promote or inhibit self-expression. They further suggest the need to develop a reliable

and valid self-report measure as central to research progress in this area. It is envisaged that this study will contribute to the current body of knowledge that exists on authenticity.

This study focuses on normal, fully functional persons and according to Faller and College (2001), there is a great deal that can be learnt about qualities that make life worth living from such normal and fully functional persons. Seligman (2002, p. 4) stresses that "psychology is not just the study of disease, weakness and damage; it is also the study of strength and virtue". According to Faller and College (2001), a large number of people require assistance in reaching a richer and more fulfilling existence. This study is a scientific attempt to understand the average person, to gain insight into their experiences of authenticity in a challenging work environment, thereby positively contributing to the field of industrial/organisational psychology.

1.4   PROBLEM STATEMENT

The research focuses on managerial experiences of authenticity in the public sector workplace. It aims to explore these experiences, understand factors that support and/or inhibit authentic behaviour and identify the perceived impact of being authentic.

As mentioned previously, employees are faced with many problems and these constantly challenge authentic behaviour. According to Vannini (2006), individuals feel positive emotions when they experience congruence with their values, goals, emotions and self-meaning, that is, they feel authentic. By contrast, individuals experience inauthenticity as a negative emotion when they experience incongruence with their values, goals, emotions and self-meaning. "As an emotion with a strong positive valence, authenticity plays an important positive motivating function for the self" (Vannini, 2006, p. 237).

According to this perspective, when acting in accordance with authentic interests and values, people's motivation, quality of experience and well-being are enhanced (Ryan et al., 2005). Inauthentic actions result in more internal conflict and lower well-being. As a result, having self aspects that are inauthentic will detract from wellness (Ryan et al., 2005).

Apart from limited research on the construct of authenticity, studying the experience of authenticity in the public service may promote an understanding of public service employees' and leaders' ability to cope with challenges brought about by increasing diversity, workplace concerns about service delivery, performance management and fraud and corruption. It may stimulate an understanding of counterproductive behaviour in the public service and it may facilitate understanding of the extent to which their experience of authenticity affects their work behaviour and performance, as well as what determines their authentic behaviour.

Furthermore, the substantial focus on structural and mechanistic solutions to problems in the organisation, and the lack of focus on the socio-psychological elements, provides a basis from which to explore authenticity as an important psychological concept in the world of work. Within the vast array of problems, one must ask: How does the public servant experience her authenticity in the work environment? What impact does the experience have on the employee and the team? How does the work environment support or inhibit authentic behaviour?

1.5   AIMS

1.5.1   General Aim

The general aim of the research is to explore managerial experiences of authenticity in the workplace.

1.5.2   Specific Aims

The specific aims of the study are to:
a) Explore managerial experiences of authenticity, both individually and in a team.
b) Explore how the work environment supports and/or inhibits authentic behaviour.

c) Investigate managerial experiences of the impact of authentic/inauthentic behaviour in the workplace.

d) Report on the construction of authenticity.

1.6   A QUALITATIVE APPROACH TO STUDYING AUTHENTICITY

I found that qualitative research was the most appropriate methodology with which to achieve the research aims of this study. Qualitative research is regarded as a broad approach to the study of social phenomena, in which the researcher takes the insider perspective to such a phenomenon (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). It is defined by Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p. 3) as " a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible". Qualitative research is seen to transform the world by turning it into a series of representations, where the researcher attempts to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning that people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

There are a number of defining characteristics of qualitative research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Green & Thorogood, 2004; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). These include ideas that qualitative research occurs in the natural world, focuses on context and uses multiple methods that are interactive, humanistic and flexible (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Green & Thorogood, 2004; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Furthermore, qualitative research is emergent rather than tightly prefigured and is fundamentally interpretive (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Green & Thorogood, 2004; Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Of significant importance to qualitative research is the qualitative researcher, who views social phenomena holistically; reflects on who she is in the inquiry; is sensitive to her personal biography and how it shapes the study; and uses complex reasoning that is multifaceted and iterative (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Green & Thorogood, 2004; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). This aspect is further discussed in Chapter 3 and personal reflections are captured throughout the study.

Qualitative research was deemed most appropriate for this study, as it allowed me to investigate the construct of authenticity in depth, with the primary goal being to describe and understand behaviour. Qualitative research is "naturalistic, holistic and inductive" (Durrheim, 1999, p. 43). A naturalistic study is one that studied phenomena in the real world as they naturally unfold (Durrheim, 1999). For a study to be holistic it understands that the whole phenomenon under investigation is a complex system. Research that is inductive is immersed in the details of the data to determine important categories and interrelationships (Durrheim, 1999). This means that a qualitative researcher conducts her study in its natural setting and attempts to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Durrheim, 1999). This research attempted to study participants' experiences as they naturally occurred in the workplace. It focused on interpreting experiences of authenticity based on the meanings ascribed to it by participants.

1.7   PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE

The disciplinary relationship, the psychological paradigm and the sub-discipline are described and explained in Chapter 3. In addition, the meta-theoretical concept as well as models, theories, concepts and constructs are also explained in Chapter 3.

1.8   METHODS TO ENSURE RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), any inquiry in the qualitative paradigm must address the conditions of applicability, consistency and neutrality, such as, internal and external validity and reliability. Lincoln and Guba (see Marshall & Rossman, 2006) reworked these constructs for interpretive qualitative inquiry; the proposed constructs are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. These alternative methods have been suggested as appropriate to ensure validity and reliability in a qualitative study and are described below (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Whittemore, Chase & Mandle, 2001). The following is a theoretical discussion of each

concept. Although some strategies are noted below, the specific strategies employed to ensure the reliability and validity of the study are described in Chapter 3.

a) Credibility. The goal of credibility is to ensure that the subject is appropriately identified and described. By adequately defining parameters, boundaries and limitations on the methodology followed in the study, its credibility will be enhanced (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Whittemore et al., 2001).

b) Transferability. This refers to the generalisability and usefulness of the findings in similar situations. In qualitative research this aspect is problematic, but overcoming this can be achieved by referring to the original theoretical framework where reference is made to how data collection and analysis is guided by concepts and models (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Strategies to enhance transferability include providing thick descriptions of data and the use of purposive sampling (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

c) Dependability. Here reference is made to the attempts by the researcher to account for changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for study, as well as changes in design. This assumption is based on the idea that in qualitative research the social world is always being constructed, thereby making replication difficult (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Guba and Lincoln (see Babbie & Mouton, 2001) recommend a single properly managed audit to determine dependability and confirmability.

d) Confirmability. The question asked here is whether or not another researcher could confirm the findings of the research, that is, do the interpretations make sense and can the logic and findings be made transparent to others (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Confirmability refers to the degree to which the research findings are a product of the inquiry and not the biases of the researcher (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). As previously mentioned, an audit trail should be left to enable the researcher to determine if conclusions, interpretations and recommendations can be traced to their sources (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

Marshall and Rossman (2006) advise that the natural subjectivity of the researcher must be considered, as this will shape the research. Strategies that can be used to overcome such subjectivity and further ensure validity and reliability of the research include,

writing extensive field notes and maintaining an audit trail (Babbie & Mouton, 2001;Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Two sets of notes will be maintained, namely, a description of the environment in which the study occurs and notes containing transcripts of interviews. All theoretical ideas, notes, raw data and interpretations will be maintained in order to subject the study to an audit.

Research in the positivist and experimental traditions are often cited as reliable and valid if the research is replicable. Qualitative research does not claim to be replicable and the researcher avoids controlling the research and attempts to conduct research within a flexible research design which cannot necessarily be replicated by future researchers (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). However, replicability can be addressed in qualitative research in the following ways (Marshall & Rossman, 2006) and attempts to address these efforts in this study are described in Chapter 3:

a) Making an assertion that qualitative studies cannot be replicated because the real world changes.
b) Keeping notes and a journal that records each design decision and the rationale behind it, thereby allowing other researchers to inspect procedures, protocols and decisions.
c) Keeping all collected data in a well-organized, retrievable form, so that the researcher can make them available should the findings be challenged.

1.8.1   Using reflexivity to further improve the reliability and validity of the study

To further improve the reliability and validity of the study, the use of reflexivity is recommended (Finlay, 2002; Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Schurink, 2005). Guba and Lincoln (2005, p. 210) define reflexivity as the "process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher, the human as instrument" and Schurink (2005, p. 17) describes it as "the process during which one critically reflects on one's own role and preconceptions throughout the research process; the data collection, analysis, interpretation and report

writing stages". According to Finlay (2002, p. 532), reflexivity refers to "thoughtful, conscious self awareness" and encompasses continuous evaluation of subjective responses, intersubjective dynamics and the research process itself.

Reflexivity highlights the researcher as a part of the phenomenon to be studied and in order to ensure that the research is more reliable and valid, it requires that the researcher take a self-critical stance to the research, the research relationships, personal assumptions and preconceptions, as well as the researcher's own role in the research study (Daymon & Holloway, see Schurink, 2005). Finlay (2002) cautions that reflexivity should not be confused with reflection. The latter essentially refers to a distanced view of thinking about something, whilst the former focuses on a more immediate, continuing and subjective self-awareness. The concept of reflexivity and the researcher as primary instrument are discussed further in Chapter 3 and applied throughout the text.

1.9 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

1.9.1 Literature Review

A comprehensive literature review, including a review of related research on authenticity, was conducted. This review provides various definitions and descriptions of authenticity and inauthenticity. Related aspects such as barriers to authenticity, reasons for being inauthentic and the effect of such behaviour are also discussed. These are presented in Chapter 2. The related concept of authentic leadership is also discussed in Chapter 2.

1.9.2 Research Design

The type of research has been defined as qualitative and exploratory in nature. Further details about the research design, particularly the type of research are described in Chapter 3.

1.9.3   Research Methodology

1.9.3.1   Sampling

A purposive sample was drawn from a population of Public Sector employees. Five managers participated in the research. All managers that participated manage people and lead teams and are employed in different areas of work. Further information related to sampling decisions are included in Chapter 3.

1.9.3.2   The researcher as primary research instrument

The researcher plays a critical role in qualitative research. Through reflexivity, the researcher is able to critically reflect on the self and the impact of the self on the research. The decisions concerning sampling, data collection, analysis and interpretation rely on me, the primary researcher in this study. The reflective role of the researcher is further discussed in Chapter 3.

1.9.3.3   The semi-structured interview as the data gathering tool

The semi-structured interview was selected as the data gathering tool for this study. All questions posed in the interview were open-ended, in order to elicit in-depth information. Based on the literature review, a pilot interview was held and thereafter the final set of questions were developed and used in the remaining interviews. Further information on the semi-structured interview as the data gathering tool is given in Chapter 3.

Interviews were held in quiet and confidential venues in the workplace that were convenient for the participants. Consent was obtained and a letter outlining the purpose of the research was sent to each subject beforehand. Interviews were recorded once permission was obtained from the subject. The interviews were subsequently transcribed.

1.9.3.4   Developing an interview guide

Since semi-structured interviews were selected as the most appropriate method for gathering data, an interview guide was developed to assist me with conducting the interviews. Details on how the interview guide was developed, as well as the final set of questions used in the semi-structured interviews, are explained further in Chapter 3.

1.9.3.5   Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis involves providing a thorough description of the "characteristics, processes, transactions and contexts" that constitute the issue being studied, with the aim of placing events into perspective (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999, p.139).

The data analysis was conducted using content analysis (Green & Thorogood, 2004). The following steps were followed: familiarization and immersion in the data, inducing themes, coding, elaboration and interpretation and checking (see Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). A discussion of the data analysis process is presented in Chapter 3.

1.9.3.6   Results

Results of the research are reported, interpreted and discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

1.10   CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions, limitations and recommendations are presented in Chapter 6 of the study. They serve to clarify whether or not the research aims have been met and propose recommendations for further research and workplace application.

1.11   CHAPTER LAYOUT

Chapter 1: Background and Problem Statement

Chapter 2: Literature Review: Authenticity

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

Chapter 4: Results

Chapter 5: Integration of Results and Discussion

Chapter 6: Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations

1.12   CHAPTER SUMMARY

In Chapter 1, I presented the introduction, background and motivation for the study. The problem statement was generated, the general and specific aims for the research were formulated. The chapter provided a foundation from which to understand the context of the study. The problem statement, general and specific aims were discussed. The approach to the study was explained, along with a theoretical discussion of methods to ensure reliability and validity. The role of reflexivity in improving the reliability and validity of the study was described. The research design and methods were briefly explained. In the next chapter, I will review relevant literature on authenticity.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW: AUTHENTICITY

2.1   INTRODUCTION

The objective of the chapter is to develop an understanding of authenticity as a psychological construct and to explore relevant research in this regard. This is achieved by providing a comprehensive literature review of the construct of authenticity. More specifically, the chapter begins with a definition of authenticity, which includes the importance of authenticity and reasons for inauthentic behaviour. Theoretical contributions to authenticity are presented by explicating the works of classic psychology theorists such as Carl Jung, Karen Horney, Carl Rogers, Viktor Frankl and Abraham Maslow. Related theoretical issues are discussed including the development of authenticity; the impact of language and voice in authenticity, adult relationships, the creation of multiple selves, as well as psychological measures of authenticity. The chapter is concluded with a discussion of authentic leadership.

2.2   DEFINING AUTHENTICITY

The word authentic is derived from the Latin word *authenticus*. The Oxford Dictionary (1989) defines authentic as "known to be true or genuine, trustworthy and reliable", while authenticity refers to the "quality of being authentic". There are many definitions and descriptions offered of the term authenticity. Common to the definitions of authenticity is the idea of being true to oneself. There are many contributors to the study of authenticity and authentic experience. These include the work of Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Viktor Frankl, Erik Erikson, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Charlotte Buhler, Frederick Perls, and James Bugental (Rahilly, 1993).

Harter (2005, p. 382) describes authenticity as "owing one's personal experiences, be they thoughts, emotions, needs, wants, preferences, or beliefs, and processes captured by the injunction to know oneself". Being authentic implies that one "acts in accord with the true self, expressing oneself in ways that are consistent with inner thoughts and feelings"

(Harter, 2005, p. 382). Similarly, Bugental (as cited in Rahilly, 1993, p. 50) states that "... a person is authentic in that degree to which his being in the world is unqualifiedly in accord with the giveness of his own nature and of the world".

Vannini (2006) conceptualizes authenticity as the phenomenological emotional experience of feeling true to oneself. Conversely, inauthenticity is described as the experience of feeling untrue to oneself. Inauthentic feelings reduce work satisfaction and sense of well-being (Vannini, 2006). According to Vannini (2006), there are two ways of conceptualising authenticity. Firstly, from a philosophical perspective, when referring to the metaphysical properties of subjects, cultures and works of art and, secondly, from a social psychological perspective. In the social psychological perspective the focus is on the self and an individual's experience of feeling true or congruent with herself. Through the social psychological approach, Tiryakian (in Vannini, 2006) explains that an individual is one who fundamentally seeks meaning and a sense of life. Thus, being true to oneself is described as a complex emotional experience about the self and "self-feelings are forms of reflexive consciousness, lived, experienced, articulated and felt" (Vannini, 2006, p. 237).

A further description of authenticity, offered by Guignon (2004, p. 6), is: "the basic assumption built into the ideal of authenticity is that, lying within each individual, there is a deep, true self – the real me – in a distinction from all that is really me". Thus, the real self contains the feelings, needs, desires, capacities, ability, character and creative abilities that make a person unique (Guignon, 2004). For Guignon (2004), becoming authentic involves getting in touch with the real self, through a candid appraisal of ourselves. This can be achieved through introspection, self-reflection or meditation (Guignon, 2004). Once achieving an understanding of that real self, becoming authentic also requires an individual to be who they actually are by being present in their relationships, careers and practical activities (Guignon, 2004). Ryan (in Ryan, LaGuardia & Rawthorne, 2005, p. 433), defines authentic aspects of personality as those that are "fully self-endorsed, volitionally enacted, and personally meaningful to the individual".

In attempting to understand the construct of authenticity, Harter (2005) recommends taking into account the description of false-self behaviour, or a lack of authenticity. Numerous verb, adjective and noun forms in the English language can be used to describe a lack of authenticity (Harter, 2005). Verb forms include "fabricating, with- holding, concealing, distorting, falsifying, pulling the wool over someone's eyes, posturing, charading, faking and hiding behind a façade" (Harter, 2005, p. 382). Adjective forms include "elusive, evasive, wily, phony, artificial, two-faced, manipulative, calculating, pretentious, crafty, conniving, duplicitous, deceitful and dishonest", whilst noun forms include "hypocrite, charlatan, chameleon, imposter, phony, fake and fraud" (Harter, 2005, p. 382). According to Harter (2005), these concepts indicate that an individual is behaving in a manner that is experienced as untrue and false. Harter (2005) cautions that acting differently does not always imply a lack of authenticity, as there are instances where people may legitimately behave differently across contexts and such adjustments to behaviour may be appropriate.

For behaviour to be described as false-self behaviour, a person must understand that she or her actions lack authenticity, they may experience psychological tension between the display of a false self and a person's sense of her true self and be consciously concerned over compromising who she really is (Harter, 2005).

Carson and Langer (2006) suggest that an important aspect of self-acceptance is the ability to let others see one's true self, without pretence and without concern for negative judgements. Truly authentic individuals are fully engaged with the environment and make no efforts to bolster their self-esteem. Individuals close themselves off to more appropriate and fulfilling alternatives when they respond in a scripted manner to a situation. The result of being false, and mindlessly pretending to be or feel something that is not authentic, has a negative impact on the individual (Carson & Langer, 2006).

Erickson (see Avolio & Gardner, 2005) describes authenticity as one's relationship with oneself. The self-referential nature of authenticity is important to understanding the construct, as the authentic self exists according to Erickson "wholly by the laws of its

own being" (in Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 317). This means that being authentic does not involve any consideration of other's view-points and, although the self is influenced by other's viewpoints, it does not substitute for the meanings that an individual attributes to themselves (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). However, the crucial and continuing influence of the social relations one has on the construction of the self is undeniable and thus the self both shapes and is shaped by social exchanges. This contributes to feelings of relative authenticity (Erickson, see Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Interestingly, Erickson qualifies authenticity and inauthenticity with the adjective relative, implying that authenticity is not an either/or condition, that is, people are never entirely authentic or inauthentic, but can be described as achieving levels of authenticity (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Martinko & Gardner, 2006). As such it can be reasoned that leaders can become increasingly authentic over time (Harvey et al., 2006).

Kernis (2003) proposes that authenticity is important in defining the adaptive features of optimal self esteem. Kernis (2003, p. 13) defines authenticity as "reflecting the unobstructed operation of one's true, or core self in one's daily enterprise".

According to Kernis (2003), authenticity has four components, namely, awareness, unbiased processing, action and relational orientation. The awareness component refers to being aware of, and having trust in, one's motives, feelings, desires and self-relevant cognitions, as well as being aware of strengths, weaknesses, trait characteristics and emotions (Kernis, 2003). This component involves being aware of the dualities that exist in one's personality (Kernis, 2003). According to Perls (see Kernis, 2003), individuals are not exclusively masculine or feminine, extroverted and introverted, rather one aspect of the duality predominates even though both exist. As individuals become more authentic, they become aware that they possess multifaceted self-aspects, and they utilize this awareness in their interaction with others and with their environments (Kernis, 2003). Thus the awareness component of authenticity can be described as knowledge of one's needs, values, feelings, figure-ground personality aspects, and their roles in behaviour (Kernis, 2003).

The second aspect of authenticity is the unbiased processing of self-relevant information (Kernis, 2003). It involves "not denying, distorting, exaggerating or ignoring private knowledge, internal experiences and externally based evaluative information" (Kernis, 2003, p. 14). This aspect involves objectively accepting one's positive and negative aspects, attributes and qualities (Kernis, 2003). For example, some people experience difficulty in acknowledging their level of skilfulness at a particular activity. Instead of accepting their poor performance, they may rationalize its implications and reduce its importance to fabricate their results (Kernis, 2003). According to Kernis (2003), such defensive processes may be motivated by self-esteem concerns and it is expected to be found for both positive and negative information.

The third component, action, involves behaviour, particularly whether people act in accord with their true self (Kernis, 2003). "Behaving authentically means acting in accord with one's values, preferences and needs as opposed to acting merely to please others or to attain rewards or avoid punishments through acting falsely" (Kernis, 2003, p. 14).

Kernis (2003) suggests that it is useful to focus on the manner in which processes associated with the awareness and unbiased processing components inform one's behavioural selection. For example, a person may react to pressure by acting in accordance with prevailing social norms that may contrast with her true self; conversely, one may be aware of one's true self and act in accordance with it, only to encounter severe social sanctions; in both instances, authenticity may be operating at the awareness and processing level and not at the behavioural level (Kernis, 2003). The needs and values of the individual may be incompatible with societal needs and values. In such instances, authenticity is reflected in awareness of one's needs and an unbiased assessment of the relevant evaluative information (Kernis, 2003).

Relational authenticity is the fourth component and involves valuing and achieving openness and truthfulness in one's close relationships, that is, it involves allowing close others to see the real you, both the good and bad (Kernis, 2003). Authentic relations require a process of self-disclosure and the development of mutual intimacy and trust. It

requires being genuine and real in relationships with those close to each other (Kernis, 2003).

A central point to Kernis' (2003) conceptualisation of authenticity is that individuals are free to choose their own reality, trust in that reality and recognise that it is not the only reality. Thus "individuals may attempt to impose their view of reality on a given person, who must then choose between this externally provided reality and a self-generated reality" (Kernis, 2003, p. 15). This implies a choice amongst multiple coexisting realities and a choice of how one's true self is to play out in one's behaviour. Awareness of this reality provides freedom and responsibility that promotes authenticity (Kernis, 2003).

Kernis's (2003) presentation of the construct of authenticity is based on a unified and transcontextual self. The view is not based on a monolithic and unchanging self that is unresponsive to situational and role requirements and he sees authenticity as "an ongoing process that occurs on several different levels that promotes both greater differentiation and greater integration of the self" (Kernis, 2003, p. 17). His perspective emphasises the value of self-understanding in psychological adjustment and well-being.

A central part to being authentic is genuineness and openness, but, Crantan and Carusetta (2004) indicate that it is socially situated. This means that being authentic involves understanding how we are shaped by, and positioned within, the world. Through critical reflection one is able to be authentic by being conscious of the self, other, relationships and context (Cranton & Carusetta, 2004).

Wood et al. (2008) provide a definition of authenticity that is derived from person-centred psychology. They indicate that, as a result of substantial debate, a clear explanation of the construct, with consensus on the content and boundaries of authenticity, has emerged (Wood et al., 2008). The person-centred model is presented in Figure 2.1 and is based on the theory of Carl Rogers.
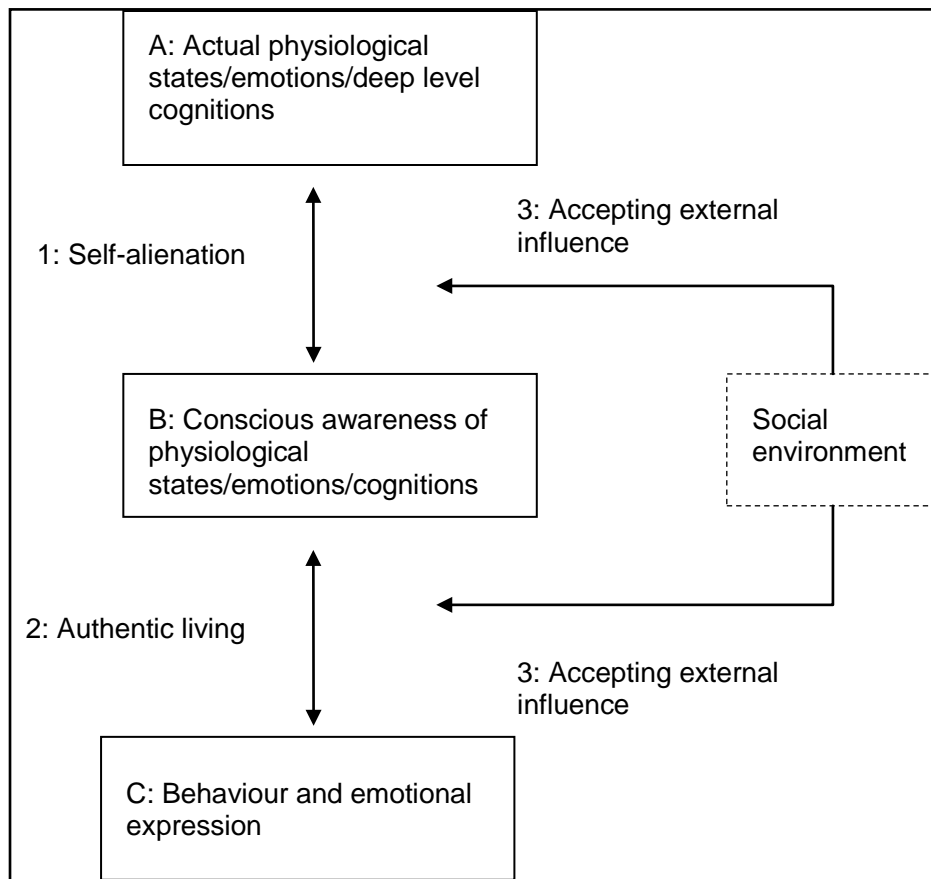
Figure 2.1: The person-centred conception of authenticity – Source: Wood et al. (2008, p. 386).

In Figure 2.1 above, authenticity is viewed as a tripartite construct and involves a consistency between actual physiological states (A), their conscious awareness (B) and behaviour and emotional expression (C) (Barrett-Lennard, see Wood et al., 2008). The person centered conception begins by contrasting actual experience (Box A) with conscious, cognitive awareness (Box B). Wood et al. (2008) indicate that perfect congruence between these two aspects can never be experienced and, as a result of this mismatch, the person experiences self-alienation which could lead to psychopathology. The person experiences not knowing herself or may feel out of touch with the true self.

The second aspect of Figure 2.1 represents authentic living. This is achieved through congruence between conscious awareness of experiences (Box B) and behaviour and

emotional expression (Box C). According to Wood et al. (2008, p. 386), "authentic living involves behaving and expressing emotions in such a way that is consistent with the conscious awareness of physiological states, emotions, beliefs and cognitions". Authentic living means being true to oneself and living in accordance with one's values and beliefs.

A third aspect of authenticity, highlighted in Figure 2.1, looks at the influence of others and the social environment. The social environment affects both self-alienation and authentic living (Wood et al., 2008). The extent to which one accepts the influence of others and the belief that one has to conform to others' expectations impact on the experience of authentic living and self-alienation. According to Wood et al. (2008) self-alienation, authentic living and accepting external influence compose the tripartite person-centred view of authenticity.

2.2.1 Reasons for inauthentic behaviour

During the 20th century, clinicians focused on observable barriers to authenticity found in socialization practices and cultural constraints (Harter, 2005). Being inauthentic was as a result of socio-environmental conditions. Karen Horney (see Harter, 2005) identified social conditions that resulted in an alienation from the real self and argued that the underlying cause of neurosis lay in the individual constructing images of what he or she ought to be, primarily to obtain the approval of others.

Carson and Langer (2006, p. 32), suggest that people act inauthentically or use deceptive pretences about themselves in order to: "avoid criticism and loss of self-esteem; win praise and increase positive self-esteem". Similarly, Harter (2005) suggests that a lack of authenticity is motivated by attempts to present oneself to win favour, acceptance and impress others. Goffman (in Harter, 2005) describes manipulative motives and various forms of face-work to communicate to others a favourable picture of ourselves. These motives serve to protect the self and preserve critical relationships, and garner power and favour with others. However, there are situations where manipulating self-presentation

can be mindful and beneficial; that is, it can be used as a technique to change current experiences in an effort to improve future behaviour and experience (see Carson & Langer, 2006).

Gergen (1991) suggests that the achievement of authenticity is prevented by the technological innovation that has saturated our society. For one to become trusted "one must be able to establish the reality of his or her identity" (Gergen, 1991, p. 203). Competition for media attention is an example of how technology hampers the building of trust. Gergen (1991) points out that such competition will influence a leader's or an individual's natural manner of relating to people and replace it with effective communication techniques (Gergen, 1991). Since the media is critical to the success of leadership roles, natural forms of communication are replaced with contrived and planned performances.

The media further challenges one's true self; with increasing public attention, a leader or individual's life becomes of great interest. The media plays two roles in presenting the individual, firstly to present positive information about the individual, thereby authenticating the individual, and secondly, suppressing information that may suggest flaws of character (Gergen, 1991). Thus their performance in public is one that is crafted and impersonal and threatens the concept of the true self (Gergen, 1991).

In as much as authenticity is valuable and must be encouraged – it begs the question, can one be too authentic? (Harter, 2005). According to Harter (2005) there may be liabilities associated with too much authenticity. In attempting to be completely truthful, Lerner (1993) feels that we may cause pain and hurt to friends, family, increase anxiety, disregard the other person's reality and exacerbate situations.

Lerner (1993) also distinguishes between honesty and truth, the former representing uncensored expressions of thoughts and feelings and the latter requiring thought, timing, tact and empathy for the other's position. Honesty is often associated with being ourselves, but it is not the best policy if it does not contain the elements of truth-telling

that will facilitate, rather than harm, relationships (Harter, 2005; Lerner, 1993). Truth-telling and honesty do not only require us to be ourselves, but also calls for tactful expression, restraint and timing in order to be truly heard (Harter, 2005; Lerner, 1993). This facilitates relationships and allows one to protect the self when necessary (Lerner, 1993). Failure to be completely authentic does not always imply that one has evil or exploitative intentions (Lerner, 1993). Pretending may allow one to protect others, the self and relationships (Lerner, 1993). According to Lerner (1993), pretending, particularly in women, is learned through culture and stems from false definitions of the self.

Kernis (2003) suggests that experiencing oneself as authentic provides a basis for optimal self-esteem, however, difficulties may be experienced in being authentic. These include blockages at the awareness stage, where people may not be tuned into their motives and feelings (Kernis, 2003). People may also deny or distort their private knowledge and experience and thus experience a blockage at the unbiased processing stage. Blockages could occur at the behaviour stage, where behaviour that represents the true self is blocked and substituted with more acceptable behaviour. Blockages may also occur at the relational stage, where a fear of rejection may influence relations with others (Kernis, 2003).

Due consideration must be given to instances where the "unadulterated expression of one's true self may result in severe societal sanctions" (Kernis, 2003, p. 14). In such instances, authenticity should "reflect a sensitivity to the fit between one's true self and the dictates of the environment and an awareness of the potential implications of one's behavioural choices" (Kernis, 2003, p. 14). Authenticity, in this case, is not reflected in the compulsion to be one's true self, rather it is reflected in the natural expression of core feelings, motives and inclinations (Kernis, 2003). When this natural expression is hindered by the immediate environmental conditions, authenticity is reflected in short-term conflict and the manner in which this conflict is resolved can have implications for one's felt integrity and authenticity (Kernis, 2003). Vannini (2006) describes the concept of frustrated authenticity, that is, a type of inauthenticity that is not inherent to a person,

but typical of an institution or culture that functions as a roadblock to authenticity. "Frustrated authenticity is the experience of feeling ineffectual in the attempt to be congruent with one's values" (Vannini, 2006, p. 246). Frustration is an emotion that is experienced when goal achievement is defeated by the presence of obstacles or hindrances (Janis, see Vannini, 2006). Organisational structure, culture and policies can frustrate individuals and hinder their attempts at authentic behaviour.

2.2.2   The importance of authenticity

Carson and Langer (2006) state that individuals who disengage in the moment are not authentic and are heavily concerned with impressing others. As a result, they start to behave in a way others think they should behave, or the way they think others think they should behave (Carson & Langer, 2006). When individuals do not respond in a genuine manner, they close themselves off to more appropriate alternatives and thus the cost of mindlessly pretending to be authentic is great (Carson & Langer, 2006).

Being authentic contributes to positive well-being, while inauthentic behaviour leads to internal conflict and lower well-being (Ryan et al., 2005). According to Carson and Langer (2006), individuals are more likely to follow a scripted response when they feel that they may be negatively judged and this response may then, in actual fact, lead to the problem that it is employed to prevent. Kawakami, White and Langer (in Carson & Langer, 2006) indicate that individuals that act genuinely and in a non-scripted manner are evaluated as more charismatic and authentic. Furthermore, praise for non-genuine behaviour may result in reduced self-esteem, because "praise directed at their pretended behaviour or qualities cannot be directed at what they are, only what they are not" (Carson & Langer, 2006, p. 32). Hussain and Langer (see Carson & Langer, 2006) conducted research on the self-esteem of college undergraduates and found that deceptive self-presentation failed to lead to enhanced self-esteem. It reduced the opportunity for benefiting from positive evaluation, where subjects felt worse about themselves after receiving praise for inauthentic behaviour.

Carson and Langer (2006) feel that purposefully acting different from what one actually is can lead to self-improvement. For example, one can act as a role-model for oneself and this technique can be very beneficial as a technique to change a bad habit or trait. It is important to note that this technique is not to impress others or look for favourable judgements, but rather to change an individual's current behaviour in an effort to improve future behaviour (Carson & Langer, 2006).

Being authentic prevents worry about being negatively evaluated and one is not worried about the right response or how others may evaluate that response (Carson & Langer, 2006). By living mindfully, and being engaged in the experience of the moment rather than focusing on enhancing perceived appearances, an authentic individual can accept herself without the negative results that accompany the undeserved praise of others (Carson & Langer, 2006). Self-acceptance is critical to mental health and the absence thereof can lead to a number of emotional difficulties, particularly anger and depression (Carson & Langer, 2006). Acting authentically therefore contributes to individual self-acceptance and enhanced well-being.

Kernis (2003) stresses that the issue of authenticity takes on greater importance in an information-based world, where there are fewer constraints. Access to the internet allows individuals to try on different selves, without the effect of face-to-face contacts (Kernis, 2003). Communicating in cyberspace can be deceptive and inauthentic when one portrays oneself contrary to one's true self (Kernis, 2003).

Adams (2006, p. 9), in his discussions with Blake and Winnicott, summarises the value of authenticity and the need for it, in the following extract:

> *In being loved, we become more open. In being open, we become more authentic. In being authentic we become more loving and creative. Love, open awareness, and authentic existence are intimately inter-related. They co-arise interdependently and together comprise a coherent structure or well-being, allowing one to be most fully human and uniquely oneself.*

It is clear from the discussion above that being authentic is valuable and leads to positive well-being. In becoming authentic we forego game-playing and thereby simplify our lives resulting in an enhanced sense of personal ease and inner harmony (Kaufmann, 1991).

The preceding discussion served to build an understanding of the term authenticity, with specific focus on how it is defined and why it is important. Reasons for inauthentic behaviour were also explored. In the following section, I will discuss theoretical contributions to further deepen our understanding of authenticity.

2.3   THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO AUTHENTICITY

The following discussion captures the contributions of a number of significant theorists, whose works have contributed to understanding authentic behaviour in the individual. Presented here are the broad contributions of Carl Jung, Karen Horney, Carl Rogers, Viktor Frankl and Abraham Maslow. The discussion presented below highlights the key contributions concerning the topic of authenticity and does not encompass a complete discussion of the related personality theory.

2.3.1   Carl Jung

Carl Jung's view of the individual is complex and dynamic and, according to Viljoen (2003, p. 95), Jung's view of the person and psyche is so complex "that it appears to be at once optimistic and pessimistic, both deterministic and teleological". To this end, Jung (1958, p. 9) describes the individual as "a relative exception and an irregular phenomenon". To Jung (see Viljoen, 2003), human beings are complex and dynamic organisms who are composed of opposing factors that may either consciously or unconsciously drive them into action. Such opposing forces are present in all people, thus individuals cannot be "all good, or all evil, purely introverted or extraverted, masculine or feminine, since the unconscious is dominated by the opposite of what dominates at the conscious level" (Viljoen, 2003, p. 95). According to Jung (see Viljoen, 2003, p. 95),

people strive toward "integrating these opposite tendencies into a harmonious whole, the self".

In Jung's theory of personality (see Schultz, 1977; Viljoen, 2003), two important concepts emerge, that of the self and the persona. The self is an archetype and is the essence of the psyche, whilst persona describes the person's public self (Jung, see Schultz, 1977; Viljoen, 2003). The persona specifically refers to the mask or façade that develops in relation to the role the individual must fulfil as expected by society. Jung (see Viljoen, 2003, p. 101) defines the persona as follows, "the persona is that which in reality one is not, but which oneself as well as others think one is". When individuals identify with their persona to the extent that the psyche and persona become identical, they are not only deceiving themselves in terms of identity, but also risking separation from their genuine emotions and experience. As a result, neurosis and pathology can develop. Wearing a mask is indicative of inauthentic practice (Cranton & Carusetta, 2004).

Jung's contribution to authenticity lies in the concept of individuation. Jung (in Schultz, 1977, p. 96) defines individuation as "that of becoming a unique individual, a single homogenous being". As it implies becoming one's own self, individuation can be translated as "self realization" (Schultz, 1977). Individuation occurs in middle age and during this time people become aware of how they are similar and different to others, that is, they become aware of their true selves (Cranton & Carusetta, 2004; Shultz, 1977). Cranton and Carusetta (2004) suggest that transformation can occur through individuation, whether people are conscious of it or not. However, actively participating in individuation consciously allows one to develop a deepened sense of self. This emerging self results in the development of authenticity (Cranton & Carusetta, 2004).

Individuation also allows one to distinguish oneself from the collective and further promote authenticity (Cranton & Carusetta, 2004). If an individual has habitual expectations and perceptions of the context that she finds herself in, then she would feel restricted in her behaviour, or if the expectation was that there are certain rules that one must live by, then authenticity is restricted (Cranton & Carusetta, 2004). Through critical

reflection one can see herself apart but still within the context, resulting in greater authenticity (Cranton & Carusetta, 2004).

2.3.2 Karen Horney

Karen Horney, although an orthodox psychoanalyst, concluded that human behaviour is shaped by the culture in which a person lives, rather than in biology and sexuality (Viljoen, 2003).

Horney's contribution to authenticity can be noted in the distinguishing characteristics of the ideal, actual and real self. High societal expectations may result in feelings of inferiority, which result in the emergence of the idealized self (Horney, see Viljoen, 2003). This idealized self is described as being "removed from reality", although it exerts great influence on the person's life (Horney, 1946, p. 96). Feelings of inferiority create anxiety and a person, then unconsciously creates the ideal self which has unlimited potential (Horney, see Viljoen, 2003).

The actual self refers to people as they consciously act in daily life and the actual self is often rejected as it may not meet the demands of the ideal self (Viljoen, 2003). The real self relates to both the ideal and actual self and emerges once a person has "relinquished all the techniques for dealing with anxiety and resolving conflict" (Viljoen, 2003, p. 157).

Neurosis develops when the ideal self becomes the actual self, "the neurotic personality suppresses the unacceptable features and internal conflicts of the actual self and masks them through the development of an ideal self" (Horney, see Viljoen, 2003, p. 163). This gives rise to a vicious cycle, in which the person cannot escape, where the ideal self sets unrealistic goals and will act, for the benefit of others, until those goals have been met (Horney, 1946). This clearly reflects inauthentic behaviour, where the true self is not reflected in one's actions. Furthermore, behaviour that is directed for the benefit of others, or to gain approval of others is viewed as inauthentic (Horney, see Harter, 2005). Horney (1946) suggests that impairment in moral integrity occurs as a result of

unresolved conflict and she describes the idealized image as "essentially a counterfeit" (Horney, 1946, p. 162). Impairment in moral integrity is characterized by a decrease in sincerity and an increase in egocentricity (Horney,1946).

2.3.3   Carl Rogers

Carl Rogers is associated with the humanistic-phenomenological school of thought and his theory emphasises the importance of people's subjective experiences of themselves and their influence on personality (Moore, 2003; Schultz, 1977). Human beings are largely believed to possess both constructive and destructive tendencies. Rogers (see Moore, 2003, p.363), however, maintains that "healthy people are aware of their positive and negative attributes, and the constructive will triumph over the destructive". A central preposition of the theory is that behaviour is determined by the choice of the individual, not by factors that lie beyond his or her control and that the environment acts only in a facilitating or inhibiting and not a determining role in behaviour (Moore, 2003; Schultz, 1977).

Roger's contribution to understanding authenticity is based on his development of the self-concept. The self-concept refers to the "picture which individuals have of themselves and the value they attach to themselves" (Moore, 2003, p. 366). It refers to individuals' views of themselves and is created by their subjective experience of the world (Moore, 2003; Schultz, 1977). The self concept represents conscious experiences and is flexible and changeable (Rogers, in Moore, 2003; Schultz, 1977).

The ideal environment in which the individual finds herself is created by circumstances that allow individuals to see themselves as they are. This ideal is rarely encountered as individuals are not unconditionally accepted by significant others (Moore, 2003). Since the environment lays down conditions for accepting the individual, this influences the self concept and results in the individual acting in accordance with the conditions set out by others and not in accordance with their potential (Moore, 2003). Acting in accordance with the expectations laid down by others thus reflects inauthentic behaviour.

Rogers also describes the ideal self. This is the self concept that the individual would most like to have (Rogers, see Moore, 2003). The ideal self in psychologically healthy persons is realistic, attainable and in harmony with the self concept, while in psychologically unhealthy persons, there is no correspondence between the ideal self and the self concept (Rogers, see Moore, 2003).

Furthermore, Rogers' describes the purpose of all life as to become "that self which one truly is" (Rogers, see Moore, 2003, p. 368). A fully functioning person would be one who is true to themselves, one who is authentic. The concepts of congruence and incongruence also highlight Rogers' contribution to our understanding of authentic behaviour. People who have become true to themselves are seen as being in a state of congruence, that is, a state where the individual is conscious of all experiences and can incorporate them into the self concept (Rogers, see Moore, 2003). Congruence is often not achieved due to environmental influences and due to the fact that the self concept is not only based on individual experiences, but on efforts to win approval from others (Rogers, see Moore, 2003).

Incongruence occurs when a person has an experience that is contrary to the self concept (Rogers, see Moore, 2003). Distorted or inauthentic behaviour may occur when needs are denied and the individual also wants to maintain a particular image. Denied needs may become very strong and are satisfied directly. When this occurs an individual is reluctant to own her behaviour (Rogers, see Moore, 2003). Ideal functioning occurs when self concepts are congruent with feelings and needs (Rogers, in Moore, 2003; Schultz, 1977).

Rogers emphasises that being authentic is a necessary characteristic of fully functioning persons. More specifically, he refers to the ability to trust themselves when choosing behaviours appropriate to a specific situation (Rogers, in Moore, 2003; Kernis, 2003). Such individuals do not rely on facades, existing codes, social norms or on the judgement of others in choosing appropriate behaviour (Moore, 2003; Schultz, 1977). Furthermore,

they do not hide parts of themselves or display different personalities for different situations (Schultz, 1977).

A further contribution by Rogers to authenticity can be found in the person-centred approach to counselling. The central hypothesis of this approach is that the individual possesses vast resources for self-understanding, for altering the self concept, basic attitudes and his or her self-directed behaviour (Rogers, 1979). These resources can only be tapped if a climate of facilitative psychological attitudes can be provided (Rogers, 1979). One of the conditions that contribute to this growth-promoting climate includes genuineness, realness or congruence of the therapist (Rogers, 1979). A therapist who is increasingly herself in the relationship and who avoids putting up a personal façade is more likely to have clients who will change and grow in a constructive manner (Rogers, 1979). Thus the therapist's authenticity can facilitate change and growth in the client.

In his experience as a therapist, Rogers (1995), found that displaying inauthentic behaviour is obstructive and unproductive in his relations with others. Rather, he has found that when dealing with people he has found it more successful to be himself. He writes "I have not found it helpful or effective in my relationships with other people to try to maintain a façade; to act in one way on the surface when I am experiencing something quite different underneath" (Rogers, 1995, p. 9). He further writes that in dealing with people he has found it effective to accept himself and the result of that self-acceptance is that the relationship becomes real (Rogers, 1995).

2.3.4   Viktor Frankl

Frankl's view of the person is concerned with spirituality and some key contributions include that a human being has the freedom to be responsible and is orientated toward finding meaning in life (Längle & Sykes, 2006; Shantall, 2003). Human beings have the freedom to choose how they behave as they are constantly faced with choices and consequently can be held responsible for those choices.

Frankl describes three dimensions of personality; the physical, psychological and spiritual dimension (see Schultz, 1977; Shantall, 2003). Optimal development can be attained when human beings function at the spiritual level, that is, when we exercise the freedom of will and search for, and find, meaning in our lives (Frankl, 1992; Längle & Sykes, 2006; Schultz, 1977; Shantall, 2003). There are a number of characteristics that describe the optimally developed person and of particular interest in this study is the characteristic of self transcendence. This characteristic describes a person as being outward looking rather than inwardly focused (see Längle & Sykes, 2006). This implies that an individual is concerned with whatever gives their lives meaning, even to a cause greater than themselves. Frankl (1969, p. 52) writes that "human existence is not authentic unless it is lived in terms of self-transcendence".

A further contribution to the study of authenticity can be found in the concept of conformism. Frankl explains (in Shantall, 2003, p. 450) that "in an effort to evade the stress of authenticity – of living lives of personal responsibility – people fall into the stream of conformism and do what most other people do" .

From the preceding discussion it is evident that Viktor Frankl's contribution to authenticity lies in the concepts of self transcendence and conformity. In self transcendence a person's life is authentic to the extent that it is outwardly orientated, while in conforming, the emergence of the true self is restricted.

2.3.5   Abraham Maslow

Maslow's view of the person is optimistic and focuses on the positive aspects of human behaviour (Moore, 2003). The underlying motive to all behaviour is the tendency to self-actualisation, where the individual realizes her true potential (Maslow, 1968). Human behaviour is explained in terms of need gratification and the development of personality occurs in accordance with the need hierarchy (Maslow, 1968). Maslow (1968, p. 114), directly relates the ultimate need for identity and self-actualisation to authenticity. He writes that "the goal of identity (self actualization, autonomy, …authenticity, etc.) seems

to be simultaneously an end goal in itself, and also a transitional goal, a rite of passage, a step along the path to the transcendence of identity". Thus the best path to self actualization is through achieving identity (Maslow, 1968).

According to Maslow (1968), there are various reasons why self-actualisation is not always attained. These include a lack of self knowledge and self insight, where a person is not aware of own needs and relies on external drives to determine behaviour. A further reason includes a lack of integration within the individual, particularly with regard to opposing needs, for example, cultural stereotypes exist of the masculine nature of man that does not permit qualities such as sympathy and emotionality (Moore, 2003). This results in conflict within a male when he is unable to integrate the cultural need with his needs.

With specific reference to being authentic, Maslow's contribution can be drawn from the characteristics of the self-actualising person (see Moore, 2003). Among the fifteen characteristics there are four that relate to being authentic. Firstly, self-actualisers possess an accurate observation of reality, that is, they are able to see past barriers, recognise reality and detect dishonesty (Moore, 2003; Schultz, 1977). Observations are accurate because self-actualisers do not need to observe reality through personal templates of desires, anxieties and cultural stereotypes (in Moore, 2003).

The second characteristic relates to self-acceptance, accepting others and human nature. There is an unconditional acceptance of the self and human nature (Maslow, 1968). By being accepting of their nature, healthy persons do not have to distort or falsify themselves or hide behind masks or social roles (Schultz, 1977). The third characteristic of self-actualisers is the ability to distinguish between means and goals, and between good and evil (Maslow, in Moore, 2003; Schultz, 1977). Self-actualisers are described as having strong ethical and moral codes and are not uncertain about right and wrong (Maslow, 1968). Finally, self-actualisers resist enculturation. This means that they abide by their own rules, rather than those set down by the community, but do not rebel against

rules on unimportant matters such as dress and language (Maslow, in Moore, 2003; Schultz, 1977).

Having discussed the major theoretical underpinnings that have, over the years, contributed to an understanding of authenticity as a psychological construct, I will now turn to explicating topics that are related to authenticity.

2.4 AUTHENTICITY: RELATED TOPICS

2.4.1 The development of authenticity

According to Harter (2005), factors that influence authenticity begin in childhood. It is in adolescence, however, that an interest in the true self develops. A possible reason for this interest in authenticity in adolescence is the societal demand for the creation of multiple selves associated with different social roles or contexts (Harter, 2005). Furthermore, "cognitive-developmental advances equip the adolescent with the ability to differentiate such selves" and as a result the adolescent may put on different personas across relational contexts (Harter, 2005, p. 384).

Harter (2005) also indicates that, from a cognitive-developmental perspective, middle adolescence is the period during which the adolescent wrestles with the issues of true and false selves, because it is during this period that they possess the cognitive ability to recognise contradictory attributes. They may, however, at this stage, not yet have the ability to resolve such conflicts. It is only later in development that the individual is "more able to cognitively integrate apparent contradictions", because of the "advent of higher-order abstractions" (Harter, 2005, p. 385). For example, cheerfulness with peers and depression with parents can be viewed as two manifestations of an overarching trait, namely, flexibility or adaptiveness.

Furthermore, Harter's (2005,) research findings show that adolescents report that it is acceptable and appropriate to behave differently in different contexts and that they

normalize opposing attributes and value inconsistency. The adolescents in the study suggest "that it would be unnatural to act similarly with everyone" Harter (2005, p. 385). As cognitive structures continue to develop in later adolescence and early adulthood, and coupled with the expectation that people should act differently in different relational contexts, early adolescent conflict about engaging in false self-behaviour should abate (Harter, 2005).

It is important to recognise that the fact that adolescents wrestle and experience conflict concerning engaging in false self-behaviour suggests that behaving authentically is valued as a goal toward which to aspire: "Contemporary adolescents appear to value, and seem to be striving for, authenticity in the face of developmental constraints that may make their quest difficult" (Harter, 2005, p. 386).

2.4.2   Language and voice in authenticity

Stern (in Harter, 2005), highlights the importance of language in the development of authenticity. On the positive side, language provides a common system through which connectedness between people can occur. On the other hand, language can serve as a barrier between interpersonal experiences, as it is lived and verbally presented, thereby distorting one's immediate experience (Stern, as cited in Harter, 2005).

Authentic communication refers to a belief that an individual's words should be an exterior expression of the core self (Gergen, 1991). Communicating authentically brings us into contact with the person "behind the mask", that is, it brings us into contact with a person's true feelings, intentions and beliefs (Gergen, 1991, p. 203). However, Gergen (1991) points out that the demands of effective communication and performance tend to remove signs of sincere presence, for example, non-words, colloquialisms and emotional disruptions are removed from communication and are replaced with a well constructed and planned message.

A key factor to language and voice in authenticity is whether or not one can verbally express one's thoughts, opinions and feelings (Harter, 2005). In Harter's research with adolescents, a large majority reported that failure to express herself represented false self-behaviour. Harter's (2005) study examines two potential determinants of authenticity, as reflected in adolescents' ability to voice their thoughts and opinions to others, that is, the role of support or validation and gender orientation. An important form of validation in the study is listening to what another has to say (Harter, 2005). The results of the study indicated that high school students who reported the highest level of support for voice also reported the highest level of authenticity, as supported by their ability to voice their opinions. "Validation in the form of genuinely listening and respecting adolescent viewpoints is highly linked to authentic self behaviour" (Harter, 2005, p. 388).

2.4.3 Authenticity and adult relationships

Research conducted on authenticity and adult relationships (see Harter, 2005; Lopez & Rice, 2006; Neef & Harter, 2002) further deepens our understanding of the value and importance of the construct. A brief overview of the findings of the research is presented below.

Lopez and Rice (2006, p. 364) describe authenticity in relationships as a "relational schema that favours the benefits of mutual and accurate exchanges of real self experiences with one's intimate partner over the attendant risks of personal discomfort, partner disapproval or relationship instability". Being authentic in a relationship involves being real with your partner, irrespective of concerns of possible relationship conflicts. According to Lopez and Rice (2006), authentic behaviour is inhibited by fear of partner rejection, disapproval and conflict. Furthermore, in relationships that are under threat, false self-behaviours such as deceptive communication may be condoned. Authentic relationships can be fostered through open and honest partner disclosures (Lopez & Rice, 2006).

Harter's (2005) research on adult spousal relationships identifies three relationship styles, that is, self-focused autonomy, other focused connectedness and mutuality. The study reveals that partners who viewed themselves as mutual reported the highest level of validation and authentic self-behaviour, while self-focused partners were found to be least validating (Harter, 2005). Other focused individuals, with self-focused partners faired the worst in relation to validation, as well as in their ability to be authentic within the relationship.

Harter's (2005, p. 390) research revealed support for a process model in which "validation by one's partner predicts the extent to which one can exhibit authentic self behaviour within the relationship, which, in turn, predicts self esteem and affect". Overall, mutual individuals provide greater validation for their partners and report greater authenticity (Harter, 2005). "In adult relationships validation, positive regard, and support for who one is as a person is associated with authenticity, which in turn is predictive of benefits such as self esteem and cheerfulness" (Harter, 2005, p. 389).

In a similar study, Neff and Harter (2002) found that authenticity was linked to the amount of validation received from one's partner. In relationships where the style was false self-behaviour, individuals were less likely to report that their partner listened to them and such individuals also reported lower levels of voice. The research showed that individuals were unlikely to express true thoughts and feelings in relationships where they did not feel validated or accepted. This suppression of the true self is linked to poorer psychological outcomes, lower levels of self-esteem and higher levels of depressed affect (Neff & Harter, 2002). Neff and Harter (2002) conclude that their findings support the claims of psychoanalytically oriented theorists such as Karen Horney, that authenticity and true self-expression are necessary for optimal psychological health.

A further study conducted by Neff and Harter (2002) examined how men and women resolve conflicts in relationships, the authenticity of the resolutions and their relations to psychological health. The results of the study revealed that most women who resolved

conflicts by putting their partners' needs ahead of their own reported that this was inauthentic behaviour and they adopted such behaviour to avoid negative repercussions from their partners (Neff & Harter, 2002).

2.4.4   Authenticity and the creation of multiple selves

The need to adapt to diverse roles in a complex society has had a significant impact on the individual, the self and its authenticity (Harter, 2005). According to Gergen (as cited in Harter, 2005, p. 384), "the demands of multiple relationships splits the individual into a multiplicity of self-investments, leading to a cacophony of potential selves across different relational contexts". This brings into question whether or not one can remain authentic through the adoption of multiple roles and multiple selves (Harter, 2005).

"Increasingly we emerge as the possessors of many voices… Each self contains a multiplicity of others" (Gergen, 1991, p. 83). In an increasingly saturated society, one filled with technological change, "it becomes increasingly difficult to recall precisely to what core essence one must remain true" (Gergen, 1991, p. 150). The personality that emerges here is referred to as a pastiche personality and can be described as a personality that borrows aspects from whatever sources are available and constructs them as useful for a particular situation, thereby creating a multiplicity of selves (Gergen, 1991). Thus, in a post-modern world, one's identity undergoes tremendous change and is continuously reformed and redirected as one encounters different relationships (Gergen, 1991). Relationships and one's interactions become the new reality that shape and influence the formation of the self (Gergen, 1991). Although the creation of multiple selves does cast doubt on one's true identity, it may provide individuals with feelings of optimism and positivity.

Lerner (1993, p. 199) writes that "we do not have one true self". Particulars of our circumstances serve to define the reality of ourselves. Furthermore, the self does not reach a point of being complete or exist in isolation, as situations constantly force the individual to redefine who they are (Lerner, 1993). The differing contexts that individuals

face, shape what they become; for example, the work that people engage in create who they are (Lerner, 1993). Lerner (1993) describes the example of women and men in low opportunity work settings, where women behaved femininely in such situations, but acted more like men when faced with a job with economic opportunity and status. Men in such low opportunity work settings displayed the female stereotype.

According to Kernis (2003), role experimentation is not necessarily inauthentic, but rather reflects an extension of one's true self in action. Role experimentation can reflect authentic behaviour to the extent that the individual is aware of, or informed by, what one knows to be true of the self. Role experimentation may result in self improvement and growth; however, in instances where one deliberately acts out an identity in contrast to one's true self, role experimentation is likely to be inauthentic (Kernis, 2003).

According to Lifton (1993, p. 1), we have become "many sided" and our being differs radically from that of the past and allows us to engage in exploration and personal experiences. In understanding the implications of the multiple self, Lifton (1993) describes the self that emerges from the confusion of modern life as the "protean self". The protean self is aptly named after Proteus, the Greek sea god of many forms (Lifton, 1993). In an inconsistent and unpredictable world, the self may display resilience and by drawing on various identities and being flexible, human beings evolve a self that is filled with possibility (Lifton, 1993). The flexible sense of self may be expressed as a lack of authenticity, but the resilience of the human condition may cause the self to evolve, thereby creating opportunities for personal growth and enhancement (Harter, 2005; Lifton, 1993).

Lifton (1993) cautions that the protean self is faced with the danger of becoming diffused to the point of rendering the self incoherent, immobile and diminished of meaning. Lifton (1993, p. 190) refers to negative proteanism, which is described as a "fluidity so lacking in moral content and sustainable inner form that it is likely to result in fragmentation of the self, harm to others, or both". The failure to achieve successful multiple selves can

result in a sense of loss and creates a vulnerability to withdrawal, apathy and depression (Lifton, 1993).

Protean flexibility enables individuals to strive for connectedness to others, with more fluid boundaries between their multiple selves that do not compromise a sense of authenticity (Harter, 2005; Lifton, 1993). Although the quest for the protean self is flawed, it does serve to enhance authenticity (Harter, 2005).

The role a person plays links an individual to social structures, groups and institutions and these provide an internal framework from which to develop a sense of meaning (Reitzes & Mutran, 1994). Multiple roles mean multiple identities, self meanings and subjective responses to roles. Reitzes and Mutran (1994), suggest that the commitment to a role, a sense of attachment to work and family roles, allows a person to view themselves more positively. In the role of worker, being competent positively influences self esteem for both men and women (Reitzes & Mutran, 1994).

Consistency is a construct that emerges from the identification of multiple roles (Cross, Gore & Morris, 2003; Suh, 2002). Multiple roles lead to multiple experiences and developing and maintaining a consistent identity is key to psychological well-being (Suh, 2002). People who are perceived as being consistent across situations are evaluated positively (Suh, 2002). Optimal psychological functioning is dependent on the consistency of the self-identity across different spheres of experience. Cross et al. (2003) report that individuals who are able to describe their behaviour as consistent across different roles or situations indicate higher levels of well-being than do individuals who have more inconsistent self concepts. Such consistent behaviour is reported to be important because it allows people to predict the behaviour of others and it facilitates social interactions (Cross et al., 2003). For example, if a person is viewed as being honest, she is assumed to be honest across situations, thereby allowing others to predict their interactions on the belief that she will behave honestly in the future (Cross et al., 2003).

When taking the view that an individual is autonomous, unique and independent of others, what essentially define a person are their internal private attributes, abilities and beliefs. In this view there is one true nature to a person or real self (Markus & Kitayama, in Cross et al., 2003). Consistency is important here because the consistent expression of stable traits, abilities and attributes serve as a foundation for validating the real self (Cross et al., 2003). Those who are confident about their real selves are able to behave autonomously and resist the influence of others. Being inconsistent threatens this core, authentic self and can result in self-concept confusion, a lack of clarity and feelings of being divided (Cross et al., 2003). Individual consistency is indicative of "maturity, self-integrity and unity and therefore associated with positive dimensions of well-being (Cross et al., 2003, p. 934).

When viewing a person through a collectivist culture, that is, when a person is embedded in the social network of the culture and defined by their social roles and personal relationships, such important relationships and group memberships and social roles define the self (Cross et al., 2003). In this instance, consistency is approached differently. Inconsistency is not viewed as conflict and tension inducing, rather it is expected behaviour because of variable norms and rules in different situations (Cross et al., 2003). The modulation and adaptation of behaviour across situations is indicative of maturity (Markus & Kitayama, see Cross et al., 2003).

Current research suggests that there is a growing interest and emphasis on multiplicity (see Harter, 2005). There is an increasing demand for models depicting how the self naturally varies across situations (Harter, 2005). A recommended solution for resolving potential conflict within the multifaceted self can be found in the role of autobiographical narratives (McAdams, see Harter, 2005). In developing a self narrative, one creates a sense of continuity over time, as well as coherent connections among life events, each of which can be experienced as authentic (Harter, 2005). Each narrative provides meaning and self direction and, as narrative construction is a continuous process, "we not only craft but also revise the story of our lives, creating new blueprints that facilitate further architectural development of the self; in doing so, one's life story can also emerge as a

true story" (Harter, 2005, p. 391). Furthermore, understanding multiple roles is important for leaders (Hill, 2002). Hill (2002) writes that the evolving self can lead to changes in role responsibilities, new selves become relevant and others may decrease in significance. A leader needs to understand and support this interpersonal development in order to assist workers to perform more effectively (Hill, 2002).

2.4.5   Measures of authenticity

There are a few measures of authenticity and Peterson & Seligman (2004) caution that only measuring authenticity via self-report can be problematic, due to the subtle nature of the construct. Some problems that could occur with self-report include concern about one's willingness to admit inauthentic behaviour; knowledge availability because people may be unaware that they are behaving inauthentically; and intelligence, education and personal development may play a role, in that it does take a particular level of sophistication to understand the difference between authenticity and inauthenticity (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Measures include (see Peterson & Seligman, 2004) Ryan and Connell's Locus of Causality Concept, where individuals are asked to rate the reason why they perform a particular motivated behaviour based on causation. The reasons for acting range from internal to external causation and are indicative of authenticity, because the self is experienced as the cause of the behaviour.

A further measure is the Experienced Authenticity Measure, by Sheldon, Ryan, Rawthorne and Ilardi (see Peterson & Seligman, 2004) and is designed to measure experienced authenticity within different social roles.

The Adolescent Voice Measure, by Harter, Waters, Whitesell and Kastelic (see Peterson & Seligman, 2004), is a measure of the extent to which people feel free to express their actual perceptions, thoughts and emotions to others.

Leader authenticity can be measured by an observer-based approach, by Henderson and Hoy (as cited in Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The scale is completed by the leader's subordinates and measures the leader's emphasis on self-expression within the role, non-manipulation of subordinates and the acceptance of personal and organisational responsibility (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Although there are measurement difficulties with self-report measures, authenticity can be measured via self-report, particularly using measures that focus on inauthenticity, for example measuring feelings of being controlled or feelings of uncertain identity (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

2.5   AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

The following discussion presents an emerging perspective in leadership theory. It begins with a definition of the term, authentic leadership, followed by a description of the characteristics of an authentic leader. Conditions that contribute to leader authenticity and dimensions of the authentic leader are presented. The relationship between authentic leadership and trust is highlighted. The conditions that contribute to the failure and success of leaders' authenticity is explored and the impact of authentic leadership on employees is presented. A discussion of the development of authentic leaders is also presented.

2.5.1   Authentic leadership and authentic leaders

Authenticity in leadership is an emerging perspective and has resulted from the global leadership crisis (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Duignan & Bhindi, 1997; George & Sims, 2007; Harvey et al., 2006). Many questions have been asked about the credibility of leaders in organisations and public life, as their performance as leaders has been so poor (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997). Various reasons have been cited for the poor performance of leaders. These include leaders clinging to a fixed mindset and viewing organisations as

linear, mechanistic systems where management is based on a hierarchical structure (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997). In such hierarchical structures, managers adopt a power over people approach to relationships (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997). Furthermore, the structure of domination that prevails in organisations produces depersonalizing relationships among individuals. In this instance, dominant individuals assume an entitlement to ideas and processes over others (Starrat, see Duignan & Bhindi, 1997). Many leaders have become driven by short-term performance outcomes and have failed to consider what constitutes sustainable outcomes (May, Chan, Hodges & Avolio, 2003).

A further reason contributing to management's poor performance is that corporate practices and philosophies support and encourage competitive and individualistic cultures and ambition, manipulation and self-serving practices are often rewarded over ethical and authentic behaviour (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997). This has resulted not only in poor performance, but many leaders at the coal-face report feelings of great frustration at the constraints on their ability to be authentic and valued in their organisations. They question the morality of current practices and describe feeling "betrayed, neglected and wounded" (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997, p.198). Duignan and Bhindi (1997) also report that in recent research of public sector organisations, managers have expressed frustration with morality and ethics and the absence of meaning and purpose in their work lives.

Important values such as truth and honesty are rarely found in organisations and deception is increasing commonplace in organisations (Duignan & Bindhi, 1997; Novicevic et al., 2006). "Some managers wear a mask of authenticity, a façade of respectability, rarely revealing their true selves" (Duignan & Bindhi, 1997, p. 206). Managers have become so accustomed to their behaviour that they would be unable to recognise their true selves (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997). According to Novicevic et al. (2006, p. 65) the current changing times require leaders with stable philosophies of the self. During such turbulent times "leader authenticity becomes salient because the continuity of organisations as social systems is threatened by multiple discrepancies among leader responsibilities toward the self, toward the followers and toward other

stakeholders". Poor leadership in changing times and a lack of authentic leadership not only impacts on relationships but, threatens the survival of the entire organisation.

The poor performance of leaders, and the variety and unique stressors that organisations are faced with, call for a renewed focus of what constitutes genuine leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). They suggest concentrating on a root construct that underlies all positive forms of leadership and its development, namely authentic leadership. According to Duignan and Bhindi (1997, p. 206), "the concept of authentic leadership impels a radical shift in our mindset about the principles and functions of leadership and the efficacy of our leadership practice". This view of leadership is underpinned by ethics, values, morality and qualities such as honesty, integrity, credibility and being fair-minded, straightforward and dependable (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997).

Luthans and Avolio's (see Avolio & Gardner, 2005) current view of authentic leadership is reflected in positive psychology and adopts a positive focus on what constitutes authentic leadership. They define authentic leadership in organisations as "a process that draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organisational context, which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviours on the part of leaders and associates, fostering positive self development" (Luthans & Avolio see Gardner et al., 2005, p. 345). By being true to herself and engaging in authentic behaviour a leader not only fosters her own development but the development of followers as well, until they become leaders. Central to the definition of authentic leadership is self-awareness and self controlled positive behaviours.

Emerging from the concept of authentic leadership is the authentic leader. Duignan and Bhindi (1997) describe authentic leaders as being aware of their own limitations, building trusting relationships, helping others grow and learn and being tolerant of others' imperfections. To become an authentic leader one must know where one stands on important moral and professional issues and act accordingly; this entails acknowledging the mask that is worn to protect oneself (Duignan & Bindhi, 1997).

Luthans and Avolio (see Michie & Gooty, 2005) opine that authentic leaders are transparent about their intentions and attempt to maintain a flawless link between their espoused values, behaviours and actions. Luthans and Avolio (in Michie & Gooty, 2005) define authentic leadership as a process that draws from the leader's positive psychological capacities, coupled with a highly developed organisational context that encourages transparency and ethical behaviour.

Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans & May (2004, p. 802) view authentic leaders as persons "who know who they are". Avolio et al. (2004, p. 802) define authentic leaders as "those individuals who are deeply aware of how they think and behave and are perceived by others as being aware of their own and others' values/moral perspective, knowledge and strengths; aware of the context in which they operate; and who are confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient and high on moral character". Kark and Shamir (in Avolio et al., 2004, p. 802) suggest that authentic leaders are "able to enhance the engagement, motivation, commitment, satisfaction and involvement required from followers to constantly improve their work and performance outcomes through the creation of personal identification with the follower and social identification with the organisation".

Avolio et al. (2004) view authentic leadership as a root construct that incorporates both transformational and ethical leadership. Authentic leaders can be either directive, participative or authoritarian, which is similar to transformational leadership (Avolio et al., 2004). In differentiating the authentic from the inauthentic leader, it is not the behavioural style that is considered, rather the authentic leader is prone to act in accordance with personal values, build credibility, and win the respect and trust of followers as well as build collaborative relationships. They lead in a manner that followers recognise as authentic (Avolio et al., 2004).

George and Sims (2007, p. xxxi) describe the authentic leader as one who "brings people together around a shared purpose and empowers them to step up and lead authentically in order to create value for all stakeholders". Authentic leaders are described as genuine people who are true to themselves and their beliefs and they engender trust and develop

genuine connections with others (George & Sims, 2007). It is important to note that authentic leaders are not perfect people, but are able to acknowledge their shortcomings and admit their errors, thereby connecting with others and empowering them (George & Sims, 2007).

An authentic leader can achieve authenticity through self-awareness, self acceptance and authentic actions and relations (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, Walumbwa, 2005; Harvey et al., 2006). According to Gardner et al. (2005, p. 345) authentic leadership "extends beyond the authenticity of the leader as a person to encompass authentic relations with followers and associates". Such relationships are characterised by transparency, openness, trust, guidance toward worthy objectives and an emphasis on follower development (Gardner et al., 2005). Henderson and Hoy (see Avolio & Gardner, 2005) describe the inauthentic leader as one who is overly compliant with stereotypes and demands that are related to the leader role.

In the preceding discussion, authentic leadership is described as a process that is based on positive psychological capacities. Its focus is on self-awareness of self-regulated positive behaviours, aimed at fostering motivation, self-development in followers and positive interpersonal relations. An authentic leader is transparent, builds trusting relations, assists with the development of others and has a clear understanding of who they are. In the next section, I will further discuss the characteristics of authentic leaders.

2.5.2   Characteristics of authentic leaders

Shamir and Eliam (2005) define authentic leaders on the basis of their self-concepts and the relationship between their self concepts and their actions. They suggest the following characteristics of authentic leaders:

a)   rather than faking their leadership, authentic leaders are true to themselves; they do not engage in developing the image or persona of a leader; performing the leadership function is a self-expressive act based on the true or real self;

b) authentic leaders are motivated by personal convictions, rather than on attaining status, honours or other personal benefits; leadership is value based;

c) authentic leaders are originals, not copies; they may possess similar values and beliefs to others but the process through which they have arrived at these convictions in not of imitation, but rather internalized on the basis of their personal experiences;

d) the actions of authentic leaders are based on their personal values and convictions; their actions are consistent with their beliefs and this results in high levels of integrity and being characterized as highly transparent.

Other characteristics of authentic leaders include a genuine desire to serve others through their leadership, to empower people, to value individual differences and motivate individuals through the identification of talent (Avolio et al., 2004, Duignan & Bindhi, 1997).

Authentic leaders consider the perspective of others and make interpretations that are free from distortions (Harvey et al., 2006). Furthermore, authentic leaders are future oriented and focused on building followers' values and behaviours (Harvey et al., 2006). A key characteristic of an authentic leader is the ability to choose authentic behaviours when faced with external pressures and incentives to act inauthentically (Harvey et al., 2006). The authentic behaviour is a response to internal desires to act with integrity and not to societal pressures to conform to certain standards (Erickson, see Harvey et al., 2006).

The authentic leader possesses personal resources such as confidence, optimism, hope and resilience (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). When these positive psychological capacities are combined with a positive organisational context and certain trigger events, such a state is seen to heighten the self-awareness and self-regulatory behaviour of the leader, as a part of her self development (Luthans & Avolio, see Avolio & Gardner, 2005). These positive psychological capacities can play a crucial role in influencing individuals, teams, organisations and communities to flourish and prosper (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Furthermore, the authentic leader is self-aware and such self-awareness occurs when

individuals are aware of their own existence and what constitutes such an existence (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Importantly, self-awareness is not an end point, but an emerging process where people come to understand themselves, their talents, strengths, sense of purpose, core values and beliefs (Avolio & Gardner, 2005).

The use of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed and effectively managed for improved performance is referred to as positive organisational behaviour (Gardner & Schermerhorn, 2004). The impetus for positive organisational behaviour is derived from positive psychology and directs management behaviour toward people's strengths and away from their weaknesses (Gardner & Schermerhorn, 2004). May et al. (2003) suggest that authentic leaders possess positive psychological capabilities, including the positive organisational behavioural states of confidence, hope, optimism and resilience. Authentic leaders continually attempt to promote and restore these states in themselves and others (Gardner & Schermerhorn, 2004).

Authentic leaders exhibit a high moral capacity to judge dilemmas from different perspectives and are able to consider stakeholder needs in their understanding of problems (May et al., 2003). Their decision-making ability is facilitated by their positive, optimistic and considerate nature. Thus their ability to execute difficult decisions and take into account others' needs in arriving at the best decision is made possible by the high moral capacity of the authentic leader (May et al., 2003). Furthermore, authentic behaviour should be sustainable over the long term in order to yield positive outcomes and contribute to organisational integrity (May et al., 2003). Leaders must display genuine commitment to sustain their authentic behaviour over time and foster such behaviour in their associates (May et al., 2003).

2.5.3 Authentic leadership and trust

The construct of trust is seen to have potentially significant implications for organisational effectiveness and performance (Avolio et al., 2004; Zhu, May & Avolio,

2004). Trust in leadership had been found to be related to positive organisational outcomes, job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Avolio et al., 2004). Authentic leaders build trust with their followers through encouraging open communication, engaging with others, sharing information and perceptions and feelings. This results in higher levels of personal and social identification (Avolio et al., 2004). Since authentic leaders display high moral standards, their reputation builds positive expectations among followers, thereby enhancing levels of trust and willingness to co-operate with the leader in order to benefit the organisation (Avolio et al., 2004). Similarly, Zhu et al. (2004) propose that employee trust in leaders will enhance compliance with organisational rules and laws and facilitate the implementation of organisational change. "Employee trust in leaders directly influences their contributions to the organisation in terms of performance intent to remain and civic virtue" (Robinson, in Zhu et al., 2004, p. 18).

2.5.4   Conditions that contribute to the failure and success of leader authenticity

Novicevic et al. (2006) outline conditions that contribute to the failure and success of leader authenticity. Moral deterioration, moral paralysis and moral disengagement result in the failure of leaders to be authentic and function effectively (Novicevic et al., 2006). Moral deterioration can be seen in the deliberate withdrawal of the individual, the avoidance of conflict and the avoidance of responsibility. It is further evident in indifferent and resigned behaviour of leaders, who feel secretive of their thoughts and feelings and dissociate themselves from organisational reality. Deceptive and manipulative behaviour is also characteristic of moral deterioration (Novicevic et al., 2006).

Barnard (see Novicevic et al., 2006) describes the moral paralysis of action as the emotional tension that creates frustration, uncertainty, loss of decisiveness and lack of confidence. Leaders who are perfectionists tend to exhibit moral paralysis through micromanagement, the ignoring of criticism and the inability to delegate responsibility

(Novicevic et al., 2006). Being insensitive, distrusting, intimidating and blaming of others are characteristic of moral paralysis (Novicevic et al., 2006).

Moral disengagement entails conforming to the organisational code and the expense of the personal code. This results in feelings of guilt, discomfort and a lack of self-respect (Barnard, see Novicevic et al., 2006). Leadership is characterized by denial, displacing responsibility and use of excuses to justify pseudo-authentic behaviour (Novicevic et al., 2006).

The success of authentic leadership is reflected in moral creativity and is characterised by the leaders' qualities such as transparent honesty, moral courage and experience-informed intuition (Barnard, see Novicevic et al., 2006). According to Novicevic et al. (2006, p. 72), "the capacity for moral creativity is a crucial quality of authentic leaders". An authentic leader who has a genuine sense of the self is adaptive to situational and organisational demands, without sacrificing personal and moral codes (Novicevic et al., 2006). Authentic leaders are able to maintain a stable self-esteem and retain self-confidence during times of crisis and, although they are inspirational and co-operative they are very firm when it comes to their true moral convictions and are uncompromising on these (Novicevic et al., 2006).

Other conditions that contribute to the success or failure of authentic leadership include authentic governance and the organisation itself. Leaders within organisations are faced with frustrations with governance and organisational structures that prevent them from building open and trusting relationships. According to Duignan and Bhindi (1997), governance obstacles include political interference, policy formulation and implementation and system restructuring. According to Block (in Duignan & Bhindi, 1997), there needs to be a reform of governance to reflect democratic principles, otherwise it will become difficult to attain the openness and trust necessary for the emergence of authentic relations.

Obstacles at the organisational level are prevalent and limit authentic leadership. Flawed and bureaucratic systems contribute to leader ineffectiveness and manager incompetence is often protected by the use of power (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997).

A further obstacle to authentic leadership rests in the tension between the interests of the individual and those of the organisation. Hodgkinson (see Duignan & Bhindi, 1997), states that there is often a poor fit between personality and role in the organisation, resulting in some leaders compromising their own values and morality and acting solely as organisational agents. Duignan and Bhindi (1997) explain that in fostering authentic leaders, there is a need to develop, support and sustain structures and processes that encourage moral and ethical behaviour that would facilitate authentic leadership.

2.5.5   Authentic leaders' impact on employee attitudes

Jensen and Luthans (2006) conducted research on the impact of authentic leaders on employee attitudes and the results of their studies provide empirical support for the positive impact that perceived authenticity has on work-related attitudes and happiness. Their study found that employees who perceived their leader to be more authentic had correspondingly higher levels of organisational commitment, job satisfaction and work happiness (Jensen & Luthans, 2006). The study also indicates that the positive effect on commitment and job satisfaction could have a positive impact on work performance.

In furthering our understanding of the characteristics of authentic leaders, the relationship between authentic leadership and trust, conditions that contribute to leader authenticity and the impact of authentic leaders on employee attitudes were investigated. The following discussion will focus on authentic leader development.

2.5.6   Authentic leader development

Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May and Walumbwa (2005) offer a self-based model of authentic leader and follower development. The model is presented in Figure 2.2 below (Gardner et al., 2005, p.346). The discussion below focuses only on authentic leader development as it is within the scope of this research. It must be noted that authentic followership is an important part of, and product of, authentic leadership development (Gardner et al., 2005). Authentic leader development is also beneficial because of its effects on followers (Shamir & Eliam, 2005).
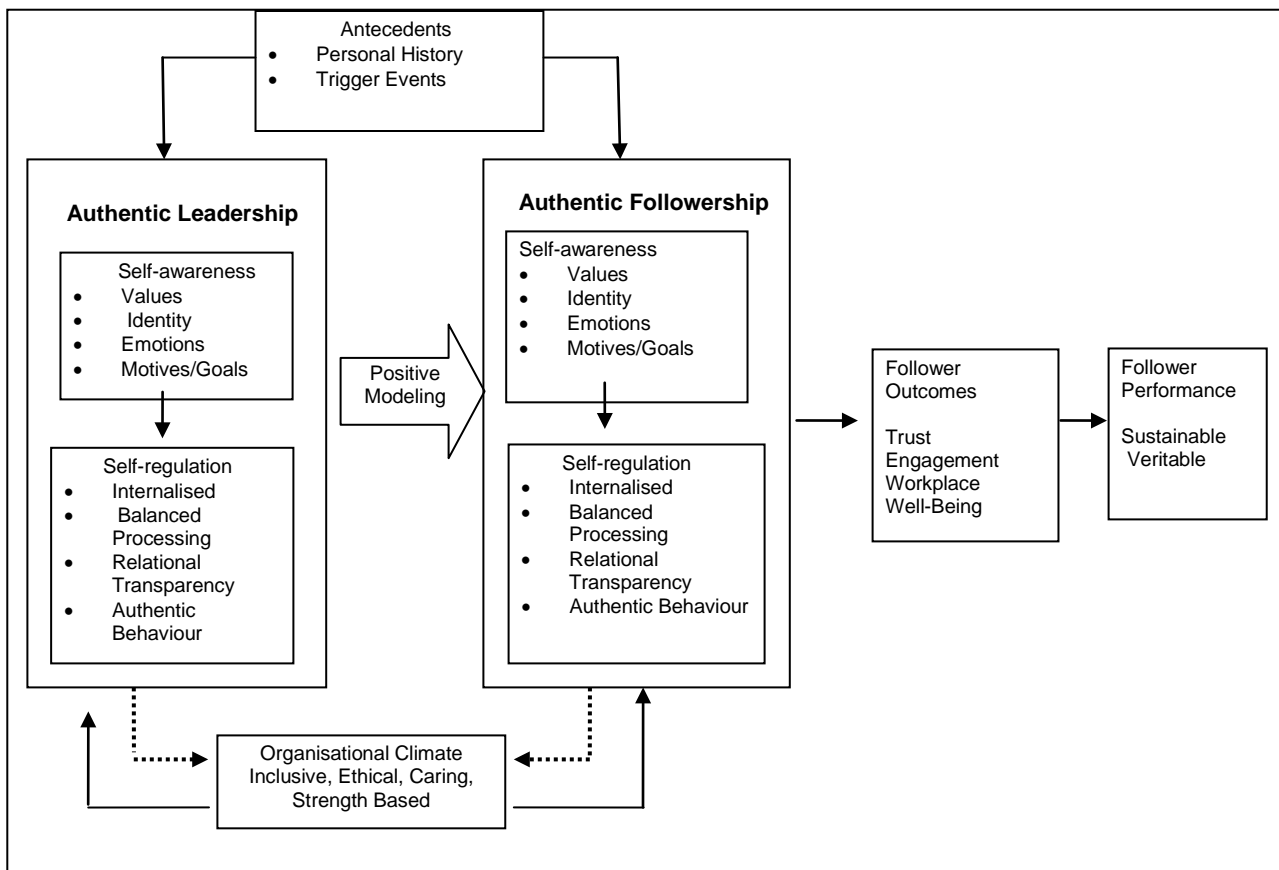
Figure 2.2: The conceptual framework for authentic leader and follower development. Source: Gardner et al., (2005, p. 346).

In Figure 2.2 (from Gardner et al., 2005) the leader's personal history and key trigger events are viewed as antecedents for authentic leadership. Personal history may include family influences and role models, early life challenges and work experiences. Trigger

events facilitate personal growth and development and these may be dramatic or subtle and serve as catalysts for heightened levels of leader self-awareness. Within organisational settings, trigger events may also arise from internal and external sources that serve to challenge the leader. Trigger events are viewed as the catalyst for heightened levels of leader self-awareness and can be either positive or negative.

A further factor contributing to the development of authentic leadership is self-awareness, or the personal insight of the leader. This is linked to self-reflection. Through introspection, leaders are able to gain clarity of their core values, identity, emotions, motives and goals. Introspection requires the leaders to consciously pay attention to some aspect of the self and there is no focus on the accuracy of that personal reflection. Instead attention is paid to understanding how one derives and makes meaning of the world, testing one's own hypothesis and self-schema. Through continually asking themselves, who am I, an authentic leader is able to build an understanding and a sense of self that provides an anchor for a more authentic self (Gardner et al., 2005).

According to Figure 2.2, a second component of authentic leadership development is self-regulation. Features associated with self-regulation include internalised regulation, balanced processing of information, authentic behaviour and relational transparency (Gardner et al., 2005). Internalised regulation refers to a regulatory system that is internally driven by the leader's core self, as opposed to external forces or expectations. Balanced processing of information refers to the collection and interpretation of positive or negative self-related information that is not distorted or exaggerated and that may inform self-development. Authentic behaviour refers to actions that are a result of the leader's true self, as opposed to environmental contingencies or pressures from others. Relational transparency refers to the leader displaying high levels of openness, self-disclosure and trust in close relationships (Gardner et al., 2005).

Central to the framework is that authentic leaders, through their words and deeds, model high levels of self-awareness, balanced processing, transparency and authentic behaviour, to their followers. As a positive role model, authentic leaders serve as a key input for the

development of authentic followers. As followers view the leader displaying self-awareness and engaging in transparent decision-making, they are able to develop trust in the leader and this fosters open and authentic behaviour on their part. This could result in group norms, which could also lead to a drive toward an ethical culture for the organisation. According to Gardner et al. (2005, p. 348), authentic leaders who demonstrate integrity, provide developmental experiences and meaningful work "produce high levels of trust, engagement and well-being among followers, while contributing to their development, which, in turn, fosters sustained and veritable follower performance".

According to the model the interaction of the leader and follower result in an authentic relationship. Through their interactions the leader and follower learn about who they are and how each impacts on the other. The consistency displayed by the leader is authenticated by the follower. However, judgements about the leader are made by the follower and this may serve to complicate the development of the authentic relationship.

The model also reflects the role that an inclusive, caring, ethical and strength-based organisational climate plays in the development of authentic leaders. Although a wide variety of outcomes may occur for the followers of authentic leaders, trust, engagement and workplace well-being are three outcomes that are consistently linked to authenticity and are viewed as significant outcomes of the authentic relationship. A supportive organisational climate provides opportunities to develop authentic leaders and followers, as well as allowing the climate to become more authentic. Work environments that provide access to information, resources, support and opportunities to learn and develop empower and enable leaders to effectively accomplish their work. This, in turn, allows the follower to be more productive and effective (Gardner et al., 2005).

Harvey et al. (2006) suggest an attributional perspective to authentic leadership development and recommend that organisations can take an active role in the development of authentic leaders by making leaders aware of the factors that might promote inaccurate attributions. The basic premise of attribution theory is "that individuals have an innate desire to determine the causes of events that are relevant to

them" and the assessment of causality that people make about these events (Harvey et al., 2006, p. 2). The following techniques may serve to promote awareness of one's attributional style and thereby promote authenticity (Harvey et al., 2006):

a)   Decrease role ambiguity by providing clear objectives and rules and well defined performance standards.

b)   Increase leader experience with employee's job duties. This will increase psychological closeness, allow for understanding the perspectives of others and increase moral capacity and authentic leadership behaviours.

c)   Attributional retraining should be facilitated to allow individuals the opportunity to become aware of their biases, allowing individuals to adjust their attribution style so that attributions become a source of empowerment. Attributional retraining in the form of external feedback will facilitate an accurate optimistic attribution style and promote positive psychological capital.

d)   Self-efficacy training is seen as an important contributor to individuals learning to increase their self-efficacy, reduce the tendency for leaders to erroneously blame themselves for failures, increase the accuracy of attributions and facilitate authentic leadership development.

Shamir and Elaim (2005) offer a life-story approach to the development of authentic leaders. The construction of a life-story is a major element in developing authentic leaders, because authentic leadership rests largely on the self-relevant meanings the leader attaches to her life experiences that are captured in her life-story. As authentic leaders are viewed as individuals who possess self-knowledge and self-clarity, Shamir and Eliam (2005) state that such knowledge and clarity can be achieved through the development of a life-story. Life-stories are self-narratives and self-narratives refer to "the individuals account of the relationships among self-relevant events across time" (Gergen & Gergen, in Shamir & Eliam, 2005, p. 402). Developing a self-narrative allows an individual to establish coherent connections among life events and to understand those as being systematically related.

The life-story approach to the development of authentic leaderships suggests that self-knowledge, self-concept clarity and the internalization of the leader's role into the self-concept are achieved through the construction of life stories (Shamir & Eliam, 2005). It is important to note that using the life stories approach is different from traditional classroom training exercises, as its focus is highly personal in nature. As a result, the extent to which authentic leader development can be planned and guided is limited (Shamir & Eliam, 2005). However, the development can be facilitated through a guided reflection process, which involves creating and clarifying the meaning of experience in terms of the self, attending to feelings accompanying the experience, re-evaluating the experience and drawing lessons from it (Shamir & Eliam, 2005). This process allows people to learn about their strengths, weaknesses, motives and values and become in touch with the true self (Bennis, in Shamir & Eliam, 2005).

Avolio and Luthans (in Jensen & Luthans, 2006) caution against reducing authentic leadership development to simple training programmes. They advise utilizing a life programme development technique that incorporates trigger events, life-story self narratives and significant moments between leaders and followers. The use of the life-story self narrative is seen as a viable way to develop authentic leaders, as it is an approach based on the self-relevant meanings leaders attach to their life story, thereby facilitating greater self-reflection and self-knowledge required to develop authentic leadership (Jensen & Luthans, 2006). According to Gardner and Schermerhorn (2004), authentic leadership development occurs after many years of personal development, experience and hard work. Becoming an authentic leader is not viewed as a destination, but as a journey, "a journey to find your true self and the purpose of your life's work" (Gardner & Schermerhorn, 2004, p. 281).

It is clear from the preceding discussion that authentic leader development can be achieved through the self-based model of authentic leader and follower development, the attributional perspective and the life-story approach. Authentic leadership development should not be reduced to simple, classroom-based training programmes, but incorporate various techniques that facilitate self-reflection.

2.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

As I researched the topic on authenticity, I was exposed to diverse thinking on the idea of being true to one-self. To this end, I can report that I underwent significant change around how I presently think about my own authenticity. I feel that the deeper understanding that I gained from the literature review has forced me to reflect deeply about many preconceived ideas and thoughts that shaped my self concept. Through the many months that I spent on this literature review, I became very conscious of my behaviour. I found myself identifying and linking my personal behaviour and those of others with the theories and research that I had learnt about. This facilitated an understanding of the myriad of emotions that I often undergo.

In the literature review presented, the definitions offered by a number of authors reveal that authenticity can be defined as being true to oneself. Various reasons for acting inauthentically were presented. It is clear from the discussion that being authentic does result in positive well-being and, conversely, being inauthentic has an impact internally and on interpersonal relations.

Theoretical perspectives discussed in the chapter reveal the importance of the self concept in understanding authenticity. Research in related concepts such as the development of authenticity show that although factors that influence authenticity begin in childhood, it is only in middle and late adolescence that one begins to cognitively integrate with the concept. The relationship between language and voice and feelings of authenticity were discussed. Adult relationships impact on feelings of authenticity. A further related concept, multiple selves, impacts on feelings of authenticity and these were discussed. A discussion of measures of authenticity highlights the use of self-report and other measures to assess feelings of authenticity and inauthenticity.

The discussion on authentic leadership focused on defining the term and identifying characteristics of an authentic leader. The relationship between authentic leadership and trust, conditions that contribute to leader authenticity and the impact of authentic leaders

on employee attitudes were investigated. Approaches to authentic leader development were presented.   In the next chapter I present the research design and methodology.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to discuss in detail the research design that informed all the research decisions in this study. The paradigm perspective is discussed with reference to the disciplinary relationship and the psychological paradigm. The research design explains the type of research used in this study. In the section on research methods, I discuss sampling, the researcher as primary research instrument; data gathering and data analysis. Finally, the requirements for a sound qualitative study are presented and discussed.

3.2 PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE

3.2.1 The disciplinary relationship

This study falls within the field of industrial and organisational psychology. The disciplinary relationship is organisational development and quality of work life, as the study explores authentic behaviour and its impact at both the individual and team level, as well as a related impact on well-being. Authentic behaviour has implications for the organisation and the employees working within them and subsequently on their quality of work life.

3.2.2 Psychological paradigm

In qualitative research, the design process begins with a philosophical assumption or a rationale that the researcher makes in deciding to undertake the study (Creswell, 2007; Durrheim, 1999). The assumptions reflect a particular stance that the researcher wishes to take. Once a researcher makes this choice, they further shape their research by identifying the "basic set of beliefs that guide action" (Guba, in Creswell, 2007, p. 19). These beliefs

are referred to as paradigms (Lincoln & Guba, in Creswell, 2007). According to Durrheim (1999) paradigms are the perspectives that provide a rationale for the research. In serving as the basis for the research, they commit the researcher to particular methods of data collection, observation and interpretation. They are described as "systems of interrelated ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions" (Durrheim, 1999, p. 36).

The psychological paradigm for this study is phenomenology. Phenomenology is defined as "the study of lived experiences and the way we understand those experiences to develop a world view" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 104). Within the phenomenological approach, the purpose of a study is aimed at understanding people and is based on the assumption of structure and essence to shared experience that can be narrated (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Creswell (2007, p. 57) defines phenomenological research as "the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon". The basic purpose of phenomenology is to "reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence" (Creswell, 2007, p. 58). The description incorporates what was experienced and how it was experienced (Creswell, 2007). This study is aimed at understanding employee experiences of authenticity and the meaning authenticity has for them. Giorgi (in Rahilly, 1993, p. 55) warns that conventional scientific research methods are not useful in understanding authentic experiences, rather that "studies of experience must begin with phenomenological research because any other kind of research assumes an *a priori* definition of the experience being investigated".

Phenomenological assumptions emphasising the exploration of the lived experience of the participants have largely directed this research; however, the study does reflect aspects of a more general interpretive stance as I relied on the theoretical review as described in Chapter 2 to formulate interpretations before during and after data gathering and analysis. A conscious attempt was made to put aside any theoretical perspectives prior to data collection in order to be open to the natural experiences of the participants.

3.2.3 The sub-discipline

The applicable sub-discipline is positive psychology. For the purpose of this research, the construct authenticity is viewed from a positive perspective. Positive psychology is an all-encompassing term that can be used to describe the "study of positive emotions, positive character traits and enabling institutions" (Seligman, Steen, Park & Peterson, 2005, p. 410). Faller and College (2001) define positive psychology as the scientific study of human strengths and virtues, which revisits the average person in an attempt to better understand the individual and with a vision to improving lives.

Positive psychology is an attractive theoretical orientation that is not value-free, as it purports that certain ways of living are better than others, that is, having a meaningful, engaged, attached life that does not put the needs of the individual above society. Furthermore, positive psychology encompasses a search for meaning and spirituality, thus creating a science that focuses on strengths that will improve the lives of people (Faller & College, 2001).

Much literature on authenticity has emerged as a result of the concept of the psychological self and the question of the reality of the self (see Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Significant progress has been made in understanding the contextual conditions that foster authenticity and characterizing the self-attuned personality, with self-determination theory progressing in this area (see Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Self-determination theory suggests that authentic behaviour is internally caused and is congruent with feelings (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Peterson & Seligman (2004) write about the construct of authenticity as a strength of character in their *Handbook and Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues.* Authenticity is described as a character trait in which people are true to themselves, where their intentions and commitment are accurately reflected. Specifically, authenticity refers to "emotional genuineness and psychological depth" (Peterson & Seligman, 2004,

p. 250). The purpose of the classification is to "reclaim the study of character and virtue as a legitimate topic of psychological inquiry and informed societal discourse (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 3). Furthermore, Peterson and Seligman (2004, p. 4) indicate that they "write from the perspective of positive psychology, which means that we [they] are focused on strengths as on weakness". Thus the reference to authenticity as a strength of character suggests that it is a positive psychology construct.

As positive psychology focuses on individual strengths, this study will explore individual expressions of qualities of authenticity, in an attempt to understand how such behaviours impact on an individual in the workplace.

3.2.4 Meta-theoretical concept

Against the sub-discipline of positive psychology, the meta-theoretical concept is personality. Numerous theorists have contributed to the study of authenticity and they range from psycho-analysts to human-existentialists, for example, Karen Horney and Viktor Frankl (Rahilly, 1993). The focus of the present study embraces the complete spectrum of contributions to the understanding of authenticity, that is, it will draw from all personality theories. Human behaviour is a complex phenomenon (Meyer & Moore, 2003) and a complete description of behaviour is only possible when based on a thorough understanding of all the factors which determine such behaviour (Meyer & Moore, 2003), thus allowing for a complete understanding of authenticity.

3.2.5 Models, theories, concepts and constructs

The applicable personality theories related to the construct of authenticity include those of Karen Horney, Carl Jung, Viktor Frankl, Abraham Maslow, and Carl Rogers. Other researchers (see Carson & Langer, 2006; Guignon, 2004; Harter, 2005; Ryan et al., 2005; Vannini, 2006; Wood et al., 2008) who have contributed to studies on the construct of authenticity were explored for definitions, explanations and descriptions. Research in related areas such as authentic leadership (Luthans & Avolio, 2003), the causes of

inauthentic behaviour, and the value and impact of authenticity were also explored. These were presented in the literature review in Chapter 2.

3.3   RESEARCH DESIGN

3.3.1   Type of research

Durrheim (1999, p. 29) defines research design as a "strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research". According to Durrheim (1999) a research design is essentially a plan that guides the collection and analysis of data. Similarly, Babbie and Mouton (2001) define research design as the plan of how the researcher intends conducting the research. A qualitative research design is open, fluid and changeable and is not defined in technical terms. "The research is an iterative process that requires a flexible, non-sequential approach" (Durrheim, 1999, p. 31).

As previously mentioned, the type of research is qualitative and exploratory in nature, as the general aim of the research is to explore managers' experiences of authenticity in the workplace. According to Durrheim (1999), exploratory studies are used to make preliminary investigations into relatively unknown areas of research. They employ an "open, flexible and inductive approach to research as they attempt to look for new insights into phenomena" (Durrheim, 1999, p. 39). According to Babbie and Mouton (2001, p.79), exploratory research is used when a researcher attempts to examine a new interest, create a better understanding about a subject and to explain the central concepts and constructs of a study. Exploratory studies lead to insight and comprehension and important research design considerations include following an open and flexible strategy that will lead to insight and comprehension (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).   The study is also interpretive, as it aims to explain subjective reasoning that underlies behaviour. In this study an attempt will be made to understand factors in the organisation that support or inhibit authentic behaviour.

According to Creswell (2007), there are five assumptions that lead to a choice of qualitative research. These are ontology, epistemology, axiology, rhetorical and methodological assumptions. Ontology refers to the nature of reality that is to be studied; the internal reality of subjective experience (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). In qualitative research, the issue of multiple realities is considered and in this study subtle realism, as defined by Snape and Spencer (2004), is followed. Subtle realism acknowledges that an external reality exists, but it is only knowable through subjective experience. Related to this, an interpretive epistemology is followed. Epistemology refers to the relationship between the researcher and that being researched (Creswell, 2007; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). From an interpretive epistemological assumption the researcher can only approximate what reality means to people in a particular context; thus truth is accessed by exploring subjective experiences thereof (compare Snape & Spencer, 2004).

Axiology refers to the role of values in the study (Creswell, 2007). In a qualitative study, the researcher "admits the value-laden nature of the study and actively report their values and biases" (Creswell, 2007, p. 18). The rhetorical assumption refers to the language of the research, where language is based on definitions that evolve during the study, as opposed to being defined by the researcher (Creswell, 2007). The writing style that I employed is personal and informal and uses qualitative terms and definitions. The language of the research participants was used in attempting to understand their experiences of authenticity.

The methodological conviction refers to the process of the research (Creswell, 2007; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). Qualitative research is characterised as "inductive, emerging and shaped by the researcher's experience in collecting and analyzing the data" (Creswell, 2007, p. 19). The research is characterised by continuously revising methods based on experiences in the field (Creswell, 2007). Changes and the impact of revised methods are reported in this study. Congruent to the underlying ontological and epistemological stance clarified before, research methods designed to access subjective experiences and to analyse qualitative data are employed in this research.

3.4   RESEARCH METHODS

3.4.1 Sampling

Sampling in qualitative research is purposive rather than random (Creswell, 2007; Babbie & Mouton, 2001), because the researcher can select individuals and sites for study as they purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon being researched. In this study, a purposive sample was drawn from a population of Public Sector employees. This method of sampling enables the researcher to select cases that will best answer the research questions and provide in-depth information on the phenomenon under study (Green & Thorogood, 2004; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003). Purposeful sampling is appropriate for use when the researcher needs to select a sample based on her own knowledge of the population, its elements and the nature and purpose of the research aim (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

Sampling in the interpretive paradigm can also be conducted based on the identification of certain important criteria (Flick, in Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The identified criteria assist in the inclusion or exclusion of respondents and in narrowing down the sample to a focused number or potential participants (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). When this approach is used, the researcher is faced with making pragmatic decisions about the sample size. Such decisions include how much time is available for the study and whether or not the researcher has any assistance in collecting data (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

In this study, five employees were targeted to participate in accordance with the recommendation of Babbie and Mouton (2001, p. 287) that an appropriate sample size for a South African master's level qualitative study is "between five and twenty to twenty five". This recommendation, along with the exploratory nature of the study, influenced the number of participants selected for this study. Saturation of the data also influenced the decision to not expand the sample further.

I selected the sample on the basis of having personal knowledge of the population and of the context of the research and being driven by the particular aims of this study. The criteria used to select participants in the population of employees was that they had to be managers who supervised and lead teams and had at least three years of experience in management. This was important, as the aim of the study is to identify managerial experiences of authenticity. I felt that selecting participants with more than three years' experience would add depth to the interviews because the managers would have spent a considerable amount of time supervising and leading employees. This would place them in a better position to respond to the questions related to supervision. The sample was also influenced by the participants' availability and willingness to participate and be interviewed. Those who were not available were omitted from the study.

The sample was therefore homogeneous, in that they all formed part of a particular sub-group (compare Saunders et al., 2003), namely managers who supervise and lead teams. They were, however similar, only in this respect. It is important to note that the small sample size cannot be considered to be representative of the total population (Saunders et al., 2003). A description of the biographical data is presented in the following sections, in order to provide an overview of the participants involved in the research.

3.4.1.1   Age

The participants' ages ranged from 35 to 45 years of age.

3.4.1.2   *Race*

Participants that were willing to participate in the research were selected and race was not a criterion in the sampling strategy. All five participants were black, three were Indian, one was coloured and one was African.

Although my race did not have an impact on the sampling strategy, I think that being Indian had a subtle and indirect impact on who I approached to participate. I found that those who were known to me were largely people of colour, that is, Indian, coloured and African. Furthermore, the employee profile in the organisation from which the sample was drawn is comprised of all race groups. However, the majority of managers are black. This could have influenced why no white participants were approached to participate.

3.4.1.3   Gender

Gender was not used as a criterion in selection of the participants, but, two males and three females participated. Once again, my gender had an indirect impact on the sample. More females are known to me than males, and it was natural that I approached more females to participate than males.

3.4.1.4   Managerial Experience

A criterion for selection of participants was that they had to have at least three years of managerial experience. This would ensure that they supervised and led teams of people and would have had sufficient time to engage with their supervisees. I expected that the time period would provide the participants with opportunities to assimilate managerial experiences, and that these would add value to the research questions posed to them. The duration of managerial experience of the participants in the study varied from eight to fifteen years.

3.5   THE RESEARCHER AS PRIMARY RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

As described in Chapter 1, reflexivity refers to the process of critically reflecting on the self as the primary research instrument (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). It requires that the researcher critically reflects on her role in the entire research process because all the aspects of interpretive research are influenced by the researcher (Finlay, 2002; Ratner, 2002; Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). According to Creswell (2007, p. 46), a good

qualitative study should reflect the "history, culture and personal experiences of the researcher". The focus is on how the individual's experience shapes all aspects of the study and reflecting on these experiences allows the researcher to position herself in the study (Creswell, 2007).

In the present study, the decisions around sampling, data collection, analysis and interpretation of results relied on me, the researcher, as the primary research instrument. I identified my own values, feelings, prejudices and biases towards the concept of authenticity, in order to fully describe and understand the participants' experience. Personal values and feelings that shaped the research study are presented in Chapter 1. I accounted for, and made explicit, any biases that I was aware of whilst conducting the research. These are presented in the discussion of the study's limitations, as well as during sampling.

Terre Blanche and Kelly (1999) explain that, in being reflexive, the researcher undergoes personal change during the research. Furthermore, Alcoff and Potter (see Guba & Lincoln, 2005), state that the researcher must engage not only with the research but with themselves and with the multiple identities that represent the changing self in the research setting. Ortlipp (2008) recommends that keeping a self reflective journal can facilitate reflexivity. The journal will allow the researcher to consciously acknowledge personal values, assumptions, beliefs and any other decisions undertaken during the research process (Ortlipp, 2008).

This research experience enabled such personal change for me, particularly since the research topic was derived from my experiences in the workplace. These reflections are captured in a personal journal that I maintained throughout the research process. I also integrated those personal reflections into various aspects of this research paper, as they related to my experience, as well as how they influenced and shaped the research. Some personal reflections are documented in the summaries found at the end of each chapter.

3.6   DATA GATHERING

3.6.1   The semi-structured interview as the data gathering tool

Data collection in interpretive research is heavily focused on acquiring information that is richly interrelated and meaningful (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). It occurs in its natural setting and interpretive researchers want to make sense of feelings, experiences, social situations or phenomena as they occur in the real world (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). Critical to data collection is to work with the data in context (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999).

Data was collected by conducting interviews; the basic individual interview is one of the most frequently used methods of data gathering in qualitative research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Nunkoosing, 2005). In this study, interviews, more specifically the semi-structured interview was used as the data gathering tool. An interview is defined as a "purposeful discussion between two or more people" (Saunders et al., 2003, p. 245). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) describe the interview as a conversation that produces situated understandings that are grounded in specific interactional episodes. A semi-structured interview is a non-standardised form of interview, where the researcher will have a list of themes and questions to be covered (Saunders et al., 2003). This method of interviewing was seen as the best way to engage and establish rapport with the participants in this study, in an open manner.

Interviews are used when we want to investigate people's experiences of an event. According to Nunkoosing (2005), the interview is the best way to identify the lived experience of a person, as it enables a person to narrate that experience. Semi-structured interviews also allow the researcher to probe the research participant, based on the flow of the interview and responses obtained (Saunders et al., 2003). According to Fontana and Frey (2005), the most common form of interviewing involves the individual, face-to-face verbal exchange. Interviews were conducted on a one-to-one and face-to-face basis,

that is, the interviews were conducted between me and a single participant and by meeting that participant in the workplace (compare Saunders et al., 2003).

Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to set the agenda in terms of the topics covered and to further explore responses, based on the interviewee's comments (Green & Thorogood, 2004; Saunders et al., 2003). They are open-ended and assist in eliciting in-depth data (Green & Thorogood, 2004; Saunders et al., 2003). Although unstructured interviews are more congruent to a phenomenological approach, my natural inclination is to work to a plan and prepare in advance, particularly when working in an unfamiliar area. As a novice researcher the semi-structured interview was chosen as the most appropriate manner in which to gather data in this study, and an interview guide was prepared with a number of open ended questions to introduce the interview, to probe the participant's natural work experiences and to conclude the interview. In as much as I used the guide, interviews were allowed to evolve naturally. The semi-structured interview allowed for consistency, but interviews became more unstructured as my confidence and trust grew in the processs. The development of the interview guide is discussed in the following section.

3.6.2   Developing an interview guide

I compiled an interview guide based on the original research design, as described in Chapter 1, that focused on authenticity and its impact on performance. A pilot interview was conducted with one of the selected participants. Following the introduction and contextualization of the study to the participant the following questions were posed:

What do you understand by the term authenticity?
How do you experience your own authenticity in the workplace?
What is the impact of this authenticity on your performance?
How do you experience authenticity in the team that you manage?
How does your experience in the team impact on performance?

These questions were further explored through various interviewing techniques such as probing questions, confirmatory questions and paraphrasing, thus retaining a flexible and semi-structured nature. The pilot interview revealed a rich set of themes and ideas and these have subsequently shaped the current research aims. Qualitative research is iterative in nature, that is, it is open, flexible and continuous and not fixed in a specific direction (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Durrheim, 1999). As a result, the research design, questions and methodology remain flexible and allow the researcher to make changes as she proceeds through the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Durrheim, 1999; Green & Thorogood, 2004). The iterative nature of the study allowed me to use the pilot interview to make various changes and improvements to the original set of questions. After the pilot interview, various changes and improvements were made to the original set of questions. The first question, on conceptualizing the term authenticity, was expanded to include an explanation, to facilitate ease of understanding. The questions concerning experiences of authenticity at an individual level and team level were combined. The separate questions on the impact on performance were found to be redundant, in that the same information was provided by the research participant. It was found that very general responses on the impact of authenticity were provided and as a result, the specific impact on performance was removed and a question relating to the general impact of authentic experiences was included. The research participant alluded to the factors in the workplace that inhibit authentic behaviour in the workplace and this provided an interesting dimension for further investigation. This item has been included in the specific aims of the research.

The presentation of the literature review in Chapter 2, that defined and described the concept of authenticity, as well as the pilot interview, was used as a basis for the development of the interview guide that was used for the remaining interviews. Confusing questions were discarded and the questions that were asked were simplified. Furthermore, the questions that the researcher intended to ask during the interview were asked.

A final set of broad, open-ended questions decided upon for the interview are listed below and formed the core questions in the interview guide I subsequently used for further interviews:

i) Describe your understanding of the term authenticity, that is, what you think it means and what it means to you?

ii) How do you experience your own authenticity in the workplace, individually and in a team?

iii) Can you describe specific experiences or examples when you were unable to be authentic – what caused this?

iv) Can you describe specific experiences or examples when you were able to be authentic – what enabled this?

v) What is the effect of your experiences of authenticity on yourself and your team?

The interview guide that I developed included the focus of the interview and the type of questions that would be asked. The focus of the interview was to conduct a general introduction, to build rapport with participants, to explore meanings, experiences and the effect of those experiences of authenticity. The types of questions were broken down into an introduction and orientation, question one, question two, question three, question four and a conclusion.

In the introduction and orientation, I noted that participants would be greeted and thanked for participating in the research. I included a reminder to explain the methodology used in the interview, to put the participant at ease, to remind them that they could ask questions and to discuss the confidentiality issue.

Furthermore, in the interview guide, I elaborated on the purpose of each question. The purpose of question one was to attempt to identify how the participant viewed authenticity. The purpose of question two was to move into the experience of authenticity

as an individual and in a team. Question 3 aimed at identifying specific examples/occasions of authentic and inauthentic behaviour and integrity, whilst the purpose of question four was to determine the impact of one's authenticity was on oneself and in the workplace.

The interview conclusion served to summarise the discussion and ensure that nothing was omitted. It also provided the participant with an opportunity to mention anything before the interview was over. A note was included to mention to participants that they could comment further at a later stage, should the need arise. A request was made by the researcher to keep channels open should further contact be required. The interview guide is attached as Annexure 1 of this document.

3.6.3 Credibility and trustworthiness of the interview

Using semi-structured interviews brings to light the question of reliability of the interview, particularly concerning the issue of bias (see Saunders et al., 2003). There are two types of bias to overcome in this research, namely, interviewer bias and interviewee bias. Addressing such bias is an attempt to improve the credibility and trustworthiness of the interview. Interviewer bias refers to instances where the comments, tone and non-verbal behaviour of the interviewer create a bias in the manner in which the interviewee responds to the questions being asked. Interviewer bias can also occur in the interpretation of responses (Saunders et al., 2003). Interviewee bias could occur as a result of perceptions of the interviewer, reluctance to share in-depth information and the time constraints experienced in participating in an in-depth interview (Saunders et al., 2003).

Based on the advice given by Babbie and Mouton (2001) and Saunders et al. (2003), I took the following steps in an attempt to overcome interviewer and interviewee bias. I was fully prepared, knowledgeable and ready for the interview. The preparation involved reading the interview guide and rehearsing how I would ask the questions. I supplied

relevant information to the participants before the interview. The purpose of the study was described in the letter of invitation that I sent out to them. I asked open-ended, probing, questions in a clear, neutral tone of voice and inappropriate behaviours such as comments, non-verbal behaviour and gestures that indicated any bias in thinking were avoided. I attempted to convey a neutral response to the interviewee and demonstrated active listening skills. I attempted to minimize interviewee bias by openly explaining the purpose of the study and adequately and fully answering any questions of clarity that the participants posed to me. This was done to encourage the participant to share in-depth information. I attempted to reduce the impact of time constraints by allowing the participants to choose times that were suitable to them. Conducting a pilot interview was also one of the strategies I employed to reduce potential bias in my later interviews with participants.

3.6.4 Ensuring the credibility of data

Interviews were tape-recorded after obtaining permission from the participants in the study. These were subsequently transcribed. In order to ensure the reliability of the transcriptions, it is recommended that one reads through the transcriptions whilst listening to the recording (Easton, McComish & Greenberg 2000; Green & Thorogood, 2004; Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999; Whittemore et al., 2001). I checked the transcribed interviews against the recordings, thereby attempting to ensure the credibility of the data.

3.6.5 Ensuring ethical standards were adhered to during data gathering

In conducting interviews, there are important ethical considerations to manage (Fontana & Frey, 2005). The traditional ethical concerns include informed consent; receiving consent from the participant after clearly informing her about the research (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Protection from physical and emotional harm was also considered. This includes the right to privacy, where the confidentiality of the participant is maintained, as well as the participant's identity being protected (Fontana & Frey, 2005).

The ethical considerations described above were met in the study by explaining the purpose of the study to the participants by way of a letter and acquiring their consent. These are included as Annexures 2 and 3, respectively. Confidentiality was assured in the letter of invitation, as well as during the interview. In protecting the participants from harm, particularly emotional harm, I indicated to the participant that they were free to choose their responses and were under no obligation to answer questions if they felt uncomfortable. Participants were free to contact me after the interview, if they needed to.

3.6.6 A natural account of how I planned and managed the interviews

3.6.6.1 Preparation of the participants

All participants were formally invited to participate in the study by me. A formal letter that described the background and purpose of the research was sent to each prospective participant. The letter indicated that the interviewing technique would be used to collect data and that the duration of the interview would vary, based on the responses provided, but may not exceed one hour. Participants were requested to suggest a date, time and venue that would most suit them. Confidentiality was assured in the letter and consent was requested for participation, as well as for the recording of the interview. Participants were requested to sign the consent form.

3.6.6.2. Planning the venue and duration of the interview

All participants were interviewed at a time convenient to them and their offices were indicated to be the most suitable venue. Easton et al. (2000) indicate that environmental hazards are a common problem when conducting interviews in qualitative data collection. Common interruptions in the workplace include loudspeakers, telephones ringing and staff interruptions (Easton et al., 2000). In order to minimize environmental hazards,

Easton et al. (2000) recommend that interviews take place in a quiet room that is free from disruption. In planning the venue, I confirmed that the selected rooms were appropriate for conducting the interview. I emphasised that the venue selected needed to be quiet, private and with no interruptions. Although the interviews took place in closed, private offices, some external noise interruptions were experienced and could not be avoided.

The duration of the interviews was between 45 minutes and 1 hour and 15 minutes and depended on the responses from the participants.

3.6.6.3   *Preparing for the interview*

I prepared for the interview by developing an interview schedule that served to guide and assist me. The development of the interview guide is described in Section 3.4.2. I also rehearsed the questions that I would pose, by reading through the guide before each interview.

   Additional preparation for the interview included the checking of equipment. I used a traditional tape recorder to record the interviews. I minimized equipment failure by using the recommendation from Easton et al. (2000), that equipment should be thoroughly checked before the interview. I did this by testing the tape recorder and checking batteries and ensuring that spare batteries were available. I also checked the recording volume and practised using the recorder.

3.6.6.4   *Conducting the interview*

I used the interview guide described in Section 3.4.2 to direct the course of the interview. Each interview varied and the manner in which the questions were asked were determined by the responses of the participant. I kept notes of my experiences after each interview was conducted. As indicated previously, interviews were recorded.

3.6.6.5   Transcribing interviews

Easton et al. (2000), emphasises that there are several errors that can occur during the transcription process. These include inaccurate punctuation, misunderstood or misinterpreted words and mistyped words, all of which have an impact on the meaning of the phrase. In order to overcome these pitfalls, Easton et al. (2000) recommend that the researcher should be the interviewer and the transcriber. Furthermore, the researcher should check the transcription for accuracy (Easton et al., 2000). As previously mentioned, I conducted the interviews and personally transcribed them. I transcribed verbal responses and attempted to capture non-verbal sounds as well. The reliability of the transcriptions was checked by reading through them and checking against the recording.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data analysis involves providing a thorough description of the "characteristics, processes, transactions and contexts" (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999, p. 139) of the issue being studied, the aim of which is to place events into perspective. According to Creswell (2007), data analysis in qualitative research involves reducing the data to themes, through a process of coding, and finally representing the data in a discussion. Marshall and Rossman (2006) describe qualitative data analysis as the search for general statements about relationships and themes. They recommend that the preliminary research questions and related literature review should guide the data analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). In analysing the data, I used the preliminary research questions and the literature review to guide my analysis. Data analysis was conducted along the following steps: that is familiarization and immersion, inducing themes, coding, elaboration, interpretation and checking (see Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). Each step will be further explained.

3.7.1   Familiarisation and immersion

Familiarisation and immersion in the data refers to the process where the researcher reads through the transcribed interviews numerous times, with the aim of achieving a rich understanding of the data and identifying interpretations (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Terre Blanche and Kelly,1999). Such familiarization is critical to the data analysis process and in this study I personally transcribed the interviews, read the interview transcripts against the recorded interview and read the transcripts on their own numerous times. In doing so I became very familiar with the content of the interviews. I also read my personal notes and field notes.

3.7.2 Inducing themes

In this step, through prolonged engagement with the data, the researcher attempts to determine the organising principles or categories that underlie the material (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2006, Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). According to Terre Blanche and Kelly (1999. p. 141), induction means "to infer general rules or classes from specific instances". The researcher attempts to find patterns expressed by the participants, to an optimal level of complexity, with main themes and sub-themes (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). Ratner (2002) suggests that central themes should summarise the psychological meanings, as expressed by the participant and that these should be grounded in the empirical evidence in the form of the subject's statements.

After prolonged familiarization and immersion, I identified various themes and sub-themes, using the language of the research participants and the literature review. I attempted to summarise the psychological meanings and used the participants' statements to support the identified themes. The identified themes, sub-themes and related discussion are presented in the following chapters.

3.7.3 Coding

In coding, the body of data is broken down into labelled, meaningful pieces, clustered into coded material under a code heading (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). This process involves marking sections of the data that are relevant to the identified themes (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). During the process of inducing themes, data was coded. Marshall and Rossman (2006) explain that coding can take several forms, such as abbreviations of key words, coloured dots, or numbers, amongst others. The codes that I used were abbreviations of key words of the identified themes and sub-themes. I then recorded the code next to relevant sections of the data.

3.7.4 Elaboration

Whilst data collection and immersion in interpretative research is often experienced in a linear sequence, induction and coding breaks up this sequence and allows the researcher to bring ideas and concepts together (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). Elaboration refers to exploring themes more closely and at this stage, the identified themes will be explored for sub-issues and sub-themes, in order to capture finer meanings and revise the coding system, where necessary (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). During this step it is useful to search for negative instances of the patterns and challenge the identified themes and sub-themes (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). I further examined the themes in an effort to identify other sub-themes and finer meanings. I also experienced the data analysis in a non-linear fashion, where I found myself re-reading transcripts and refining identified themes and sub-themes.

3.7.5 Interpretation and checking

Interpretation involves making sense of the data, offering explanations and making inferences about it (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). It is a process in which the researcher attempts to form larger meanings of what is occurring with the data

(Marshall & Rossman, 2006). A written account of identified themes and sub-themes is provided using the categories from the thematic analysis (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). This is provided in Chapter 4.

3.8 REQUIREMENTS FOR A SOUND QUALITATIVE STUDY

The soundness of a qualitative study can be assessed by analyzing all the steps followed in the research process. The following discussion highlights characteristics of a good qualitative study (Creswell, 2007; Meyrick, 2006; Whittemore et al., 2001), as well as the efforts I made to enhance the soundness of this research.

According to Meyrick (2006), good quality research ensures that the epistemological and theoretical stance of the researcher is stated clearly in the study. The researcher uses an appropriate recognised approach to qualitative inquiry. The researcher frames the study within the assumptions of the qualitative approach to the research. The assumptions include that qualitative research occurs in its natural setting. The researcher is a key instrument in the data collection, there is a focus on the view of the participants, and the research is interpretive and holistic in nature (Creswell, 2007). Furthermore, the study should reflect the personal experiences of the researcher. The researcher reflects on her experiences and thus positions herself in the qualitative study (Cresswell, 2007; Whittemore et al., 2001).

This study is qualitative in nature and made use of the qualitative tradition of inquiry. The paradigm of phenomenology frames the study within qualitative research. The study is described as being interpretive and holistic in nature. The research design makes it explicit that the research occurs in its natural setting, in this case, the workplace. By using the qualitative paradigm, I acknowledge that I am the primary research instrument, and through reflexivity I documented my personal experiences as they framed and shaped the research. These are discussed under Section 3.2. in this chapter and also noted to some extent in other chapters.

In designing the research, the researcher begins with a single focus, that is, beginning the study with a focused understanding of a single concept (Creswell, 2007). Along with this, the study should include detailed methods to data collection, data analysis and whether or not there were changes in technique or focus (Creswell, 2007; Meyrick, 2001). This study had a single focus, the exploration of the meaning of authenticity and how research participants' experienced this authenticity. This research also had an evolving design, allowing data collection to be amended to suit the aims of the research and the participants' experiences. Changes to the semi-structured interview are discussed in Section 3.4.

Creswell (2007) recommends that in order to ensure sound qualitative research, the researcher utilizes meticulous data collection procedures. This means that the researcher uses multiple forms of data collection, summarises the data adequately and spends sufficient time collecting the required data. Detailed methods of data collection and analysis are provided in this chapter. Although multiple forms of data collection were not used, I attempted to follow a rigorous data collection procedure by conducting semi-structured interviews that were recorded and subsequently transcribed. I ensured that I was adequately prepared for each interview and used an interview guide to assist me.

A further characteristic of sound qualitative research is that the data analysis should occur using multiple levels of abstraction (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The analysis moves from the particular to the general, taking into consideration multiple themes and alternate explanations (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Meyrick, 2006). The method of data analysis selected for this study is congruent with qualitative research. Through processes of familiarization, immersion, coding and inducing themes, the data was reduced to themes and sub-themes. Alternate explanations were also sought.

Creswell (2007) further recommends that the researcher writes up the analysis with persuasion enabling the reader to almost experience being there. The written account of the analysis should be clear, engaging, realistic and should represent the complexities of the study. This enhances the soundness of the study (Cresswell, 2007). I made a

significant effort to present results in a clear, engaging and realistic manner. Data was accurately presented, using the voice of the research participants.

Finally, research must be conducted with due consideration to ethical requirements (Creswell, 2007; Haverkamp, 2005). Ethical requirements were considered and these are discussed in Section 3.4.4. of this chapter.

Alternative methods of validation and assessing the reliability of the study were also presented in Chapter 1. These will be explored to highlight the steps taken to ensure the study's validity and reliability.

In Chapter 1, the concepts of credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability were described as methods to ensure the validity and reliability of the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Lincoln & Guba, in Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Whittemore et al., 2001). The following discussion describes the specific efforts that I made to ensure the study's reliability and validity, using the concepts described.

a) Credibility. In pursuit of credibility the as defined limitations of the methodology used, and, the participants in the sample were identified and described in Section 3.2. The limitations of the methodology of the study are presented in Chapter 6.

b) Transferability. In light of the recommendation by Marshall and Rossman (2006), that the generalisability of a study can be enhanced by referring to the original theoretical framework that guides data collection and analysis, I used the literature review presented in Chapter 2 as a basis for the development of the measuring instrument. The literature review also informed the analysis process. To further enhance the transferability of the study, purposive sampling was used and thick descriptions of the data were provided to allow the reader to make assumptions about transferability.

c) Dependability. In an effort to account for changing conditions in the research design, I maintained field notes and materials to facilitate an audit. Changes to the research design are captured in this chapter.

d) Confirmability. As previously mentioned, an audit trail should be left to enable the researcher to determine if conclusions, interpretations and recommendations can be traced to their sources (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The interview schedule and interview recordings and transcriptions have been maintained to allow for an audit to determine whether or not researcher bias had influenced the analysis. An audit trail is also evident in this dissertation. The section on the development of the interview guide and the steps followed in the data analysis procedures are documented in this chapter.

With specific reference to the replicability of the study, it is important to note, that this study does not claim to be replicable (generalisable), and I avoided controlling the research and attempted to conduct research within a flexible research design, which cannot be replicated by future researchers. As an audit trail is a significant aspect of determining the soundness and transferability of the research, Babbie & Mouton (2001, p. 278) stipulate that in conducting an audit trail six sets of data should be reviewed.

a) Raw data – recordings, written field notes, documents and survey results.
b) Data reduction and analysis products – the write-up of field notes, theoretical notes such as working hypotheses, concepts and hunches.
c) Data reconstruction and synthesis products – themes that were developed and findings and conclusions and a final report.
d) Process notes – these include methodological notes, trustworthiness notes and audit trail notes.
e) Material relating to intentions and dispositions – these include the inquiry proposal, personal notes and expectations.
f) Instrument development information – this includes pilots, forms and preliminary schedules, observation formats and surveys.

In this study, raw data, such as tape recordings of interviews and written field notes, have been maintained. Theoretical notes have also been maintained. Developed themes, conclusions and the final report are presented in the following chapters. Process notes, the inquiry proposal and personal notes have also been maintained and documented. Notes and a journal of design decisions were maintained and are available should other researchers wish to inspect procedures, protocols and decisions. Data is kept in a well-organized, retrievable form. Finally, the pilot interview and the preliminary interview schedule have been maintained. These documents would assist in conducting an audit to determine the reliability and validity, that is, the confirmability and dependability, of the study.

Limitations on improving the study's validity and reliability are included in the discussion on the limitations in Chapter 6.

3.9   CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter I presented a detailed discussion of the research design and methodology used in this study. The psychological paradigm, the methodological convictions and type of research were described. Purposive sampling was used to select five participants for this study. I was the primary instrument in the research and decisions concerning sampling, data collection, analysis and interpretation were made by me. Data gathering was conducted using the semi-structured interview. The process undertaken to analyse data was described. All the steps in the research process were analysed for soundness. In the next chapter I discuss the results of the study.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to discuss the results of the study, in order to enhance the understanding of employees' experiences of authenticity in the workplace. In this chapter I present the results of the data analysis and provide a description of the themes and sub-themes.

4.2   DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Using data analysis as described in Chapter 3, four main themes were extracted. Once the themes were coded, I further identified sub-themes through the process of elaboration. According to Green and Thorogood (2004), one method of presenting data is to describe themes using quotes or raw data from the interviews. In this chapter, I present the themes and sub-themes and substantiate them, using interviewees' statements. These themes and sub-themes are further discussed in this chapter. Four main themes and related sub-themes were identified. The main themes and their related sub-themes are presented in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: List of identified themes and sub-themes

Theme No.	Theme Description	Sub-theme Description
Theme 1	Managers construct authenticity as being true to oneself	
Theme 2	Authenticity is facilitated by internal and external factors	▪ Contextually appropriate behaviour and the manifestation of multiple selves facilitates authenticity ▪ Open, structured work environments facilitate authenticity
Theme 3	Barriers found in others and in the work environment that inhibit one's ability to be authentic	▪ Interpersonal judgement may act as a barrier to authenticity Limitations on self expression is a barrier to authenticity ▪ Leader power and authority is a barrier to authenticity ▪ Organisational culture and irregular work practices act as a barrier to authenticity
Theme 4	Consequences of authentic and inauthentic behaviour	▪ Consequences of authentic behaviour on an intrapersonal and interpersonal level ▪ Consequences of inauthentic behaviour on an intrapersonal and interpersonal level

4.2.1   Theme 1: Managers construct authenticity as being true to oneself

The participants' construction of authenticity ranged from being very comprehensive to general and broad. All the participants in the study indicated that they had not given much thought to the concept of authenticity before being approached to participate in the

study. Initially, they indicated that they were unaware of the theoretical construct and thus it was unfamiliar to them.

One participant acknowledged this in: *"… before I sat here as you spoke to me and as I spoke about respect, trust, openness in the workplace, I had given very little thought to the fact that authentic behaviour would impact on something like that, but now that you have mentioned it, it has got me thinking"*. Another participant also said this would be the first time that she encountered the concept. This is evidenced in: *"…because when you mentioned authenticity to me, it was like, what is this, I think you are about the first person who has spoken to me about the concept of authenticity"*. Similarly, a further participant reported that she did not consider or think about the concept and states:
"I don't know. I haven't considered the concept". Another confirmed her unfamiliarity with the construct in: *"I really haven't given it much thought"*. Yet another participant indicated that she had not given the concept much thought and mentions: *"I've never really considered the term. I know it must exist in some genre where you consider it. It never occurred to me… but I've never applied my mind to it"*.

Although participants demonstrated limited knowledge of the construct, once they were prompted to clarify what it means to them when they initially did not understand, they attempted to respond to the questions posed to them in the interview. Once they began exploring the concept in the interview, the experiential awareness of the construct, as it impacted on their lives, became evident. Subsequently, participants were able to describe authenticity as being real and being true to oneself. Other explanations included being original and being valid and correct.

One participant provided a comprehensive description of her understanding of the term authenticity. She explained that authenticity is a true representation of who the person is, their personality and how they feel. She stated that it is:*"…something that is the actual thing, … it is a real representation of that type of feeling, a true representation of that person's personality and what that person actually feels"*. Similarly another participant

also described authenticity as being real, she indicated that it is *"just being real, who you really are"*.

Two of the participants described authenticity as originality. One participant was doubtful of her understanding of the term, but stated that: *"I would consider it as originality but I may be wrong"*. Whilst the second participant reported that *"…something is authentic when it is original and I suppose I would then name it, just basically understand it on those terms"*. The term original is commonly associated with something new and different, novel and fresh. It is often referred to something that is different from anything else, and not a copy or replica of something. According to the Chambers Dictionary (2008), original means *inter alia*, new, interesting and different from anything else and not copied from something else; whilst originality is described as the ability to think and act independently or unconventionally. In describing authenticity as originality, participants could be referring to their behaviour being original to themselves, that is, it not copied or conventional. They could also be referring to their ability to think and act independently and thus be authentic.

Another participant describes authenticity as being valid and correct. One's behaviour should be suitable and applicable to the context that it was being used in. Furthermore, for behaviour and actions to be termed authentic, she explained that it should be accurate, or absolutely correct, implying that there can be no element of error, inaccuracy or mistake.   For behaviour to be correct, it must be contextually based. She expressed this in: *"It would be something that, well, is correct, but also valid, valid in terms of the context you were using it in, for authentic it must be absolutely correct, but I think that I would extend it to look at the circumstances that you were in for it to be truly authentic"*. Valid behaviour relates to basing actions on truth and fact and, for something to be valid it must be well grounded, just, appropriate and have a foundation based on truth or fact (Chambers, 2008). Valid also relates to expressing yourself truly and honestly.   The term correct is also described as *inter alia*, free from error, true and accurate (Oxford English Dictionary for Students, 2006). Describing authenticity as valid and correct relates to the participants' perception that behaviour, actions and feelings should be appropriate and

based on truth or fact and that one should do what is right and correct. This participant emphasised that for behaviour to be authentic it must be contextually appropriate. Due consideration must be given to the circumstances that one is faced with, as these circumstances will influence the degree to which one's behaviour can be experienced as valid and correct. Contextually appropriate behaviour also suggests one must adapt and adjust one's behaviour without losing a sense of who you are.

She further explained that in her actions and relationships with people, there should be congruence between what she says and how she behaves. She also stated that she experiences difficulty with achieving congruency and this creates dissonance for her and causes interpersonal problems. She states:

> *what I am producing and also my behaviour should all be saying the same thing, like if I am telling you something and you can see I do something else, that's definitely not being authentic in my actions and with my relationships with people, so it should be, the whole package should be saying the same thing, um, which I have a problem with...I try to achieve it but its not always easy, it is something that can torture me sometimes,...and sometimes dealing with it can cause other problems.*

In constructing the term, another participant described authenticity as being true to oneself and linked it to other constructs such as morality, values and respect. She stressed that the concept should not be viewed in isolation of other concepts, as the development of authenticity rests with lessons from her childhood development, life experiences, religion and morality. This is evidenced in the following statement:

> *I think authenticity is an expression of oneself, I think authenticity has a lot to do with morality,... values,... respect. I am trying to say that authenticity is not a concept that is there on its own, it is developed and built by life experience and what one is really taught, so what I am really saying is that my authenticity has a basis on several things, my authenticity has its basis in my life experiences, it has*

its basis in my upbringing, it has its basis in my morals and my morality, and I think largely my authenticity has its basis in religion and spirituality.

She explained that a person may not be completely authentic, but try to be as authentic as possible*: "and sometimes one may not be fully authentic, but try to be as authentic as possible"*. This relates to the idea that behaviour must be contextually appropriate. This adjustment does not mean dishonesty or incongruence with who you are and what you feel.

From the participants' statements it is clear that authenticity means being true to oneself. Important elements that emerge in understanding what 'being true to oneself' entails are constructs like 'originality', being 'valid' and 'correct' and congruence between different aspects of the self. Originality explains being true to oneself by being original and unconventional, as well as being able to think and act independently. Being valid relates to being true to oneself in that one's behaviour, actions and feelings are appropriately based on truth and fact. Authenticity is also related to being correct, in that such 'correctness' explains doing the right thing and one's ability to adjust oneself to display contextually appropriate behaviour without losing or giving up your true self. The deduction that authenticity relates to contextually appropriate behaviour links to, and implies, that behaviour must be understood within the context and circumstances within which it occurs and that with the understanding that authenticity is a relative concept.

4.2.2   Theme 2: Authenticity is facilitated by internal and external factors

Participants in the study described various factors that allowed them to truly be themselves. Contextually appropriate behaviour and the ability to adopt multiple roles and open, structured work environments emerged as facilitators of authenticity, the former being an internally driven facilitator and the latter being an external facilitator. These are discussed below.

4.2.2.1   *Contextually appropriate behaviour and the manifestation of multiple*
                selves facilitates authenticity

When participants in the study were asked to describe a time when they could truly be themselves, they reported a need to play differing roles in various circumstances. The adoption of such roles came across as fairly commonplace, natural and necessary for appropriate behaviour.

One participant stated that one cannot be fully authentic all the time and indicated that the work environment may prevent one from expressing oneself authentically. However, she indicated that she is able to express herself very authentically outside the work environment, suggesting that the self outside the work environment may differ from the self that is portrayed in the work environment. This is evidenced in: "*Sometimes one may not be fully authentic, but try to be as authentic as possible. If I had to express myself on something outside the work environment, I think I can express myself very authentically*".

Another participant said it is important to understand one's role and adapt to changing circumstances. She explained that a lack of role clarity and understanding makes it difficult to adapt. Although maintaining the true self, she highlights that she has to play multiple roles by adapting to the changed circumstance. She states that: "*…you've got to understand what your role is so for somebody who has not actually understood that then it becomes difficult to adapt to this and hence for you while you want to remain who you are but first you need to adapt to the changed circumstance and then be in a position to do what is expected*".

She goes on to describe that she experienced some degree of conflict or difficulty with being her real self within her current circumstances and finds that, in order to cope, she has to adapt to changing circumstances without compromising herself. She states:

> *I think in the current context it's difficult to be the real you because there are*
> *other factors that one has to consider but by and large I always feel that I'm the*

real me, sometimes it is that real me that puts me into trouble because it's difficult to be somebody else but what I try and do to try and understand the situation and adapt to it however I don't want to compromise much but it's also like in the workplace balancing compliance with progress, that somebody will say that you are a stickler for this and hence you are a bad bureaucrat whereas you've also got to comply but at the most of times I am me.

Another participant referred to the different roles that are expected of her in the workplace and at home. She acknowledged that there are different sides of her and that aspects of her personality are hidden from her family. She says: *"I think it's really now that I am truly myself and I feel that I am more truly myself in the workplace than I am in more personal circumstances, lets say with my parents-in-law or my family. It's here that there is a certain side of me that they don't see, you know the part that can make decisions, that part of me"*. She described how she shaped her different selves to fit into the role expectations of her family. She explained that aspects of who she truly is, are masked with her family, but revealed in the workplace. This is evidenced in:

I think the family always, they perceive me as someone who's quiet and accommodating, somehow I sense with my family even the family I married into, their expectations of me were never very high. Maybe with my family it was higher and there's almost a kind of disbelief that you could achieve this or be that whatever and yet I feel I am that person but I don't show it. I prefer to be, to keep humble, to keep quiet and to restrain myself I suppose it's because, I don't know I just portray that personality at home. In fact they'll often perceive me as someone that will not say anything much. I won't argue a point or whatever, I let it go. But yet in the work environment it's like I feel free to like tell maybe the staff, you know what I think you are wrong and they come to respect that. So it's some aspects of me that is, they don't see the full me there well I suppose maybe they don't see parts of me that I show on the outside as well.

When I asked her how she feels about her multiple roles, she responded by saying that she was comfortable with who she was: *" I am fine actually, the way I am"*.

Another participant described adopting differing roles in the workplace and with her family. She states: *"I think, I am myself all the time, but the kind of person that I am at work in like this professional work environment is different from when I am with my family and friends"*. She stressed the "now" aspect of being herself. In her current context she reported feeling more who she truly is, but alluded to playing different roles as the context required. This is described by: *"I think now, I am more myself, but sometimes, especially if there is conflict and people problems then you have to, well you don't have to be different or like someone else, but you have to play a different role, be more firm, stricter"*. She indicated that she is comfortable with the multiple roles that she plays because, to her, this is appropriate behaviour. She states:

> *I am quite comfortable with who I am because I think that it is appropriate. You can't manage your family and friends so you have to be different and treat them differently, plus, you know, your family, you love them, you don't necessarily love the people you work with in the same way and I think your love for your family causes you to be different and accept them. Don't get me wrong, I do care about the people at work, but not to the same level. At the end of the day, work is work, you have to be a certain way, especially if you are a woman, a bit more assertive and confident, I'm okay with that.*

Similarly, another participant indicated that her true self is revealed at home rather than at the workplace. She stated that pressure at the workplace requires a different response. Being compromised in the workplace prevents her from being herself. She states:

> *Well I can definitely truly be myself when I am at home, I think its because there is no, pressure, they say you can't choose your family, they say you just have to love me for who I am, and, I think at home I am most comfortable, with the children and my husband. I like family and family get togethers and things like*

that I like that sort of thing. At work, I am quite comfortable at the moment, but there are certain areas where I feel sometimes I feel like, like I am being compromised and I am not being true to myself.

She also mentioned that publicly, irrespective of the conflict that she might encounter with her seniors, she would display loyalty and not reveal how she truly feels, thus masking her true self. This is evidenced in: *"…that would be my conflict with my manager, but in public it would still stay loyal to whoever the head is in the organisation…".*

Behaviour that was appropriate to the context and the adoption of multiple roles are internally experienced by the participants in the study. Being able to identify appropriate behaviour and adopt multiple roles facilitated authentic behaviour for them. This implies that individuals are multidimensional, complex beings who adjust and adapt their behaviour as required. Being true to oneself lies in understanding who you are within the multiplicity of roles that are adopted.

4.2.2.2 *Open, structured work environments facilitate authenticity*

During the interviews, participants were asked about environmental factors that influenced their behaviour. Participants reported that feeling at ease in an open, but structured environment, where they were given space to behave, allowed for more authentic behaviour. Participants reported that the organisational culture, strong leadership and organisational rules and policy could facilitate authentic behaviour.

One participant indicated that organisational needs, policies and procedures impact on her authentic behaviour: *"We are impacted on by policies and procedures and by the needs of the organisation.* In describing the general environmental impact, another participant reported that feeling at ease allowed her to perform better and be more committed. She states:

if you are yourself you feel at ease doing the best as you can possibly do and you find that the environment allows you to work much better, to commit yourself much better, to give that, to go that extra mile, to actually trying to produce the best. Whereas if you are not yourself you are doing things for the sake of doing things and whether the quality is right or not it's not you, it does not come from within so that is where I find that it would be that different.

Another participant indicated that she requires space to be herself, but realised that circumstances might result in changes to her current environment. This is evidenced in:

but I think with working under circumstances there where people give you more space and allow you to do the things that you need to do you actually start to do things that you want to do, be yourself and I feel it's now, I don't know whether that's going to change with other dynamics whatever but I feel it's the way I am now which maybe been like that for maybe the last two years or so.

A further participant stated that she felt that the work culture had an impact on whether she could be authentic or not. She suggested that an open, free, work environment allowed her to be more authentic. *She said: "definitely the whole work culture can either allow you be yourself or not. Say if you have a very open, free, work environment … you can be more yourself".*

Another participant concurs with the idea that the organisational culture impacts on one's authenticity. She believes that the culture is influenced by senior management in an organisation and appropriately demonstrated behaviour will serve as a guide for staff on lower levels. Organisational rules and policy are important guidelines for behaviour and the absence thereof impacts negatively on one's ability to behave authentically. This is evidenced in:

one of the things that I am currently grappling with is the organisational culture and how that affects authenticity, because culture is something that should start

from the top, the way the managers behave is automatically you'll find that staff will know that that is just not on that that is acceptable, but in the current organisation that I am in there's just no rules, you can do what you like, say what you like, when you are being told anything of value you can decide if you will use it or not, even if it's a policy, so you will always be following up, following up, because people will just choose when they will do something. It's a culture from the top to the bottom.

The work environment is an important facilitator of authentic behaviour. Culture, systems and processes can serve to both facilitate and inhibit authenticity. From the results presented above, an open, fluid, but structured, work environment that is supported by clear policies and procedures facilitates authentic behaviour.

4.2.3   Theme 3: Barriers found in others and in the work environment that inhibit one's ability to be authentic

Participants in the study described factors that prevented them from being authentic. Barriers to authenticity were found largely to be externally placed, suggesting that participants did not consciously impose self-inhibitors to their authenticity. Being judged and labelled by others and having limitations placed on their self-expression were identified as barriers found in others. Factors within the work environment also served as a barrier to authentic behaviour. These include leader power and authority, organisational culture and irregular work practices. These are explained further in the sub-themes below.

4.2.3.1 Interpersonal judgement may act as a barrier to authenticity

All the participants in the study expressed concern about how the relationships they engage in impact on them and their ability to be authentic. The opinions, judgments and perceptions of those they interacted with were found to influence participants' behaviour. Participants reported that they were unable to control these opinions and judgements and

that the responsibility to hold accurate viewpoints rested with those who held those opinions and made those judgements.

One participant felt that if one encounters an individual who does not believe one's authentic expressions then eliciting support from them would be problematic and this would have a negative impact on her performance. She explained: *" I have to say that no matter how much one tries to express themselves authentically one would come across individuals even with that authentic expression may not necessarily believe that you are authentic and my clear experience has been that you may not get the same support from them and that tends to impact on your performance as well"*. She further explained that she felt that the perceptions and views of others cannot be controlled and that people form their judgements of you based on their background and perceptions of a particular situation: *"We cannot control the perceptions of other people and people's views and perceptions of how you express yourself are dependent on their own mindset and their own background, how they perceive a particular situation"*.

Another participant felt that people are often dishonest and that people lie. She states: *"Unfortunately, people don't see it that way and my personal viewpoint is that also, people lie"*. When I probed further about her opinion of people lying and the impact thereof, she explained that she felt that people are dishonest about the type of services that they receive and this impacts negatively on employees, because they feel unappreciated: *"People would not tell the truth about services that have been delivered to them, because people would complain about things, you go there you'd find that they've got things...that also impacts negatively on employees because they feel that they are not appreciated"*.

For another participant, people's views and judgements resulted in labelling and she experienced being stuck with a particular perception. She stated: *"I found that, that practice persisted in this department because certain people had perceptions of you and they labelled you and this is what you were and this is how you were and because you were uncertain of yourself and how you should be you just accepted that"*. She further

explained that her experience of being labelled and her self concept had changed because her current environment allowed her to be herself. This is evident in: *"but I think with working under circumstances there where people give you more space and allow you to do the things that you need to do you actually start to do things that you want to do, be yourself and I feel it's now"*. She supported this further by saying: *"I used to be very conscious of what people think of me and everything and now I feel I don't have to go out and prove anything to anybody, so I'm fine actually the way I am"*.

Another participant reported that she was uncertain about how she should behave around people who are unknown or whose feelings were hidden. She said: *"sometimes, if you don't know people or how they feel about you, then you don't quite know how to be with them"*. She cited a specific example of a conflict she experienced with a co-worker that illustrated her inability to behave appropriately. She suggested that her inability to act appropriately is linked to the level of honesty and trust that existed between them: *"so every time I am with her I don't know how to act, how much to share because I don't know how honest she is being with me, so I don't really want to share anything with her, I guess you could say that I don't trust her because I don't know how she feels about me"*.

When asked about how her authentic behaviour impacted on others, one participant revealed that she was unsure how people viewed her, but that she hoped they trusted her. She said that she was unable to control others' views, but was able to accept this. She stated: *"I hope that they feel that they can trust me to lead them, but you know it just depends on them, what they think about me. I can't really control what they think"*. She explained that people's perceptions of how they are treated, irrespective of your efforts, can create tension in the relationship: *"You know, you try to treat people fairly, but if they see it differently, then it makes it difficult to interact with them.* For her, this would result in a breakdown of the relationship. She stated: *"I guess what happens then is that the whole relationship breaks down"*.

One participant talked about how the viewpoints held by others could lead to potentially harmful judgements, resulting in labelling and being forced to interact with a person on

the basis of that judgement. The judgement and perceptions then serve as the basis for the interaction. She expressed this in: *"I think that people in the workplace are too quick to judge you, so they make a decision about who you are without really considering the context that you have to act in, and then that's that, you know, that's who you are, and you have to constantly deal with that person based on how they judge you"*.

When I probed her regarding this, she expressed that she was unconcerned about people's judgements because they cannot be changed. She explained that it is problematic for her when people share their opinion of you, or start rumours, as this can have an impact on relationships within a diverse group. She further expressed frustration with people not formulating their own views, engaging in group-think and being influenced by others. She stated:

> *Nowadays, I don't care what people think, because you really can't do anything about it, the problem comes in when they spread their opinion of you amongst a particular circle and then if affects so many relationships. I don't think that people in the workplace make up their own minds, I think that they are easily influenced by others, so they judge you not on the interaction with you, but on what they have heard, that makes it so hard to work with people in this diverse work environment.*

Participants revealed that interpersonal judgements and opinions that are not based on clear evidence of behaviour have a negative impact on their ability to be authentic. Such interpersonal judgements create barriers to effective interpersonal relations.

4.2.3.2   Limitations on self- expression is a barrier to authenticity

Self-expression emerged as an important element in this research on authenticity. Being able to voice opinions was highlighted throughout the interviews as an important facilitator of authenticity. Self-expression can be viewed as a concrete expression of one's authenticity.   The ability to freely express oneself directly reflects one's

authenticity, either spoken or acted out. Self-expression in this context refers to one's ability to voice one's opinion, being heard and being able to exercise one's level of autonomy. When limitations are placed on self-expression, the true expression of the real self or personality is hindered and this is seen to directly impact on one's ability to be authentic.

In this study, participants indicated that there are circumstances in which they are unable to voice their opinions. They are forced to limit their self-expression and censor their thoughts and opinions and this caused stress and frustration for them. The limitation of self-expression is a result of external factors and participants reported that they have simply accepted that this occurs.

One participant revealed her frustration with not being able to voice her opinion. She is further frustrated in that she felt she is not heard and unable to take necessary action to change the situation. She explained that such behaviours may be incorrectly viewed as conformism, thus leading to incorrect judgements. She said: *This has been my great frustration of working … there are those times where you just can't say or do anything to change the situation. By giving in, people also think that you are conforming and not fighting for the section, but really it can be very difficult".*

Some participants reported that they experienced not being heard. Although one participant reported that she was able to express her opinion, she indicated that she felt disappointed that the consequences of her expressed opinion did not meet her expectations and as such she experienced not being heard: "*but over the years I have just appreciated that I rather just say it, not being vindictive, but say it and sometimes the consequences are not what you expect".* Another participant reported having learnt of instances when the system cannot be changed. She indicated that simply being told to do things made her uncomfortable and she viewed this as unethical. She reported that she was able to express her opinion, but that she was concerned that what she communicated and expressed was not heard. In addition, she indicated that she was anxious about beginning to accept what she referred to as unethical practices because of the regularity

of the occurrence. She felt that her autonomy was compromised by having to accept the existing conditions:

but I have learnt that there are certain areas where I can't fight the system. And I can't badger myself because I don't think ethically its correct, because there are certain areas where you get told to do things, it makes you uncomfortable, but you reach the point where you can't fight that system, the way that they feel it should be, all you can do is express how you feel and give guidance ... knowing that they are not really going to listen anyway, because, you ease your conscious by saying that I have explained the way it should be and why it should be, but that is one area that does, which I am actually afraid to say, in all honesty, scares me that I am starting to accept it, because I think ultimately that's how people actually lose focus and start doing things that they don't realize they are doing the wrong thing... it happens so regularly, where I get called in and told, you start thinking its okay".

Another participant questioned her level of autonomy and reported that accepting the present state of affairs requires personal strength to cope, stating that *"I don't know whether you try to be strong or you try and say that if the situation does not allow anything, there is nothing that you can do".*

For one participant, being allowed to voice her opinion without fear of judgement and/or concern with the opinion of others allows her to be authentic. She said: *I think if you are allowed to voice your opinion without being judged all the time or having to worry about what others think then you can be more yourself".*

From the results that are presented above, limitations on self-expression is a source of frustration and anxiety. When individuals are unable to speak their minds, or when they are unable to communicate openly, they are unable to be true to themselves. As a result of being unable to express thoughts and opinions, one is faced with negative judgements and the perception of conformism. In addition to being unable to freely express opinions,

participants reported that they are not heard. In instances where they can express themselves, the desired results of the communication are not achieved. This could imply a feeling for participants in this study, that their opinions are not valued, because the recipient does not hear the entire message. Being free to express opinions in an environment where there are no fears of judgement or of other opinions allows one to be more authentic. The environment thus facilitates freedom of expression which, in turn, impacts on authenticity. This relates to the sub-theme where open, structured work environments were identified as a facilitator of authenticity.

4.2.3.3 Leader power and authority is a barrier to authenticity

For participants in the study, the leadership style adopted by their leaders influenced their ability to be authentic. When the leadership style is one in which the leader exerts her authority and power over those she leads, she limits their ability to freely express themselves. As a result, participants experienced difficulties with being authentic. Participants hold the view that those in senior positions should fulfil a particular role and behave in an expected manner. Those in a leadership position sometimes use their authority to elicit certain behaviour or favours from the individuals that they supervise. This essentially tests an employee's morality. Evidence of this is presented below.

One participant explained that those in leadership positions have authority to overturn decisions. For her, irrespective of the impact of those decisions, she found herself having to simply accept the *status quo*, despite how she felt or her expertise and knowledge in the area. She states: *"Sometimes senior people intervene in your decision- making, overturn your decisions, so you have to go with that because they have the authority to do so, and no matter whether you know best, because it affects your work, you must just accept that"*.

One participant described her personal experience with her previous supervisor as one that prevented her from being herself. The power and authority that the supervisor exerted over her, impacted on her personality and her ability to be herself. She felt

restrained and was unable to confront her manager. Importantly, now that she is not supervised by this particular manager, there is no power relationship and she is able to display confidence and be herself. This is shown in the following statement:

> *moments when I worked under my previous supervisor, I felt that I was very timid, strained and totally not standing up to this person and in that way I couldn't be myself at all and that was for a long long time. I mean there were certain instances where I would and it's curious that when I interact with this person now it's like so different because that person doesn't have that power and is interacting with you on a different level and you are more confident of yourself and can be who you always were.*

She explained that, while being supervised by this particular manager, she was subjected to threats and these negatively affected her, as it spoke directly to her job security, which she views as very important. She stated: *"I was worse off because I worked under him and it was always these threats, a lot of it is baseless threats. Threats that I will put a warning letter in your file and those things were like, I mean I took the job very seriously, the position was serious to me, it meant my security and those kind of things affected me"*.

Another participant believed leaders should be more professional and apply organisational rules correctly. This would result in them serving as role models for staff in the organisation, thus creating an environment where people are able to behave appropriately. Role confusion is prevalent and a heavy political influence makes it difficult to be yourself. This is evidenced in the following:

> *if managers and senior managers were more professional, serious about organisational rules and didn't just break the rules themselves, then again, people would know how to behave. Nowadays, people are so confused about their roles, you have managers defending staff when they should be focused on the organisational objective, you have all sorts of crazy things happening. Also, if you*

have very political senior managers, then everything is driven by this politics, and the people who work there are supposed to be apolitical, so that you can serve all the people of the country, but now, if your managers are heavily aligned then there is really not much you can do, and then you can't really be yourself.

A further participant stated, in reference to senior management, that she needed to caution herself against being forced into a position where things that she believes to be wrong become acceptable to her: *" there are lots of things that I can see are wrong, but the fact that I am not even giving you an example where I am not really myself, makes me start thinking that I'm more and more going into this thing that a lot of the things are acceptable, which I have got to start guarding against because when you get badgered enough you start thinking that it is acceptable"*. She referred to recruitment practices as an example of where the influence of her seniors resulted in her compromising someone else. She expressed ambivalence in that she is aware that the practice is wrong, but had to accept the instruction from her senior and she suggested that she experienced difficulty in voicing her true opinion. She reported that: *"its sort of, there is an expectation, I am giving it to you, this is your supervisor giving it to you... you take it and then you go and you end up compromising somebody else that's going to chair that committee, and tell them that this is what you received. So you, you know it's wrong, perhaps I should have just said no"*.

When probed further about how she felt about this, she reported that she felt manipulated through a silent exchange of favours because she did not object at the time, once again alluding to not being open about her true feelings: *"and I actually allowed myself to be manipulated ... I thought about it afterwards that maybe that was a silent exchange of favours without it actually being said"*.

When the leadership style adopted by leaders is one that is characterised by authority and power, the ability to be authentic is hindered. Further to this, threats to job security have a negative impact on one's emotional state and levels of self-confidence. Leaders have a responsibility to serve as role models and not use their position to manipulate, garner

favours and force their employees into submission. Importantly, some participants reported that they felt constrained by the leadership power, to the extent that they were unable to take any active steps to change the situation they were in.

4.2.3.4 Organisational culture and irregular work practices act as a barrier to authenticity

The work environment was identified as a barrier to authenticity. This was particularly so in environments in which there are high levels of anxiety and tension. Work environments that were characterized as being political were identified as preventing authentic behaviour. Participants described an inability to do anything about the political pressure and, as a result, they experienced work stresses. In the face of political pressure, participants are unable to be authentic. Organisational systems, particularly recruitment practices that were not correctly implemented, further prevented authentic behaviour.

One participant described her work environment as one in which there are high levels of anxiety and tension. She reported that it is difficult for her to be authentic as she felt insecure in her position as a result of her perception of inequity and the application of rules. She stated: *"people are unhappy, nervous, there is tension, at least I think so it is difficult because you don't know where you stand. You work hard, but sometimes you have to concede to race or other legislation"*.

One participant suggested that she enjoyed working in a structured work environment because it facilitates being authentic, and mentioned: *"I actually like structure and it upsets me when people think that they can do anything because its just okay"*. However, she explains that her current environment is not conducive to authentic behaviour. This is evidenced in: *"the environment is not always conducive for a person, for authenticity in the workplace"*.

One participant specifically described her work environment as being characterised by politics: *"the work environment, like I've said, has been characterized to a certain degree*

by politics". Another participant explained that her work environment was characterised by political pressure. She stated: *"in the current environment, there is political pressure"*. Another emphasised the stress associated with the political environment and that she is still faced with instability and insecurity due to changes in the workplace: *"I think for a long time it was very stressful being in this political environment and all of the pressures that go with it... you still face that instability and insecurity in the environment ... and that the office changes all of the time and you don't know how it can impact on you..."*.

Political agendas drive actions in a particular direction and, for another participant, there are times when she is required to simply follow that agenda, even though she does not want to. She stated: *"because of the political drive or the political agenda when you just have to go with the flow, even though you don't want to"*.

When participants were asked about specific examples of when they were unable to be authentic, some highlighted that organisational recruitment practices had an impact on their ability to be authentic. Recruitment was the most mentioned area of human resource management that tested the participants' ability to be true and act authentically.

As a result of the degree of politics in the work environment, appointments are sometimes unfair and this impacts on the upward mobility of people in the organisation. One participant stated: *"The work environment, like I've said, has been characterized to a certain degree by politics which has meant that there've been dubious appointments which also affects us, for example, and also impacts on the mobility potential I think for people down there, those are the things"*. She questions the appointment of people without the relevant procedures being followed. This flaunting of procedures results in feelings of betrayal and creates difficulty in acting consistently and defending procedures. She says:

> *I think it's things that you are asked to do that you feel that these are actually not right, I would not approve of this. Like most of that comes in terms of the people that you find working here and when you follow it up you find that person has*

been appointed and you ask yourself how could that have happened?... and then you find out...even the appointment itself because you would have had the post advertised and the process of selection undertaken...so that makes you feel betrayed somehow, because you also deal with the issues of being consistent. I know that there are always exceptions but you've got to be thorough so that you can also defend.

Being forced to recruit someone is a source of frustration for another participant. She reported that the most difficult experience in the recruitment process is when the perception of racism is created as a result of not appointing someone. This angered her, as she felt that it led to incorrect judgements. This is highlighted in her statement:

Sometimes you have to take a staff member on transfer because there are problems in another section and you have a vacancy and you just can't say no, you've just to do it, otherwise it looks as though you are not co-operative. I think that the worst times are when it looks like you are being racist, because you may not want to recruit someone from a particular race group or you don't give someone a performance bonus and they say that you are doing this because they are black, I mean African, that really makes me angry, because it is an easy way for people to judge you, even though you know that this is not how it really is.

According to another participant, the increased incidence of unprofessional conduct in the area of recruitment creates anxiety for her, because she finds herself in a position in which she is starting to accept something that she knows is morally wrong. This is expressed in the following:

but basically it's in terms of recruitment, where the manager will tell me, I've got my candidate and then you know that this is wrong, but then you start, what worries me is you start thinking that it is acceptable... which in some cases has actually happened, even with myself. You start thinking that it is okay, the manager can say that and you must arrange it so that the manager can get his

way. When you know that it is not the way its supposed to be, that's what you actually have to guard against, because when these things start to happen all the time, they start becoming an acceptable practice and even sometimes you start thinking that its okay, the manager said it, without thinking, hey, morally now that's not the way it should be.

In the previous theme, open-structured work environments were reported to facilitate authentic behaviour. In work cultures characterised by high levels of anxiety and tension, political pressure and irregular systems, participants reported an inability to remain true to themselves.

4.2.4   Theme 4: Consequences of authentic and inauthentic behaviour

When asked about the impact of being authentic, participants revealed that at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal level, the impact was positive. Conversely, the impact of inauthentic behaviour had negative outcomes at both levels. The intrapersonal and interpersonal consequences of authentic and inauthentic behaviour are discussed in the following sections.

4.2.4.1 Consequences of authentic behaviour on an intrapersonal level

Participants reported that their personal experiences of authenticity resulted in higher levels of confidence and a stronger sense of work commitment within themselves. To this end, extracts from the raw data presented in Table 4.2. suggest increased self-confidence, personal effort and work commitment. Increased levels of self-confidence reduced the need for validation from others.

Table 4.2: Intrapersonal consequences of authenticity

Participant 1:	*"I think by acting authentically at my level, I have confidence that I am doing the right thing"*

Participant 2:	*" you feel at ease doing the best you can possibly do,..., commit yourself much better, ..., to go that extra mile"*
Participant 3:	*" I feel I have this confidence in me, and I don't have to prove to other people what I am or what I can be"*

4.2.4.2   Consequences of authentic behavior at an interpersonal level

The participants in this study reported that they enjoyed positive outcomes at an interpersonal level as a result of their authentic behaviour. Such authentic behaviour facilitated relationships and led to positive emotional experiences.

One participant provided an in-depth description of the interpersonal impact of acting authentically. She described her authentic behaviour as creating an opportunity for people to understand her, stating:*" I have tried to express myself as authentically as I can within the work environment…by expressing myself authentically, people have an opportunity to understand and experience me as I am and as nothing else"*. She continued to explain that if people are able to understand who she truly is, then respect, trust and support are fostered. She explained: *"What authenticity then does in the workplace is that if people understand that you are expressing yourself authentically, it engenders respect, it engenders support… it tends to draw people to you on the basis that they trust you and they trust your judgement"*. As a result, by expressing herself authentically, she believes that the people she works with could work harder or be more committed. She stated: "*I think that people would want to go the extra mile when they work with you because they know that you are expressing yourself authentically, or being authentic"*.

Similarly, another participant believes that being herself allows others to work better, as they may see her as being trustworthy: *"I try to be myself and be professional in the workplace and I hope that me being myself allows them to work better. I hope that they feel that they can trust me to lead them… that creates an environment in which they can work and I think co-operate with you"*.

Two participants in the study referred to the concept of consistency. Consistent behaviour was found to support authenticity and subsequently have a positive impact at the interpersonal level. They indicated that behaving consistently supported their authenticity and contributed to positive interpersonal relations. One participant suggested that it was important that the people she works with have consistent expectations of her and that how she responds to problems must also be consistent. She states: "*and I think very importantly is that they understand that behaviour today and responses today to a similar problem will be quite similar if the same problem is raised on another day*".

She explained that consistent behaviour on her part allowed others to feel comfortable enough to be authentic. Consistent behaviour creates an awareness that fosters interpersonal relations. This is evidenced in: "*what consistent behaviour does, my personal assessment is that it creates comfort, and by creating comfort, people themselves feel free to be authentic with you and what people also understand is that they understand the parameters within which you would act, in the way you would express yourself*".

Another participant reveals that, in acting authentically, people are provided with an opportunity to understand who you are and how you will behave. This implies that authentic behaviour creates a basis of consistent behaviour that facilitates understanding and expectations. She suggested that once people know who you are they should have consistent expectations of how you should behave. She views this as being positive. She explained: "*I think that when you are yourself and people really get to know you, that this is who you are, then things are much better, they learn what your expectations are and how you will react*".

Numerous positive outcomes are reported to result from behaving authentically. Authentic behaviour is seen to facilitate relationships, because individuals that you interact with understand you better. This, in turn, leads to respect, trust and support, as well as commitment. Trust emerges as an important contributor to fostering commitment

to work objectives and it is seen as a necessity to motivate others to work and co-operate with you. Behaving consistently supported authenticity and had a positive impact on the interpersonal level.

Participants in the study described the impact inauthentic behaviour had on themselves and on their relationships with others. These are presented and discussed below.

4.2.4.3 Consequences of inauthentic behaviour on an intrapersonal level

Participants revealed severe intrapersonal consequences of inauthentic behaviour. The consequences negatively impacted on their ability to lead and participants described emotional responses such as frustration, increased levels of pressure and a loss of focus.

When asked about the consequences of inauthentic behaviour, one participant stated that it resulted in a failure to lead people at a management level: *"at a management level, the impact of that is that one can't lead"*. Another participant reported that she was frustrated to the extent that she would have left her job; however, her need for security exceeded her need to relinquish her job. She reported experiencing a lack of self-confidence and self-esteem. Her ability to perform effectively as a manager was also affected. This is evidenced in the following: *"I could've left my job you know that kind of feeling but obviously my need for security prompted that I stay. I mean not just walk away,…, I think maybe the impact on me was that a lack of self-confidence and of self-esteem, maybe I wasn't leading in managing as properly as I could because of that and because of the uncertainty he placed on me"*.

For another participant, inauthentic behaviour created pressure and wasted time. She expressed anger, frustration and experienced internal conflict. She explained that she dealt with inauthentic behaviour by accepting that there is nothing she could do about it. She expressed this in:

> *It also creates so much pressure, there are ways to do things and achieve them easily, but you might have to work with ineffective managers and that just creates*

more work that also wastes time, you know, time is so precious,…,that frustrates me, you can't say anything about it, that really upsets me, in fact it angers me…Then you have to ask, what is the real intention here?..., So in some cases I have been quite upset, but you can't hold it in you and you find ways to deal with it, like saying that well, there is nothing I can do, so just let it go.

One participant described almost being in a severe car accident as a result of a conflict in her workplace, where she was unable to be authentic, voice her opinion and challenge the individual she was in conflict with. After a very serious experience she felt forced to deal with the situation and stated: *"you have got to find a way to deal with this, you can't let things eat you up that you can't even focus on what you are doing".*

On the intrapersonal level, participants report that their inauthentic behaviour is felt at an emotional level, that is, feelings of frustration, lack of self-confidence, self-esteem and anger. At the behavioural level, participants report not being able to focus and the inability to effectively perform the leadership role.

4.2.4.4   Consequences of inauthentic behaviour on an interpersonal level

Participants reported that the impact of inauthentic behaviour on interpersonal relationships leads to a lack of trust, poor communication, high levels of anxiety and conflict. Work performance was negatively affected as inauthentic behaviour created an unhealthy environment.

One participant provided a detailed description of what she thought would be the consequence of inauthentic behaviour. She stressed that low levels of trust, uncertain behavioural expectations, poor communication and conflict can result from inauthentic behaviour. A lack of respect, animosity, creating divisions and taking sides also occurred as a result of in authenticity. This is evidenced in the following:

where people have not acted authentically... it impacts on the level of trust, it impacts on what people expect in terms of how people express themselves, so if someone does not express themselves authentically, there is this feeling that what we are going to hear is not true, not in our interests and that creates a lot of dissonance in terms of respecting people, it creates a lot of animosity, sometimes dysfunctional behaviour and I used the word comfort earlier on, I think that it depresses the ability of people to communicate and in many instances in the work environment it can start alienating people. I think in a work environment, inauthentic behaviour can also create divisions... being inauthentic would mean that I am taking sides and in taking sides you create divisions and the converse of all that is the lack of trust, poor communication, high levels of anxiety and depression of communication and interaction

She also stated that she avoided people that she thought were inauthentic and stated:
"one worked better with people who were authentic and perhaps kept away from the people who were inauthentic".

Another participant explained that inauthentic behaviour lowered the morale of her team. This occurred due to inconsistent and conflicting messages. She stated: *"For me it would generally lower their morale because sometimes you are preaching something to them at one stage and then you find that you again are saying something different to what you have said, for them the issue is that they've got to stick to the rules".* According to another participant, work performance is affected: *"it does affect the performance of work".* A further participant indicated that inauthentic behaviour created an unhealthy environment: *"it can create a bit of an unhealthy environment".*

As previously discussed, trust was noted as important in facilitating relationships and resulted in positive outcomes. Inauthentic behaviour leads to a lack of trust and subsequently a breakdown in interpersonal relationships. Inconsistent and conflicting messages result in lower morale and inauthentic behaviour contributes to creating an unhealthy work environment.

4.3   CHAPTER SUMMARY

I arrived at these themes using qualitative data analysis. As I was the primary research instrument, data analysis was influenced by my interpretations and frame of reference. In attempting to describe the themes and sub-themes I was guided by the need for rigour and soundness. I found myself constantly searching for alternate explanations and keeping my own biases in check. I relied on the literature review to inform the analysis as it evolved. Data analysis, like much of this research, was inductive and emerging. Themes and sub-themes did not appear in a linear, static manner. Through immersion, coding and elaboration, and further immersion, themes and sub-themes evolved. It was for me a process of back and forth and back again, until the themes and sub-themes emerged in a constructive, clear and meaningful manner to me. The results of these efforts are presented in this chapter.

In this chapter I presented the results of the qualitative research. Four main themes were identified, as well as relevant subthemes. Data from the semi-structured interviews were presented in support of the identified themes. The analysis revealed that authenticity is constructed as being true to oneself. Further to this, the analysis highlighted that authenticity is facilitated by internal and external factors. Contextually appropriate behaviour and the manifestation of multiple selves facilitate authenticity at an internal level, while open, structured work environments facilitate authenticity at an external level. Barriers to authentic behaviour were identified. Interpersonal judgement as a barrier in others was found to hinder authenticity. Limitations on self-expression, leader power and authority, as well as organisational culture and irregular work practices were identified as a barrier in the work environment. The fourth theme covered the consequences of authentic and inauthentic behaviour at both the interpersonal and intrapersonal levels.

In the next chapter, I will present the integration of the results and the discussion.

CHAPTER 5: INTEGRATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to discuss the results of the study. In this chapter, I present a diagrammatic representation of the results and this is used as a basis for the discussion in the chapter. The results of each theme and sub-theme are presented, explained and then integrated with key elements from the literature review. The purpose of this is to build on the main themes and sub-themes and further deepen our understanding of authenticity as it relates to the experiences of the participants.

5.2   INTEGRATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following diagram represents an integration of the identified themes. In Figure 5.1 authenticity is constructed as being true to oneself. An elaboration of the meaning ascribed to authenticity is presented in the diagram. These meanings are explained in the discussion that follows. In addition, the research revealed internal and external facilitators of authenticity, as well as barriers thereof. These themes are elaborated on in the sections that follow. The consequences of authentic and inauthentic behaviour manifesting at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal level, are also illustrated in the diagram and discussed in this chapter.
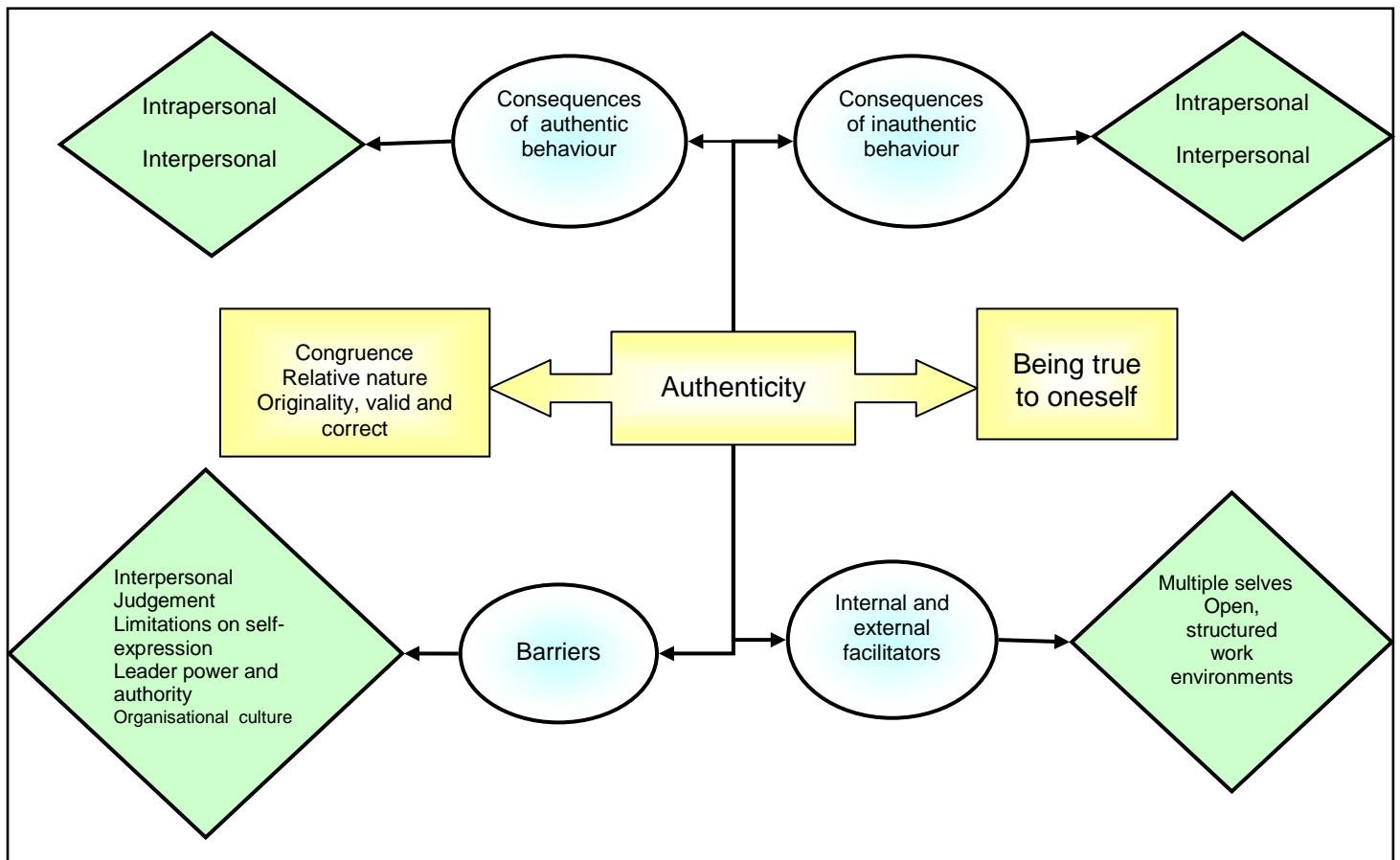
Figure 5.1: Diagrammatic representation of results

5.2.1   Managers construct authenticity as being true to oneself

Irrespective of the initial reports of unfamiliarity and lack of exposure to the construct, participants were able to explain how they constructed the concept. The analysis revealed that central to their understanding is that authenticity means being true to oneself. In

Figure 5.1, the construct of authenticity and the related description, that it means being true to oneself, is centrally located because of the significance it has to remaining themes and sub-themes. For the participants in this study, being true to oneself means being true to your feelings, your personality style and preferences, upbringing and related values, and morality. Further descriptions, as they relate to the participants' understanding of the term are also depicted in the figure. In explaining their understanding of authenticity, originality and being valid and correct were related to being true to oneself. For the participants in the study, being original means being unconventional and being able to think and act independently. Being valid implies that behaviour is appropriately based on truth and fact, with correctness suggesting that one is true to oneself when one engages in contextually appropriate behaviour. Further important elements that emerge in the descriptions of authenticity are that there should be congruence between different aspects of the self and that behaviour must be understood within the context and circumstance within which it occurs. In addition, one may not be fully or completely authentic, but rather attempt to be as authentic as possible.

Further to this construction is the idea that behaviour and actions should match thoughts and feelings. There should be congruence between the spoken word and behaviour. This congruence is viewed as an important element in being authentic, but, such congruence may not always be achieved. Also, behaviour must be understood within the context and circumstances within which it occurs. Included in the construction of authenticity is mention of the development of the construct. Factors such as life experience, religion and morality influence the development of authenticity. Furthermore, one may not altogether be authentic or inauthentic, but can achieve relative levels of authenticity or be as authentic as is possible.

As highlighted in the literature review in Chapter 2, it is not unusual for the construct of authenticity to be unfamiliar to participants. It is a fairly new concept and a number of researchers have indicated that there is a lack of empirical research in authenticity and that the construct has been neglected in mainstream psychology (Harter, 2005; Lopez & Rice, 2006; Vannini, 2006; Wood et al., 2008). The lack of a body of knowledge

concerning authenticity can be seen as a contributing factor to the participants' lack of awareness and exposure to the construct.

Furthermore, as described in Chapter 2, a number of definitions of authenticity were presented and discussed. The idea that authenticity means being true to oneself underlies the definitions offered by many researchers (Guignon, 2004; Harter, 2005; Kernis, 2003; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Vannini, 2006). Research suggests that the construct can be divided into philosophical and psychological meanings (Novicevic et al., 2006; Vannini, 2006). Psychological meanings focus on identities and the self. The constructions offered by the participants in the present study link closely with the social psychological conception described by Vannini (2006). In the social psychological perspective, the focus is on the self and the individual's experience of feeling true or congruent with oneself. Participants in this study described authenticity as being real, being true to oneself and original. The philosophical meanings of authenticity include moral virtues and ethical choices (Novicevic et al., 2006; Vannini, 2006). These were mentioned by one of the participants who linked her understanding of authenticity to morality, values, respect and spirituality.

Being authentic implies that one not only acts out the true self, but also acts in ways that are congruent with inner thoughts and feelings (Harter, 2005; Kernis, 2003; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Vannini, 2006; Wood et al., 2008). Luthans and Avolio (see Michie & Gooty, 2005) emphasise that an authentic leader is transparent and attempt to maintain a flawless link between espoused values, behaviours and action. One of the participants described that her behaviour and spoken word should match, but she stressed that she experienced difficulties with achieving this congruent behaviour. This does not imply that the participant is inauthentic and Harter (2005) cautions that acting differently does not always imply a lack of authenticity, rather that such adjustments to behaviour may be appropriate. There are instances where the needs of the individual may be incompatible with societal needs and values. In such cases, authenticity may be reflected in an awareness of one's needs and the individual may act out behaviours that are socially acceptable (Kernis, 2003).

Congruence is an important concept in understanding authentic and inauthentic behaviour. According to Rogers (see Moore, 2003), those who are conscious of all experiences and can incorporate them into the self concept are seen to be in a state of congruence. Incongruence occurs when needs are denied and the individual has an experience that is contrary to the self concept (Rogers, in Moore, 2003). This could result in inauthentic behaviour and creates reluctance for an individual to own her behaviour. This relates to the participants' explanation of experiencing difficulties with being congruent and that other problems are caused in attempting to be congruent. This suggests that the participant is undergoing an experience that is contrary to her self concept, thus creating difficulty for her.

Linked to this is the idea that one may not be fully authentic, but try to be as authentic as possible. This singles out the idea that authenticity is not an absolute construct, where one is either authentic or inauthentic. This relates to the research by Erickson (see Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Harvey et al., 2006), who suggests that authenticity is a relative construct. This means that people are never entirely authentic or inauthentic, but can be described as achieving levels of authenticity (Erickson, in Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Harvey et al., 2006). Being as authentic as possible relates to the difference between honesty and truth. Lerner (1993) distinguishes between the two concepts, by explaining that honesty refers to the uncensored expression of thoughts and feelings, while truth telling requires thought, timing, tact and empathy. Truth-telling calls for tactful expression and timing in order to be fully heard and this facilitates relationships and allows one to protect the self, where necessary (Harter, 2005; Lerner 1993). The liability associated with being too authentic is that interpersonal relations could be damaged, thus calling for a need to be as authentic as diplomatically possible, as raised by the participant in this study.

Research concerning the development of authenticity reveals that factors that influence authenticity begin in early childhood (Harter, 2005). One participant reported that her upbringing, along with other factors such as life experiences, religion and morality, influenced her authenticity.

From the preceding discussion, it is evident that the participants' construction of authenticity is closely related to the empirical research in the field. By creating a basis from which the construct is understood, I will now discuss the factors that facilitate authenticity.

5.2.2   Authenticity is facilitated by internal and external factors

From the research presented in Chapter 4, the internal factors that facilitate authenticity are contextually appropriate behaviour and the manifestation of multiple selves. This is shown in Figure 5.1 as multiple selves.

5.2.2.1   Contextually appropriate behaviour and the manifestation of multiple selves

For the participants in this study, the adoption of multiple roles is natural and necessary for appropriate behaviour. Adopting diverse roles based on the required circumstances is seen as necessary for the interaction and preservation of relationships. Participants in the study suggested that they do not have just one true self and that their multiple selves are not experienced as inauthentic. Participants demonstrated an awareness of their multiple roles and this allowed them to feel more authentic as they are free to choose their behaviour. In reference to specific multiple roles, participants indicated that their work role differed from their social role. They explained that the work context required that they adopt different behaviours and that these behaviours were appropriate to the circumstances of the workplace.

In-as-much as participants reported comfort with multiple roles, reference is made to instances in which elements of their personalities are masked and not revealed to certain groups. In this case, behaviour can be viewed as inauthentic.

Harter (2002) writes that the need to adapt to diverse roles has a significant impact on the individual's authenticity. Participants in the study reported adopting multiple roles and these multiple roles appear similar to Gergen's (1991) pastiche personality. The pastiche personality is described in Section 2.3.4., as a personality that borrows aspects from whatever sources are available and constructs them as useful for a particular situation, thereby creating a multiplicity of selves (Gergen, 1991). The creation of the multiple roles appears necessary as one's identity undergoes tremendous change and is continuously reformed and redirected as one encounters different relationships. These relationships influence and shape the formation of the self.

Research suggests that we do not have one true self and that multiple selves are not experienced as inauthentic, but rather as necessary for the interaction and the preservation of relationships (Kernis, 2003; Lerner, 1993; Lifton, 1993). The participants' responses are consistent with this research, in that participants found themselves playing diverse roles based on the required circumstances. Research in the area of multiple selves suggests that, where elements of their personality are masked and not revealed to certain groups, the self may be experienced as inauthentic, resulting in a sense of loss, withdrawal, apathy and depression (Lifton, 1993). Similarly, pretending may allow one to protect the self and others (Lerner, 1993). According to Lerner (1993), pretending, particularly in women, is learned through culture and stems from a false definition of the self. This relates to the experiences described by two participants, who indicated that they do not reveal elements of the self to others.

Kernis (2003) stated that individuals function with greater authenticity when they are aware of their multiple roles. Individuals are free to choose how their true selves are to be revealed in their behaviour and being aware of this choice and acting accordingly promotes authenticity. It is important to note that participants do not report acting inauthentically as a result of the adoption of multiple roles. Kernis (2003) writes that role experimentation is not necessarily inauthentic, but reflects an extension of the true self in action. Participants in the study reported that they were aware of the necessity to adopt

multiple roles, suggesting that they are aware of the true self, and the adaptation of the true self to the demands of differing contexts. Three of the participants explicitly stated their awareness and comfort with their multiple roles. According to Reitzes and Mutran (1994), the sense of attachment to work and family roles allows a person to view herself more positively, for example, being competent in the role of worker positively influences self-esteem for both men and women. The comfort and ease with which the participants reported adopting multiple roles indicated that it may have a positive influence on their well-being.

According to Lerner (1993), differing contexts shape individual behaviour and the work that people engage in creates who they are. All the participants in this study reported that their work role differed from other roles. The work context required them to adopt different behaviours that were seen by them to be contextually appropriate. The workplace can thus be seen as an important contributor to shaping individual identity and also one's experience of authenticity. This relates to the next sub-theme where open, structured work environments were identified as facilitating authenticity.

5.2.2.2   *Open, structured work environments facilitate authenticity*

The external factor that facilitates authenticity is the work environment. This is captured as open, structured work environments in Figure 5.1. Open but structured work environments were reported to facilitate authenticity. In describing the organisational culture of the workplace, the participants referred to open, free workplaces as supporting authentic behaviour. An open, free workplace would provide opportunities to perform the management function effectively, to make decisions and to take necessary actions without fear of reprisal. Clear policy and procedures would facilitate such action and support decision-making at the management level. Policies and established procedures would provide the structure that participants referred to as a necessary feature of the work environment. The structure that participants referred to would provide boundaries for appropriate behaviour, creating an environment in which one felt comfortable enough to be authentic. Senior leaders who demonstrated appropriate behaviour, and served as role

models in the organisation, would contribute to the culture of appropriate behaviour and this would further facilitate authentic behaviour at all levels.

Research on environmental factors that affect authenticity focus largely on the environment as a barrier to or inhibitor of, authenticity (Duignan & Bhindi 1997; Harter, 2005; Kernis, 2003; Lerner, 1993; Vannini, 2006). This is similar to the finding in this research and will be discussed in Section 4.2.3.2. Rogers (see Moore, 2003; Schultz, 1977) explains that although behaviour is determined by the individual, the environment can act as a facilitator of behaviour. Cranton and Carusetta (2004), feel that being authentic is based on an understanding of how the environment influences one's behaviour. Similarly, Wood et al. (2008) indicate that the social environment influences authentic living and the extent to which one accepts the external influence of the social environment impacts on the experience of authenticity.

5.2.3 Barriers found in others and in the work environment that inhibit one's ability to be authentic

A number of factors that are found in others and in the work environment were identified as barriers to authenticity. Interpersonal judgements were identified as a barrier in others, whilst limitations on self-expression, leader power and authority, as well as organisational culture and irregular work practices, were identified as barriers in the work environment. These are reflected under barriers in Figure 5.1.

5.2.3.1   Interpersonal judgement may act as a barrier to authenticity

The participants in this study reported that their interpersonal relations affect their authenticity, particularly in cases where they were judged by others and when they were unable to control or influence those perceptions and judgements. They said that they are not always able to be themselves in their relationships with others. They felt that the perception of others cannot be controlled and that they were unaware of how they were perceived by others. Participants experienced a lack of validation, positive regard and

support from others and this prevented them from being authentic. According to Guignon (2004), becoming authentic requires an individual to be who they truly are in their relationships, careers and practical activities. Harter (2005) writes that adult relationships require validation, positive regard and support in order for one to be authentic.

In being judged, participants experienced being labelled. In these circumstances, participants reported that they were unsure of how to behave and sometimes found themselves behaving in accordance with the label or judgement. Participants reported that a lack of trust occurred as a result of being judged and labelled and this impacted negatively on the relationship. Research indicated that individuals are likely to follow a scripted response when they feel they may be negatively judged (Carson & Langer, 2006; Harter, 2005). Carson and Langer (2006) state that individuals who are not authentic are heavily concerned with impressing others. As a result they start to behave in a way others think they should behave or the way they think others think they should behave (Carson & Langer, 2006). This relates specifically to the experiences of being labelled and judged, as reported by the participants.

5.2.3.2 *Limitations on self expression is a barrier to authenticity*

In the research, self-expression in the workplace emerged as an important contributor to being true to oneself. Being able to freely express opinions, thoughts and feelings emerged as a concrete expression of one's authenticity. Participants reported that there are circumstances where they are unable to voice their opinions, they experienced not being heard and suppressed their true feelings. They reported that they are sometimes disappointed by the consequences of expressing their opinions. Further to this, participants revealed that they are unable to change the situation they are faced with. They reported that their autonomy was compromised and that they are unable to change systems and are forced to accept the *status quo*. As a result of the limitations on self-expression, they were unable to be authentic.

Harter (2005) feels that a key factor in authenticity is whether or not one can verbally express thoughts, opinions and feelings. In research with adolescents, Harter (2005) found that an important form of validation is listening to what one has to say. The ability to voice opinions, genuinely listen and respect viewpoints is linked to authentic behaviour (Harter, 2005). Participants reported that they are unable to voice opinions, feel that they will not be listened to, or that they will be disappointed with the consequences of voicing their opinions. There are limitations on their self-expression and this suggests that they are sometimes unable to communicate authentically. In the face of this limitation, participants experience the self and their behaviour as inauthentic.

In the research conducted by Neff and Harter (2002), individuals were unlikely to express true thoughts and feelings in relationships in which they did not feel validated or accepted. This suppression of the true self is linked to poorer psychological outcomes, lower levels of self-esteem and higher levels of depressed affect (Neff & Harter, 2002). Neff and Harter (2002) conclude that authenticity and true self-expression are necessary for optimal psychological health. As reported by the participants in the study, the limitations on their self-expression caused stress and frustration. Participants reported that they suppressed their true feelings and felt forced to accept such behaviour. Gergen (1991) writes that being unable to communicate authentically prevents the expression of true feelings, intentions and beliefs.

Participants reported that they experienced their autonomy being compromised when they are forced into accepting the *status quo* and unable to change the circumstances or particulars of a situation. This relates to research by Wood et al. (2008), who suggest that the influence of others impacts on authentic living. The extent to which one accepts the influence of others and the belief that one has to conform to the expectations of others could result in feelings of self-alienation. In this instance the person experiences not knowing herself or may feel out of touch with the true self (Wood et al., 2008). This relates to the participants' experiences of not being able to exercise autonomy, having to accept the *status quo* and being unable to change the situation.

Participants also reported that they accepted the realization that they can do nothing to change or influence the *status quo* and subsequently conform to environmental demands. This relates to Frankl's (1992) idea of conformism. According to Frankl (see Shantall, 2003), individuals can become victims of their circumstances and this may result in conformism. Conformism describes an effort to evade the stress of authenticity and do what most other people do, or what is expected of them (Frankl, see Shantall, 2003). Participants, however, report discomfort with simply accepting the current practices, as they test their ethical and moral beliefs. This relates to research by Novicevic et al. (2006) on moral disengagement. According to Novicevic et al. (2006), inauthentic leadership is evident in indifferent and resigned behaviour of leaders, who feel secretive about their thoughts and feelings and dissociate themselves from organisational reality. Moral disengagement occurs when leaders conform to the organisational code at the expense of the personal code.

5.2.3.3   *Leader power and authority is a barrier to authenticity*

A further limitation to participants' self-expression is the authority and power that their leaders exercise over them. When participants experienced power and authority over them, they reported difficulties in being authentic. The participants experience their leaders as using the leadership position to elicit certain behaviours or favours from the staff that they supervise. They reported that leaders use their positions to threaten, manipulate and force them into accepting decisions that they are unhappy with, suggesting that leaders act inauthentically. Leaders who do not act authentically impact on the overall organisational culture. Inauthentic leaders create animosity, conflict and dysfunctional behaviour. Trust, communication and respect are negatively impacted upon. Participants hold the belief that leaders should be more professional and serve as role models. This would create an environment for people to behave appropriately and foster authenticity. Participants referred to being unable to change the circumstances that they are faced with. They felt particularly constrained by the power and authority that their leaders have over them.

In the literature review, research indicated that leader ineffectiveness and manager incompetence limit authentic leadership (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997). Such ineffectiveness and incompetence is often protected by the use of power (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997). Participants refer to leader ineffectiveness and that leaders use their positions to garner favour. This prevents participants from being authentic. Research by Duignan & Bhindi (1997), revealed that in hierarchical structures managers can adopt a power-over-people approach to relationships. As a result, relationships are depersonalized, and dominant individuals, in this case the leader, can assume entitlement over others (Starrat, see Duignan & Bhindi, 1997). This directly relates to the experiences of the participants.

Participants reported that leaders should serve as role models, be more professional and apply organisational rules correctly. Participants expected leaders to function effectively and to set an example for employees to follow. This implies that there is an expectation for leaders to utilize appropriate leadership styles and be authentic themselves. Authentic leadership is described in the literature review in Chapter 2. It is leadership that is driven by ethics, values, morality and qualities such as honesty, integrity and credibility and being fair-minded, straightforward and dependable (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997). The particular leadership style adopted by an authentic leader can be directive, participative or authoritarian (Avolio et al., 2004). Irrespective of the leadership style, the authentic leader will act in accordance with personal values, build credibility, win the respect and trust of followers and build collaborative relationships. They thus lead in a manner that followers recognise as authentic (Avolio et al., 2004). Authentic leaders display the ability to choose authentic behaviours when faced with external pressures and incentives to act inauthentically (Harvey et al., 2006). From the participants' experiences with their leaders, it is evident that they experience inauthentic leadership. In serving as role models, the expectation from participants is that their leaders should be authentic.

According to Rogers (see Moore, 2003), the environment determines the conditions for accepting the individual. This influences the self concept and results in the individual acting in accordance with the conditions set out by others. The reports of the impact of leader power imply that individuals act according to the conditions set out by their senior

managers. These conditions are generally reported to result in negative emotions such as feelings of manipulation. In addition to the leadership style acting as a barrier to authenticity, organisational culture and work practices limit one's ability to be authentic. This sub-theme is discussed in the next section.

5.2.3.4 *Organisational culture and irregular work practices act as a barrier to authenticity*

Participants in this study experienced their work environment as a barrier to their authenticity. Even though open, structured environments were seen to facilitate authenticity, organisational culture and irregular work practices act as barriers to authenticity. As mentioned previously, organisational rules and policy are requirements for appropriate behaviour. Participants reported that the absence of such rules impacted negatively on their ability to behave authentically. Participants described the organisational culture as being influenced by politics. Such a political work environment inhibited their ability to be authentic and caused stress and instability. Participants said that they may be required to follow the requisite political agenda even at times when they do not support that agenda. Research indicates that governance obstacles such as political interference, policy formulation and system restructuring can contribute to a lack of authenticity.

Research presented in the literature review highlights the influence of the environment on authentic behaviour (Kernis, 2003; Lerner, 1993). More specifically, Kernis (2003) writes that authenticity can be hindered by environmental conditions and this could result in short-term conflict. Kernis (2003) cautions on the uncontrolled expression of the true self, which could result in societal sanctions. Here authenticity should be reflected in the fit between the true self and the dictates of the environment. Lerner (1993) states that circumstances define who we are and since the self does not exist in isolation, the

differing contexts that individuals face, shape what they become. The environmental influences described by the participants clearly impact on their ability to be authentic and are a source of conflict for them. Harter (2005) also reports that socialization practices and cultural constraints were identified as barriers to authenticity. Thus, being inauthentic was a result of socio-environmental conditions (Horney, see Harter, 2005).

Vannini (2006) describes the concept of frustrated authenticity, that is, a type of authenticity that emerges from an institution or culture that functions as a road block to authenticity. Frustration is an emotion that is experienced when goal achievement is defeated by organisational structure, culture and policies (Janis, see Vaninni, 2006). Participants in this study clearly described how the organisational culture and the political work environment impacted on their ability to be authentic. According to Duignan and Bhindi (1997), governance and the organisation itself contribute to a leader's authenticity. Governance obstacles include political interference, policy formulation and implementation and system restructuring. This related to the participants' experiences of the political nature of the work environment and how it limits their ability to be authentic.

Participants in the study emphasised organisational recruitment practices as a specific example of when they are unable to be authentic. Participants who were exposed to unfair appointments, unprofessional conduct, the flaunting of recruitment procedures, as well as being forced to recruit someone and being accused of racism during recruitment processes, reported that they are unable to be authentic. These barriers created frustration and anxiety for participants and it compromised their values and morals. The flawed organisation recruitment practices directly impacted on the ability of participants to be authentic. According to Duignan and Bhindi (1997), flawed and bureaucratic systems contribute to leader ineffectiveness. Participants describe feeling frustrated and angered by the organisational recruitment practices and this relates, once again, to the concept of frustrated authenticity, as described by Vannini (2006).

Hodgkinson (see Duignan & Bhindi, 1997) writes that the tension that exists between the needs of the individual and that of the organisation may pose an obstacle to authentic

leadership. He explains that there is sometimes a poor fit between personality and role in the organisation. This results in some leaders compromising their values and morality and acting as organisational agents (Hodgkinson, see Duignan & Bhindi, 1997). Participants expressed disappointment at compromising their values and morality. They indicated dissatisfaction at having to act as organisational agents and that they were forced to accept the practices as they were.

In the preceding discussion, the construction of authenticity, enhancers, barriers and the environmental impact were discussed. In Figure 5.1, the consequences of authentic and inauthentic behaviour are shown. The consequences were identified at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels.

5.2.4   Consequences of authentic and inauthentic behaviour

5.2.4.1   Consequences of authentic behaviour on an intrapersonal level

Being authentic results in general well-being on an intrapersonal level. Participants reported feeling confident, at ease and more committed to their work. Participants also reported that they were unconcerned with the negative evaluations of others, because they were satisfied with who they are. Such self-acceptance positively contributes to mental health and enhanced well-being.

Research has revealed that being authentic contributes to positive well-being (Carson & Langer, 2006; Ryan et al., 2005). Participants reported feeling confident, at ease and committed. Carson and Langer (2006) state that being authentic prevents one from having concerns about being negatively evaluated. One participant reported that her authenticity had built her confidence and she was unconcerned with the negative evaluations of others. This relates to research by Carson and Langer (2006), who indicate that self-acceptance is critical to mental health and acting authentically contributes to individual self-acceptance and enhanced well-being.

5.2.4.2   Consequences of authentic behaviour at an interpersonal level

On an interpersonal level, being authentic resulted in a number of positive outcomes. Being authentic was seen to build trust, respect and support and resulted in the creation of authentic relationships. Employee work performance also improved as a result of the participants' authentic expression of themselves.

A further element enhancing authenticity is the ability to behave consistently across situations. Participants indicated that behaving consistently supported their authenticity and contributed to positive interpersonal relations. Being consistent facilitated authentic behaviour in those that they interacted with. Behaving consistently allows for positive evaluations by others, as well as higher levels of well being (Cross et al., 2003; Suh, 2002).

According to Kernis (2003), authentic relations require a process of self-disclosure and the development of mutual intimacy and trust requires being genuine and real in relationships. Authentic leaders have authentic relationships with their followers and such relationships are characterized by transparency, openness, trust, guidance toward worthy objectives and an emphasis on follower development (Gardner et al., 2005). Establishing such relationships is critical for authentic leaders (George & Sims, 2007) and the participants in the study reported an overall positive impact of their authentic behaviour on interpersonal relations. Authentic behaviour was seen to build trust, respect and support. The work performance of employees improved as a result of participants' authentic expression of themselves. These reports are similar to research by Kark and Shamir (see Avolio et al., 2004) that suggest that authentic leaders are able to improve motivation, commitment, satisfaction and involvement required from employees to increase their performance levels. Avolio et al. (2004), report that authentic leadership results in winning the respect and trust of followers, as well as building collaborative relationships. Employee trust in leaders facilitated compliance with organisational rules and laws and assisted with the implementation of organisational change (Robinson, in

Zhu et al., 2004). Participants in this study reported that their authentic behaviour built respect, trust and fostered positive relationships.

Consistency is a construct that emerges from the identification of multiple roles (Cross et al., 2003; Suh, 2002). In Chapter 2 it was reported that multiple roles lead to multiple experiences and developing and maintaining a consistent identity is key to psychological well-being (Suh, 2002). People who are perceived as being consistent across situations are evaluated positively (Suh, 2002). Cross et al. (2003) report that individuals who are able to describe their behaviour as consistent across different roles or situations indicate higher levels of well-being than do individuals who have more inconsistent self-concepts. Such consistent behaviour is reported to be important because it allows people to predict the behaviour of others and it facilitates social interactions (Cross et al., 2003). Participants in the study reported that social interactions are facilitated by their authentic behaviour. In being consistent in their behaviour, those that they interact with are also able to be authentic. Consistency is important because the consistent expression of stable traits, abilities and attributes serve as a foundation for validating the real self (Cross et al., 2003). Those who are confident about their real selves are able to behave autonomously and resist the influence of others. Individual consistency is indicative of "maturity, self-integrity and unity and therefore associated with positive dimensions of well-being (Cross et al., 2003, p. 934).

The consequences of authentic behaviour result in positive outcomes at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. Conversely, inauthentic behaviour results in negative outcomes. These are discussed in the following sections.

5.2.4.3   Consequences of inauthentic behaviour on an intrapersonal level

For participants in the study, the inability to act authentically not only impacted on work satisfaction but on individual performance as well. At an intrapersonal level, frustration, increased levels of pressure, a loss of focus, a loss in self-confidence and self-esteem are experienced.

In the literature review presented in Chapter 2, studies have shown that inauthentic feelings reduce work satisfaction, sense of well-being and can result in internal conflict (Ryan et al., 2005; Vannini, 2006). In this study participants revealed that their inability to act authentically not only impacted on work satisfaction but on individual performance as well. The emotional responses that were reported included anger, frustration and an inability to focus and these affect the participants' level of well-being. According to Carson & Langer (2006), inauthentic behaviour may result in reduced self-esteem. One participant reported a loss in self-confidence and self-esteem.

5.2.4.4   Consequences of inauthentic behaviour on an interpersonal level

At an interpersonal level, the cost of inauthentic behaviour is high. Participants reported that not being authentic leads to a lack of respect, trust, poor communication and conflict. Inconsistent and conflicting messages resulted in lower morale and reduced work performance. Participants reported avoiding relationships that they perceived as inauthentic. The reports by the participants at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels relate to research that indicates that inauthentic feelings reduce work satisfaction, sense of well-being, loss in self-confidence and self-esteem and can result in internal conflict (Carson & Langer, 2006; Ryan et al., 2005;Vannini, 2006).

Managers have often cited qualities such as honesty, integrity, credibility, being fair-minded, straightforward and dependable as being critical to successful leadership (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997). According to Duignan and Bindhi (1997), truth and honesty are rarely found in organisations and deception is rife. The impact of this is a lack of trust, poor communication and high levels of anxiety. Participants reported experiencing this lack of trust, poor communication and increased levels of anxiety. The overall impact of inauthentic behaviour is reduced work performance and the creation of an unhealthy work environment. Rogers (1995) writes that he has found is obstructive and unproductive in displaying inauthentic behaviour. Participants in this study appear to hold similar views. Lowered moral, avoidance of interactions with inauthentic people,

animosity, conflicts and unhealthy environments are the reported results of inauthentic behaviour. These are barriers to effective relationships with others.

5.3   CHAPTER SUMMARY

Interpreting the data at a deeper level and linking it to the literature review was both challenging and enlightening. I have to acknowledge the fact that the particular direction I took in the literature search probably predisposed me to interpret the data in a particular manner, albeit subconsciously. Yet, I found myself elated by the clear linkages between my research and the empirical research conducted by experts in the field. I was eager to present the integration in a well-written, clearly understandable and interesting format, because I believed that the findings were highly significant and important in understanding authenticity.

Figure 5.1, the diagrammatic representation of results, represents the findings of this research. Constructing authenticity as being true to oneself served as a basis upon which the remaining themes and sub-themes were discussed. In the discussion presented, all the themes and sub-themes were related to key elements of the literature review. The literature review supported the results in various aspects and these were elaborated on and explained.

In the next chapter I will present the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of this research.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to explore authenticity, that is, how it was understood and experienced. To this end, the study became a journey of discovery, bringing to the fore interesting interpretations and themes that throw light on this little-known construct of authenticity. Although the research culminates in this chapter, the journey to understanding authenticity and being true to myself has not.

The objective of this chapter is to present the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of the study. The conclusions from the literature review, as well as from the research study, are presented. Thereafter the limitations of the study are discussed. Finally, recommendations for future research and organisational application will be made.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

Two sets of conclusions are discussed in this section. The first covers the conclusions drawn from the literature review and the second set will explain the conclusions drawn from the empirical part of the study.

6.2.1 Conclusions from the literature review

The general aim of the literature review was to build an understanding of the construct of authenticity and to identify related concepts. The intention of the review was to attempt to find as much research available in the area of authenticity as possible. From the literature review it emerged that there is a lack of empirical research in the area of authenticity. In conducting the literature review, I found that there exist a number of independent pieces of literature that address authenticity.

The literature review revealed that authenticity, as a strength of character trait, can be viewed as a legitimate topic, be positioned as a positive psychological construct and be studied from that perspective. This suggests that authenticity is an important contributor to understanding the self and building a body of knowledge in the area will be beneficial to the discipline of psychology. Research revealed that authenticity impacts on work behaviour and it is therefore an important subject to study from an industrial psychology perspective.

Lack of empirical research aside, in reviewing the literature, I found that there are a number of theorists who address the topic of authenticity and attempt to define it. They all offer definitions and descriptions of the term. In constructing authenticity, being true to oneself is common to the definitions that are given in the literature review. An important element to understanding authenticity is the relative nature of the construct. People are not viewed as being entirely authentic or inauthentic; rather they achieve levels of authenticity. This brings to the fore the importance of understanding the self and being aware of one's actions and the motives for those actions. The issue of being too authentic is resolved in the literature review by understanding the difference between honesty and truth, where truth-telling calls for tact and timing, as opposed to harming relationships through honesty. One is cautioned against being too authentic, particularly when such authenticity results in severe societal sanctions. This highlights the impact that society and the environment play in shaping one's authenticity.

Research revealed that individuals act inauthentically in order to avoid criticism, loss of self-esteem and to win praise, impress others and increase positive self-esteem.

Inauthentic behaviour was also found to protect the self and preserve critical relationships. Inauthentic behaviour is associated with negative outcomes, while being authentic contributes to positive well-being.

The contributions of Carl Jung, Karen Horney, Carl Rogers, Viktor Frankl and Abraham Maslow further deepen our understanding of the construct. Each of their contributions focus on the self concept, but the perspective on being authentic is directly linked to the relevant personality theory. Jung's contribution to authenticity lies in the concept of individuation; that is, becoming a unique individual, becoming aware of the true self and becoming aware of how similar or different one is from others. Karen Horney's contribution is found in the characteristics of the ideal, actual and real self. Inauthentic behaviour is demonstrated when the true self is not reflected in one's actions and when behaviour is directed for the benefit of others.

Carl Rogers' contribution to authentic behaviour is highlighted in the concepts of congruence and incongruence. People who have become true to themselves are in a state of congruence, where they are conscious of experiences and can incorporate them into the self concept. Incongruence refers to a state where needs are denied and the individual attempts to maintain a particular image. This is seen as inauthentic behaviour. Central to Rogers' theory is that the environment can play a facilitating or inhibiting role in determining behaviour.

Self-transcendence and conformism are the basis of Viktor Frankl's input to our understanding of authenticity. In self-transcendence a person's life is authentic to the extent that it is outwardly orientated, while in conforming, people tend toward going along with the crowd and restricting the emergence of the true self. Finally, Abraham Maslow's characteristics of the self-actualising person further deepen our understanding of being authentic. Possessing an accurate observation of reality, accepting others and human nature, being able to distinguish between means and goals and having strong ethical and moral codes are characteristics of self-actualisers that contribute to them being authentic.

The literature review revealed a number of related topics to authenticity. Research into the development of authenticity suggests that authenticity begins in early childhood, continues and deepens into adolescence, late adolescence and early adulthood as cognitive structures develop. Language and the ability to communicate one's opinions were found to be important contributors to one's authenticity. Language can serve as an enhancer and a barrier to communication, while communicating authentically serves to reveal the true self. Being able to verbally express thoughts, feelings and opinions is a determinant of authenticity.

In adult relationships, research was limited to personal relations with a significant partner. Being authentic in such relationships requires one to be real, irrespective of the potential conflict. Validation, positive regard and support by one's partner determine the extent to which one can be authentic.

In attempting to understand being authentic, the concept of multiple selves was found to be relevant and important. In adopting multiple roles and multiple selves it was found that one is not necessarily being inauthentic, rather that an individual is constantly engaging in defining the real self. The adoption of multiple roles can be viewed as authentic if the person is aware of her true self. Engaging in multiple roles is seen as necessary in the current society that is characterized by unpredictability and change. However, in adopting multiple roles and multiple selves, if one is to achieve psychological well-being, then consistency is important. Consistent behaviour is important because it allows people to predict the behaviour of others and it facilitates social interaction. The consistent expression of stable traits, abilities and attributes allow for self-validation. This, in turn, creates opportunities for autonomous behaviour and resisting the influence of others.

Authentic leadership was researched and this was found to be a new concept in understanding leadership. This view of leadership is underpinned by ethics, values, morality and qualities such as honesty, integrity and credibility. Self-awareness, self-controlled positive behaviour, and self-development underlie authentic leadership. The

authentic leader is described as a person who knows herself, is confident, optimistic, morally and ethically sound and as one who can inspire others to improve their work performance. The authentic leader leads in a manner the followers recognise as authentic because they act in accord with personal values and build credibility and trust. Conditions such as moral deterioration, moral paralysis, moral disengagement, governance obstacles and the organisation itself contribute to the failure of leader authenticity. Moral creativity contributes to the success of the authentic leader. Research revealed that perceived leader authenticity resulted in higher levels of organisational commitment, job satisfaction and work happiness and an overall positive impact on work performance. Authentic leadership development can be conducted by focusing on personal history, self-awareness, self-regulation and positive modelling. An attributional perspective and the life-story approach can also be used to develop authentic leaders.

6.2.2   Conclusions from the empirical study

In Chapter 1, the general aim of the study was articulated as being to explore managerial experiences of authenticity in the workplace. The specific aims of the study were to explore managerial experiences of authenticity, individually and in a team. The study sought to explore the impact of the work environment as supporting or inhibiting authentic behaviour. It investigated the impact of authentic/inauthentic behaviour in the workplace and aimed to report on the construction of authenticity. The conclusions drawn from this research, as they relate to the aims of the study, are presented below. Additional conclusions are highlighted.

6.2.2.1   *Managerial experiences of authenticity*

Managers describe their experiences of authenticity as it relates to them. They draw on personal experiences within, as well as outside, the workplace in order to understand and explain their authenticity. The experiential awareness of the authenticity was used to describe the meaning of the construct and how it manifested in behaviour, actions, thoughts and feelings. Through the participants' experiences of authenticity and

inauthenticity, the meaning of the term authenticity was constructed, based on personal interpretation and understanding; internal and external facilitators and barriers to authenticity were identified; and the consequences of authentic and inauthentic behaviour were determined.

(a)   Managers' construction of authenticity

The construct of authenticity is new and unfamiliar, but it is one that is acted out in behaviour. In this study, authenticity was constructed as being true to oneself, being real and original. This related to the psychological meaning of authenticity. Philosophical meanings were raised, where authenticity was linked to morality, values, respect and spirituality. In being authentic, participants referred to congruence between the spoken word and behaviour and, although it is an important element to being authentic it is not always achieved.   One may achieve relative authenticity, that is, one may not be absolutely authentic or inauthentic, but achieve levels of authenticity or be as authentic as possible. Factors such as life experience, religion and morality influence the development of authenticity.

6.2.2.2   The work environment as a supporting and/or inhibiting factor

The study aimed to identify the impact the work environment had on authenticity, that is, to what extent the work environment supported and/or inhibited authentic behaviour. In general, it was found that the work environment both supported and inhibited a person's ability to be authentic. More specifically, open, structured work environments were found to facilitate authentic behaviour.   Limitations on self-expression, leader power and authority and organisational culture and irregular work practices were identified as barriers to authenticity in the workplace.

(a)   Open, structured work environments facilitate authenticity

An open, but structured, work environment, with adequate space to behave freely, facilitates authentic behaviour. An organisational culture that is supported by clear policy, rules and procedures would also facilitate one's ability to be authentic. Rules and policy provide structure that support actions and decision-making which in turn provide boundaries within which one would feel comfortable and secure enough to be oneself. An environment in which appropriate behaviour is demonstrated by senior leaders would facilitate authentic behaviour at all levels.

(b)   Limitations on self-expression is a barrier to authenticity

Self-expression is an important contributor to being true to oneself. Self-expression is a concrete expression of one's authenticity. The limitation on one's self expression is a significant barrier to being authentic. Being unable to voice opinions, not being heard and suppressing true feelings result in experiencing the self and behaviour as inauthentic. Authenticity is further compromised when individuals are disappointed by the consequences of expressing their opinions and being unable to change systems. Individual autonomy is compromised when one is forced to accept the *status quo*. Compromised autonomy, along with being unable to change the current circumstances results in conformism, that is, doing what is expected. The limitations on self-expression cause stress and frustration and negatively impact on an individual's ability to be authentic.

(c)   Leader power and authority is a barrier to authenticity

Leader power and authority negatively impact on the ability to be authentic. Power and authority is used to elicit certain behaviours or favours from employees and leaders sometimes use their positions to threaten, manipulate and force employees into accepting decisions that they are unhappy with. This negatively impacts on one's ability to be authentic. Leaders who do not act authentically impact on the overall organisational culture. Inauthentic leaders create animosity, conflict and dysfunctional behaviour. Trust,

communication and respect are also negatively impacted upon. Leaders who are authentic would achieve greater success at creating work environments that facilitated authenticity.

(d)   Organisational culture and irregular work practices act as a barrier to authenticity

The absence of policies and rules impact negatively on an individual's ability to be authentic. In an environment where there are high levels of anxiety and tension one is unable to be authentic. A political work environment inhibits the ability to be authentic and causes stress and instability. Governance obstacles such as political interference, policy formulation and system restructuring can contribute to a lack of authenticity.

Flawed and bureaucratic organisational recruitment practices impact on one's ability to be authentic. Being exposed to unfair appointments, unprofessional conduct, the flaunting of recruitment procedures, as well as being forced to recruit someone and being accused of racism during recruitment processes negatively impact on ones ability to be authentic. This results in frustration and anxiety and it compromises values and morals.

6.2.2.3 Other factors facilitating authentic behaviour

In addition to identifying the work environment as a facilitator of authenticity, contextually appropriate behaviour and the manifestation of multiples selves was identified as an enhancer to one's authenticity. The adoption of multiple roles is natural and necessary for appropriate behaviour, as well as for the interaction and preservation of relationships. Multiples selves are not experienced as inauthentic and an awareness of multiple roles allows for freedom of choice and behaviour resulting in greater authenticity. Behaviour can be viewed as inauthentic when elements of the personality are masked and not revealed to certain groups. However, it was found that behaving consistently across situations supported authenticity and contributed to positive social

outcomes. Results revealed that the work role differs from the social role and the workplace is a significant contributor shaping the individual and impacting on her authenticity.

6.2.2.4 *Other identified barriers to authenticity*

Along with the barriers found in the workplace, interpersonal judgements are an identified barrier that is found in the behaviour and actions of others. Interpersonal relations impact negatively on authenticity, particularly where individuals feel judged by others and when they are unable to control or influence those perceptions and judgements. A lack of validation, positive regard and support from others prevents one from being authentic. The experience of labelling creates behavioural uncertainty and can result in behaviour that is in accordance with the label. This results in a lack of trust and a resultant negative impact on the relationship.

6.2.2.5 *The impact of authentic and inauthentic behaviour in the workplace*

The impact of authentic and inauthentic behaviour in the workplace is drawn from the consequences of such behaviour at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal level. Being authentic resulted in overall well-being on an intrapersonal level. Feeling confident, at ease and experiencing higher levels of commitment were experienced at the intrapersonal level. Being authentic facilitates self-acceptance and reduces concern about being negatively evaluated by others. Self-acceptance positively contributes to mental health and enhanced self-esteem. On an interpersonal level, being authentic results in positive outcomes. It results in building trust, respect and support, as well as the creation of authentic relationships. Employee work performance is seen to improve. Authentic behaviour fosters consistency. Consistent behaviour across different roles and situations allows for predictable behaviour and thus facilitates social interactions and creates an opportunity for others to behave consistently.

Inauthentic behaviour results in frustration, increased levels of pressure, loss of focus, loss in self-confidence and self-esteem at the intrapersonal level. It impacts on the individual's ability to perform effectively. On an interpersonal level, not being authentic results in a lack of respect and trust and poor communication and conflict. Lower morale and reduced work performance is also experienced.

6.3   LIMITATIONS

Assessing the limitations of the study is necessary to ensure the soundness of the research undertaken. The limitations are presented across the domain of the literature review and the empirical study.

6.3.1   Limitations of the literature review

The limited literature available in this field was reviewed in Chapter 2. According to Harter (2005), there exist numerous unconnected pieces of literature, but no single body of information. Vannini (2006) state that there is a lack of definitional clarity and qualitative research on what it means to be authentic and inauthentic. In the research that I conducted, I found that a plenitude of information on the meaning and construction of authenticity exists, as well as a variety of papers that incorporate or encompass the construct. Although some literature on studies of the impact of authentic and inauthentic behaviour, and on relationships in the workplace, are available, these were found to be limited. Research on authentic behaviour in the South African workforce was also found to be limited. Although the body of knowledge on authenticity is limited, this emphasises the significance of the objective of this study, to contribute to the development of this body of knowledge.

6.3.2   Limitations of the empirical study

6.3.2.1   *Sample size*

Although the sample size selected was based on the recommendation that an appropriate sample size for a qualitative study is between five and twenty-five (Babbie & Mouton, 2001), the small sample size (five) used in this study can be seen as a limitation, as this small number cannot be considered to be representative of the total population. Using a larger sample would have added depth to the research results and strengthened the contribution of this study to the body of knowledge and understanding of authenticity.

By using a larger sample, prolonged engagement is facilitated, to the extent that data saturation occurs (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Kelly, 1999). This would serve to enhance the credibility of the study. Due to the limited scope of the Master's dissertation, prolonged engagement were not pursued further in this study. Data saturation was however identified in that themes started to overlap amongst participants and new themes were not emerging from the data analysis.

6.3.2.2   Use of the semi-structured interview

In using the semi-structured interview, I was aware of the need to control interviewer and interviewee bias. Interviewer and interviewee bias is discussed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.4.3). Steps were taken to overcome interviewer bias, but, it must be noted that my lack of experience with conducting semi-structured interviews in the qualitative paradigm can be seen as a limitation to the study. The fluidity of the interviews was affected by my anxiety and nervousness in conducting interviews with known participants.

The impact of interviewee bias, particularly the reluctance to share in-depth information, is a further limitation. Participants in the study were known to me, and the amount of personal information they were willing to share was limited to an unknown degree by this relationship.

6.3.2.3   The researcher as the primary research instrument

As discussed in Chapter 3, the researcher in this study is the primary instrument. Sampling decisions, data collection, analysis and interpretation of the results relied primarily on the researcher. As a limitation, I was concerned that my biases and beliefs would influence the interviews and the participants' responses. Of particular concern was the assumption that participants in the study shared my feelings concerning issues of truth, honesty, fraud and corruption in the organisation. My expectations of the results were influenced by the assumption that participants would describe experiences that were similar to my own. This is not a limitation *per se*, as the subjectivity of the researcher and being involved in the process is characteristic of qualitative research. Furthermore, I experienced some anxiety and discomfort in conducting interviews with known subjects. This discomfort and anxiety inhibited the initial natural flow of the interviews to some extent.

6.3.2.4   Confirmability of the research

The confirmability and consistency of the research can be improved through the use of multiple researchers, a peer review or participant researchers (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). In this research study, it was not possible to use multiple researchers, due to the nature of the Master's dissertation. All the research was conducted by me and research findings were potentially limited by this.

6.3.2.5   The use of triangulation

Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods to collect data in qualitative studies (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). This serves to enhance the credibility of the study (Whittemore et al., 2001). A limitation of this study was that data was collected using only one source, that is, the semi-structured interview. One interview was held with the participants and interviews were conducted by one researcher. By using multiple methods, such as follow-up interviews, any deficiencies in the initial data collection stage could have been overcome. Participants' further thoughts on authenticity

could have been elicited and clarity on themes could have been probed. This would have provided for richer and thicker descriptions of the areas being investigated.

6.3.2.6   The use of member checks

Member checks involve referring to the source of the information to check both the data and the interpretation (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The aim of member checks is to determine the intended meaning of the respondents, correct any errors that may have been captured during the transcription of interviews and allow the participants an opportunity to provide additional information (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Member checks serve to improve the credibility of the data analysis stage (Whittemore et al., 2001) Due to time constraints and the non-availability of participants, no member checks were conducted. As a limitation to the study, not being able to conduct member checks prevented me from ascertaining additional information and verifying interpretations. This   reduces the credibility of the data analysis stage.

6.3.2.7   Ensuring the quality of the research

Irrespective of the limitations mentioned above, I attempted to ensure that the requirements for a sound qualitative study were met, in order to ensure the quality of the research. The steps taken to achieve this are described in Chapters 1 and 3.

6.4   RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are made for future studies in the field of organisational and industrial psychology as well as for organisational application.

6.4.1   Recommendations for future studies

I recommend that future research studies be undertaken using the phenomenological approach within the domain of organisational and industrial psychology, particularly

organisational development and quality of work life. Studies should be undertaken to explore each of the thematic concerns in greater detail. It is recommended that future researchers describe and articulate in greater detail the experiences of authenticity in the workplace, as well as its related impact and the factors that support and inhibit authentic behaviour. Future research topics should include the following:

- The construction of authenticity
- Internal and external factors that facilitate authenticity
- Contextually appropriate behaviour and the manifestation of multiple selves
- The work environment as an inhibitor and facilitator of authenticity
- Interpersonal judgement as a barrier to authenticity
- Limitations on self-expression
- Organisational culture and its impact on authentic behaviour
- Organisational practices, policies and procedures and their impact on authentic behaviour
- The impact of leader power on authenticity
- The impact of authentic leadership on authenticity
- Consequences of authentic behaviour on an intrapersonal and interpersonal level
- Consequences of inauthentic behaviour on an interpersonal and intrapersonal level

6.4.1.1   *Use of a larger and more diverse sample*

A significant recommendation for future research is that a larger and more diverse sample should be used to ensure greater depth and richness of results. In the South African workforce, there is great diversity and this diversity will add value to any research conducted in the workplace.

6.4.1.2   *Use of triangulation*

Due to the nature of the construct of authenticity and the limited awareness of the topic, as described by the subjects in this study, it is strongly recommended that future research

utilize multiple methods of collecting data. Follow-up interviews and the maintaining of an "authenticity journal" is recommended as methods that will enhance the data collected.

6.4.2 Application of the findings to organisational practices

The primary value of this study in my mind lies in the impact of authenticity experiences in the workplace, specifically the factors that facilitate and inhibit authentic experiences. The consequences of not being able to be authentic are clearly detrimental to organisational performance and the realisation that experiences of authenticity do not only lie within the individual employee is significant to organisational policy and practice. The research findings therefore provide valuable implications for use within the organisation. These include conducting authentic leadership development programmes, wellness programmes for employees as well as appropriate organisational audits.

6.4.2.1 *Authentic leadership development*

This study asserts that authenticity is an important construct, with significant impact on both the individual and the team, particularly by leaders. Authentic leadership development programmes should be offered by organisations to not only create awareness of the construct but to build a foundation for the development of leadership capacity. Authentic leadership development should not be restricted to classroom training courses, but should include the "life-story" self-narrative method, as advocated by Shamir and Eliam (2006). By encouraging self-reflection through the life story, personal meanings can be drawn from the leaders' experience. This would facilitate greater self-knowledge and develop their potential to become authentic leaders (Jensen & Luthans, 2006).

6.4.2.2 *The provision of employee health and wellness programmes*

In the study, it was found that there are negative consequences of inauthentic behaviour at both the intra and interpersonal levels. These negative consequences are a source of

conflict and frustration for participants and resulted in negative psychological outcomes. The provision of health and wellness programmes, particularly offering counselling services would provide participants, and others with similar experiences with an opportunity to deal with the negative emotions associated with inauthentic behaviour.

Any conflict or issues arising from dealing with the multiple roles that participants reported engaging in can be dealt with through such counselling opportunities. Autobiographical narratives are a recommended solution for resolving potential conflict with the multiple self (McAdams, see Harter, 2005). In developing a self narrative, one creates a sense of continuity over time, as well as coherent connections among life events, each of which can be experienced as authentic (Harter, 2005). Counseling opportunities can also assist participants to discuss their concerns around how the perception and judgements of others' affects them.

6.4.2.3   Organisational culture audit

Organisational culture was identified as an environmental factor that influenced the subjects' ability to act authentically. Organisational culture refers to the system of shared values and beliefs that impacts on employee behaviour (DuBrin, 2004). Organisational culture has considerable depth and power to control individual behaviour through its value system (DuBrin, 2004). In an uncertain environment it is recommended that an organisational culture audit be conducted to determine organisational values, levels of power and trust. The audit can be used to create awareness of, and communicate, organisational values. The visibility of organisational values may facilitate the adoption of these values and allow for more authentic behaviour.

6.4.2.4   Organisational systems audit

A further recommendation for organisational application is the conducting of a systems audit. Organisational systems, processes and procedures should be reviewed in order to identify problem areas and blockages that could prevent individuals from acting

authentically. For example, an audit of recruitment practices or organisational communication systems could be conducted. Such an audit may highlight those areas in which problems exist or communication channels are restricted. Once these are identified, organisations will be in a position to improve systems and processes, thereby facilitating authentic behaviour and communication.

6.5   CHAPTER SUMMARY

As mentioned previously, this research became a very meaningful personal journey about what being true to oneself means. Reflecting on the entire research process, I can state "with no pretences", that this course of study has changed me. A fundamental change is the consciousness and awareness that I experience within myself as well as in my interactions with others. No course of study has had a more meaningful and profound impact as this. It has awakened my interest not only in authenticity as a field of study, but of my self-concept as it is shaped and framed by my authenticity. Carl Jung (n.d.) is quoted as saying " your vision will become clearer when you look into your heart, who looks outside, dreams, who looks inside, awakens". This research inspired me to look within, and I am now consciously aware of "being true to myself".

In this chapter I presented the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of the study. Conclusions drawn from the literature review as well as the research study were presented. The limitations of the research study were discussed. Recommendations for future research and organisational application were made.

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ANNEXURE 1

MANAGERIAL EXPERIENCES OF AUTHENCITIY IN THE WORKPLACE

INTERVIEW GUIDE

FOCUS OF THE INTERVIEW:
- General Introduction
- Building Rapport with participants
- Exploring the meaning of authenticity
- Experiences of authenticity
- Effect of the experiences of authenticity

TYPES OF QUESTIONS	
Introduction and Orientation	Greeting. Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research My research topic is on your experience of authenticity in the workplace I will be using qualitative research techniques and would appreciate if you would share your thoughts, opinions and experiences. This is an open semi-structured discussion, and you are free to ask any questions should you need clarity. I will be recording the interview, purely for research purposes, and I want to assure you again that this discussion is strictly confidential. Before we start, is there anything that you would like to say at this stage
Question one The purpose of this question is to attempt to build the	Describe your understanding of the term authenticity, i.e. what you think it means and what does it mean to you?

interviewees construction of authenticity.	
Question two This question moves into the experience of authenticity both as an individual and at a team level	How do you experience your own authenticity in the workplace, individually and in a team?
Question Three This question attempts to search for specific examples/occasions of authentic and inauthentic behaviour and enabling conditions	Can you describe specific experiences or examples when you were able to behave authentically? What enabled this? Can you describe specific experiences or examples of when you were unable to behave authentically, where you have behaved inauthentically? What enabled this?
Question Four This question focuses on the impact of experiences of authenticity	What do you think is the effect of your experiences of authenticity on yourself and your team.
Conclusion The focus here is to summarise the discussion and ensure that nothing has been omitted.	Summarise: Do you agree that the main points we have talked about today are… Is there anything else that you would like to mention before we end our interview Thank you for your time.

ANNEXURE 2

33 Silver Road
Northdale
Pietermaritzburg
3201

Dear ……………..

PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH FOR A MASTERS DISSERTATION IN INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY

I am currently studying towards a Masters Degree in Industrial Psychology through the University of South Africa. One of the requirements for the completion of the degree is the submission of a dissertation. My research topic is: **experiences of authenticity in the workplace**. The purpose of the research is to explore the concept of authenticity and how employees (particularly managers) experience their own authenticity, what is the impact of this on their work and on the team and to further explore factors in the organisation that support and/or inhibit authentic behaviour.

I have opted to conduct the research using qualitative methodology, which entails gathering data using the interviewing technique. I have selected you through a purposive sampling technique, and upon your consent, to participate in the research. The interview is semi-structured, and the duration will vary depending on your responses. It is envisaged that the duration of the interview will not exceed one hour. The time, date and venue of the interview will be set to your convenience.

Should you agree to participate, you will be required to furnish me with a suitable date, time, and a convenient venue for the interview as well as sign the attached consent form and return it to me. Furthermore, there is no prior preparation required for the interview. At the interview you will be asked a set of questions upon which you will be free to respond as you choose. There are no restrictions and limitations to your responses.

My role in the data collection is that of researcher. I will conduct the interview with you: thereafter do the necessary transcriptions as well as analysis. Your participation and the information you provide will be treated with complete confidentiality. No other parties or individuals are involved in data collection and analysis, however, my supervisor at Unisa will have access to the raw data. The interview will be recorded, with your consent, and thereafter

transcribed. The recording is done to ensure that no important input from you is omitted. The interview tapes and transcripts will be carefully stored, with no individual and/or party having access to it to further ensure confidentiality.

Your participation will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

……………………………………
Nirvana Royappen
Date:……………

ANNEXURE 3

CONSENT FORM

Participation in the research

I …………………………………………………….(full name), consent to participate in research being conducted by Mrs Nirvana Royappen, on the topic: Experiences of Authenticity in the workplace.

Recording of the Interview

I consent to the interview being recorded for data collection purposes (tick the appropriate box)

☐   Yes   ☐   No

I suggest the following date/s, time/s and venue/s for the interview

Date/s: …………………………………………

Time/s: ………………………………………….

Venue/s: …………………………………………..

SIGNATURE

………………………………………….
NAME

………………………………………….
DESIGNATION

…………………………………………………

DATE

Thank you for consenting to participate in my research.

Please return your completed form to:
Nirvana Royappen
Tel: 033 – 395 2886
Cell: 084 458 9966
Fax: 033 – 3424 681
e-mail: royappen@premier.kzntl.gov.za
Postal Address: 33 Silver Road, Northdale, Pietermaritzburg, 3201